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HEALTHIER KITTITAS

Newsletter of the Kittitas County Health Network

OVERVIEW

Kittitas County Health Network staff and network members were busy during the first few months of the year with the mental health sales and use tax proposal (1/10th of 1%), grant applications, and many other projects.

The most recent grant application (a HRSA Care Coordination grant) has provided momentum for the Health Commons project. This new grant would help fund programs to provide community based care coordination services and identify individuals needing care coordination before they reach the crisis level.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel many events and meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While this has brought about a pause in some of our projects, we are hoping to move our meetings to a virtual format in May so that work can continue.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Washington Community Stars

Kittitas County Health Network was given an honorable mention in the Community Stars Awards, in honor of National Rural Health Day.

Reverse Site Visit

Marie Betts (KCHN) and Dede Utley (KVH) traveled to Washington DC to attend the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program -Implementation Grant: Reverse Site Visit in early March. This was a required conference for all grantees and allowed them an opportunity to learn from experts and share experiences with other grantees across the country. While there, Marie and Dede also met with staffers from the offices of Senator Patty Murray and Representative Kim Schrier. During these meetings they discussed rural health care, areas of success in our county, and priority needs for rural communities.

Recovery Presentation

David Douglas gave a presentation on Addiction, Recovery, and Stigma in our last opioid response meeting. It was well attended and was an engaging and educating presentation. Stay tuned for future presentations from David as well as Dr. John Asriel on similar topics.

New Board Member

We welcomed Greg Aubol as a new KCHN Board member following the retirement of Harry Kramer. Greg is also the new Director of Kittitas Services for Comprehensive Healthcare in Ellensburg.

Strategic Planning Event

KCHN was awarded \$5000 from the Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health to be used for a facilitator to lead a strategic planning event. This event will hopefully take place in the early summer.

Dede and Marie outside of Representative Kim Schrier's Office



David Douglas presents on addiction, stigma, and recovery



WORK GROUPS AND TASK FORCES

Behavioral Health

On February 3rd, members of the Kittitas County Health Network presented the final 1/10th of 1% sales tax proposal to the County Commissioners. It was an incredible presentation and was followed by personal statements from community members. Commissioners gave positive feedback but ultimately decided to vote to table the Public Hearing indefinitely in the following meeting. They requested to see more county wide engagement and a specific business plan. Work began quickly after this request and presentations have been made to organizations throughout the county to inform the general public about the tax initiative. Unfortunately, the messaging around this work has been temporarily put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A meeting with the Commissioners is tentatively scheduled for April 28th at 1pm.

ACEs & Resiliency

The ACEs and Resiliency Task Force held its annual film series in March. They showed two films; Resiliency: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope and Raising of America: Early Childhood & the Future of our Nation. A discussion was held after each film and was led by professionals within the community. Unfortunately, the third and final film (Screenagers Next Chapter: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience) had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. We will be rescheduling for later in the year

Assessment

Amy Fuller left Kittitas County Public Health and so Marie Betts (KCHN staff) was appointed as the new chair of the Assessment Work Group. Their work has been focused on the reporting for the Opioid Response Implementation grant.

Care Coordination/A-Team

KCHN staff submitted a HRSA Care Coordination Grant in March to continue work on the Health Commons platform.

Opioid Response

CHCW and the Opioid Response group worked together to create a Public Service Announcement about opioid addiction. The PSA was shared on social media and has been showing at the movie theaters.

