



2018 Pierce County
Community Health Assessment
Executive Summary of Preliminary Key Findings

Overview: In 2018, [Tacoma Pierce County Health Department](#), [MultiCare Health System](#), [CHI Franciscan Health](#), [University of Washington - Tacoma](#) and [Kaiser Permanente](#) began a comprehensive community health planning and assessment process. Undertaken in collaboration with a wide range of community partners, the overall aim of this work was to identify key areas where the community could take action to improve community health and address health equity. The assessment also fulfills public health accreditation requirements.

Vision: *Building healthy, fair, spaces & places for all.*

Mission: *We will lead the region in growing healthier spaces & places.*

Guiding principle (processes): *Our processes will be collaborative, communicative, data-driven and based on listening, community engagement and observation.*

Staff:

CHI Franciscan Health: Doug Baxter and Laurie Brown

Kaiser Permanente: Victoria Garcia

MultiCare Health System: Lois Bernstein, Kristin Gilman and Dr. Jamilia Sherls.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Public Health Centers for Excellence: Tommy George, Cindan Gizzi, Karen Meyer, Ingrid Payne and Emily Turk.

Commitment to Health Equity

Throughout the Community Health Assessment (CHA) process, social determinants of health provided the framework for both the community engagement process and as a way to focus attention on the importance of neighborhood and community conditions. Income, education, housing and transportation create opportunities or barriers to health. Health should not be determined by zip code, income, race or any other factor.

Methods and Sources

To develop the full CHA report, numerous community engagement methods were used to hear directly from residents. In addition, multiple data sources were reviewed and analyzed to describe the health of the community. These included:

- Ten community workshops (held in diverse geographic areas and with multiple populations)
- Community survey (approximately 1600 responses; survey was available in English, Spanish and Korean)
- Four "Forces of Change" assessment workshops (held in rural and urban locations; TPCHD Board of Health and staff)
- Selected health indicator data.

Strengths and Assets (not in ranked order):

Participants in community workshops, online surveys and forces of change assessment workshops brought up those conditions and characteristics they appreciate and see as important assets of Pierce County communities.

- Parks and places to enjoy the outdoors.
- Grocery stores and markets nearby.
 - Other local sources of food, such as food banks and community gardens (for fresh produce and community gathering).
- Resources that make neighborhoods safe.
- People working together collaboratively to get things done.
- Innovative partnerships and programs.
- Groups that support students and youth.
- Community colleges offering trade skills and a pathway to four-year degrees.
- Organizations that working towards equity.
- Planning efforts to address changing community characteristics, for example:
 - Improved public transit in Tacoma (Link light rail).
 - Trend towards walkable communities within new development.

Preliminary key findings:

Based on results of this CHA, Pierce County preliminary key findings emerged. These findings are shown below and came from applying a prioritization process and criteria to the health indicator data and community engagement themes. Complete details can be found in the full report.

What the data tells us:



- **Obesity results in numerous health issues.** These health problems include heart disease and other chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes, among others.
- **People are dying before their time.** Premature death includes both unintentional and intentional injuries. Unintentional injuries include motor vehicle crashes, poisonings and falls. Intentional injuries include self-inflicted (suicide), homicide, assault and other.

What both quantitative data and community input tells us:

- **Access to healthcare, specifically mental health and substance abuse services.** Access to health care services. Need to improve clinical care programs and provide additional resources to patients. Health sciences education as a response to provider shortage. Availability of prevention programs and treatment services. Access to medication assisted treatment for those experiencing opioid use disorder.

What the community tells us:

Residents identified neighborhood and community characteristics needed for quality of life and livability:

Healthy neighborhoods that include:

- **Access to healthy food.** Affordable, healthy food that is available close to work and home.
- **Safe, reliable and affordable housing.** Available and affordable housing. The impacts of gentrification on marginalized communities. Quality of housing stock. Effects of housing costs in King County on housing availability in Pierce County. Housing and land use related planning and policy needs.
- **Ways to get around.** Availability of public transit, safe cross walks, sidewalks, lit streets, bike lanes, curb cuts, trails, etc. Buses that meet people where they live, learn, work and shop.

Communities that include:

- **Equitable access to community resources.** Parks, information, services, activities, etc.
- **Celebration of diversity.** Opportunities to participate in and celebrate various ethnic and cultural community traditions, including one's own.
- **Friends and support.** Number of friends and family within one's support system. Belonging and trust. Opportunities to give and receive social support. Organizations that encourage and support social connections, in addition to health and wellbeing.

How will these findings be used?

- Key findings will be shared with those who participated in surveys, workshops, etc. as well as community residents and leaders. When findings are shared 'in person', questions may include:
 - Do these findings reflect your experience and understanding in Pierce County?
 - Are there any major issues missing from the list of findings?

- If no additional issues are identified, 2 – 3 priorities will be selected through a prioritization process.
- Priorities will become the basis for the 2019 – 2024 Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Organizations, groups, and others are encouraged to adopt and incorporate county wide priorities into their strategic plans.

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