

The CDO Quarterly provides insight into community-based partnerships associated with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Community-Driven Outreach (CDO) initiative. Each issue features inspiring and educational stories of effective community-rooted outreach work aimed at achieving health equity in Washington state. The CDO initiative centers communities who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and provides increased access to COVID-19 information, resources and vaccines.

## **Diverse services and open dialogue draw community to vaccine clinics at Asia Pacific Cultural Center**

“Something is going on at APCC all the time,” said Skye Rozon of Asia Pacific Cultural Center in Tacoma. That constancy allows APCC teams to build trusting relationships over time and connect people to vaccines and health screenings they might not seek out otherwise.

Programs at APCC span small-business education, grocery distribution, holiday celebrations, mental health services, and more. “Once people are here and see a [vaccine] clinic is happening and it’s free,” he explained, “a lot of times they are interested then: when they physically see it here.”

With services in Chinese, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, Khmer, and several other languages, APCC is prepared to communicate with a wide audience. Rozon stresses, however, that trust is what makes public health messaging effective.

“A lot of health and medical terms are complicated in any language. It’s not the translation that matters,” Rozon observed. “It’s the dialogue to hear what matters to the person and give responses that are not daunting or scary. Who is talking with them can matter more than the information.”



*A friendly atmosphere draws people to APCC’s vaccine events*

## Event explores healthy connections with family, community, individual, and spirit

The Northwest Washington Indian Health Board on Feb. 3 held a day-long conference built around the culturally relevant factors that contribute to resilience and overall wellness.

Lacey Conner, the organization’s public health project coordinator, described the activity and the innovative framework behind it.

**Q:** *What was the Healing Hearts conference?*

**A:** The Healing Hearts conference created an open, safe place for sharing stories and promoting mental, emotional and physical healing. The event was open to the public, and attendees were mostly members of local Tribes. The day was centered around the factors shown to protect against substance use disorder and strengthen wellness in Native communities, across four categories: family, community, individual and spiritual.

Four speakers each touched on one of the factors, incorporating song, poetry, background research, and stories of life journeys. A 55-minute documentary, “Native Transformations in the Pacific NW: Stories of Strength in a Public Health Crisis,” shared stories from four people overcoming the effects of the opioid crisis. The film highlighted the qualities—identified in a participatory research process—that help three Coast Salish communities overcome the impacts of the opioid crisis.

Resource tables rounded out the setting, providing information on mammograms and diabetes management.

**Q:** *What should people know about the Native Transformations Framework connected to the conference?*

**A:** The Native Transformations Project was a community-based research project that identified sources of strength and protection against substance use disorder (SUD) in three Coast Salish tribal communities: connections to family, community, individual, and spirit. Protective parenting, social connections, speaking from the heart, and rites of passage are specific examples of each respective protective factor.

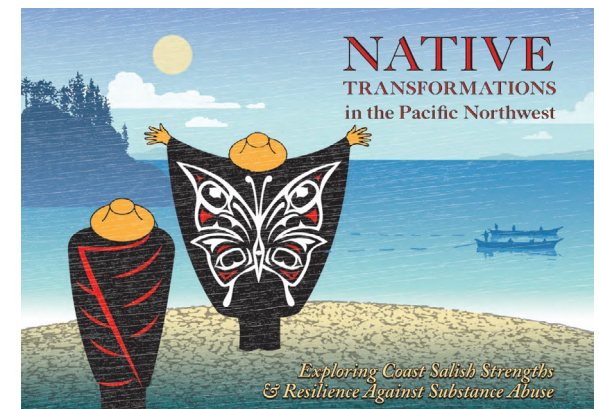
The Healing Hearts conference fostered an environment for people to explore and apply these protective factors, an especially important opportunity following the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing a safe, welcoming place for people to come together and share their experiences was essential for community healing and the ability to move forward.

Many of our tribal communities have been dealing with the effects of substance misuse and overdose, especially opioids. The conference created a chance to air stories of hope for the future and overcoming addiction, emphasizing the factors in the Transformation Framework. Research on SUD prevention and treatment primarily involves Euro-American populations, leading to interventions applied to Native communities and others that tend to emphasize

individual responsibility. Overlooking family, community, culture, and spiritual factors leads to ineffective prevention and treatment programs for Native Americans. The Healing Hearts conference was one activity to help repair that disconnect.

