



King County

King County Board of Health

Staff Report

Agenda item No: 7

Date: April 18, 2024

Briefing No: 24-B09

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Subject

Public Health Strategic Planning Update

Summary

Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) has worked for the past year to develop the 2024-2029 departmental strategic plan (Plan). The plan defines the Department’s vision, mission, values, and priority areas, and sets the direction of the department for the next six years. The Plan describes how PHSKC will meet the most persistent and urgent health challenges facing King County, embed Racism is a Public Health Crisis into the Department’s everyday work, and strengthen PHSKC’s core functions to protect and promote the health of the people of King County, in partnership with other sectors and King County partners. The Department expects to release the final strategic plan in Summer 2024.

Background

The Board was last briefed on the Plan in October 2023. The briefing (BOH Briefing No. 23-B18) shared the summary findings from PHSKC staff, community partners, and other public health partners to inform the development of the Plan.

PHSKC is transitioning out of an intense, multi-year emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in which racial inequities were among the greatest challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic created trauma and burnout among the public health workforce and caused PHSKC, and public health departments across the nation, to fundamentally rethink how public health departments do their work.

Building on these lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan includes the voices of community and staff and sets the department’s path for the next six years. The department deliberately strove to develop this plan using an anti-racist process, and the plan itself embeds anti-racism and racial equity throughout.

The health issues facing the people of King County are significant. These complex issues must be addressed by multiple sectors and partners working together. This plan describes how Public Health will focus the department’s activities and resources to address these threats to community health. The strategic plan will also guide Public Health in strengthening internal capacity and

infrastructure in ways that support all programs throughout the department to better meet population health needs.

Analysis

In the course of developing this plan, approximately 100 community and public health system partners, as well as employees throughout the department, provided feedback in listening sessions and interviews. PHSKC staff worked alongside community partners to use this feedback as a foundation to collaboratively develop Public Health’s new vision, mission, values, and priorities:

Vision: Health, well-being, and racial equity – every day for everyone in King County.

Mission: To promote and improve the health and well-being of all people in King County by leading with racial equity and changing systems and structures that impact health.

Values: Equity, leadership, collaboration, partnership, accountability, and working upstream

And identified the following Priority Areas:

Overarching priority: Anti-racism and equity	
<p>Climate & Health</p> <p>Emerging Threats to Community Health and Well-being: Health of People Experiencing Homelessness, Gun Violence Prevention, Overdose Prevention, Community Well-being and Youth Behavioral Health</p>	<p>Information, Impact & Innovation: Policy Development and Change, Data and Information Systems, Communications</p> <p>Partnerships: Community Partnerships, Academic, Philanthropic, and other Public-private Partners</p> <p>Workforce & Infrastructure: Workforce Well-being and Workplace Culture, Internal Collaboration, Emergency Preparedness</p>

Successful implementation of many activities outlined in this strategic plan depends upon alignment of existing resources or identification of new resources and partnerships. Public Health intends to be proactive in seeking these resources and in using this plan to inform the department’s strategic investments to modernize and transform the health department’s work to provide high quality public health services and continue the journey towards becoming a racially just health department.

Attachments

1. Strategic Planning update slide deck, April 18, 2024