**Q:** *What’s next for the Northwest Washington Indian Health Board?*

**A:** We will continue outreach on the Native Transformations framework, focusing on “what’s right” with our people instead of “what’s wrong” and reminding people they have inherent strengths that have been passed down for generations. We plan to have more retreats and conferences focused around healing our healers and coming together to share stories.



The Native Transformations Project informed the agenda for a NWWIHB event in February.

## Spirited style helps move vaccination messaging

Refugee and Immigrant Services Northwest (RISNW) brought a vibrant spirit to outreach around COVID-19 vaccination. RISNW led the creation of music videos with a cultural connection to Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander people in the north Puget Sound region.

Partners at Pacific Islander Community Association of Washington (PICA WA) composed an original song with lyrics saying, “Let’s vaccinate. It’s our time.” The music has a contemporary Pasifika style, up-tempo and reggae influenced. Working closely with RISNW, a local media company produced a video around the music, featuring images of local people and Pacific Island locations. The combination helped catch the eye of longtime Washington residents and new immigrants alike. Introductory narration comes from local community members, delivered in five languages.

“It’s a way to appeal to all generations, and be persistent with health messaging but not overbearing,” said Steve Bader, project manager for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander outreach at RISNW.



RISNW’s music video shows local people getting vaccines

## Community partners gather in Spokane to share experiences in public health outreach

In April, more than a dozen organizations from across the state met to share knowledge and insights from their work in the CDO initiative over the last 12 months. The organizations – subcontractors specializing in Latino, Latina, and Hispanic audiences – described their outreach tactics, reflected on recent progress, and discussed their ideas for continued success and sustainability.

The event was held to mark a milestone in the CDO initiative: nearly a year since its launch in support of COVID-19 vaccine outreach and education. CDO initiative partners met April 15 and talked about their 2023-2024 outreach experiences, including the important role of community organizations in public health.

During the event, participants discussed potential next steps to ensure equitable recovery and resilience for communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and other health-related inequities. By pairing trusted community voices with local and state health agencies, public health can reach more people with information and resources to advance better health outcomes.

Word-of-mouth and sharing of personal experiences, as partners did at this event, is a key ingredient in public health outreach. “We need to keep showing the government that we are here, and we have needs,” said Martha Zuniga, Deputy Director of Entre Hermanos, who shared stories of strong collaboration between governments and communities over recent years.

Jennyfer Mesa, Executive Director and founder of Latinos en Spokane added, “The most effective, meaningful solutions emerge from the people closest to the issue. We are building power among Latino and immigrant Washingtonians so we can create and direct resources by and for the community,”



Community partners and DOH gathered in Spokane to reflect on a year of outreach through the CDO initiative.

## Featured Resources

### CDC recommends spring COVID vaccine for people 65+

As of February 28, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends adults ages 65 years and older receive an additional dose of the updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine. People who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccine have a lower risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 than those who are unvaccinated. For more information, check out the [CDC's news release](#) and stay up to date on the latest COVID-19 vaccine guidance on the [Washington State Department of Health's \(DOH\) vaccine page](#).

### MMR vaccine guidance to prevent rising measles cases

Measles is almost entirely preventable through vaccination, but [cases of the disease](#) are on the rise in the U.S. and around the world, which is linked to declining rates of measles vaccination. The best protection against measles is the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. The vaccine provides long-lasting protection against all strains of measles. Children should receive two doses of the MMR vaccine--one at age 12 months to 15 months and another between ages four and six—and adults who have never gotten the MMR vaccine should get one dose. People with certain health conditions or who have had certain medical procedures recently should skip or delay MMR vaccination. DOH details these guidelines on the [DOH website](#).

### Outreach resources on measles and vaccination include:

- [Flyers in multiple languages](#)
- [Map of vaccine providers for adults and children in Washington](#)
- [Videos, presentations, article content, and infographics](#)

## Did you know?

DOH's [Healthier Washington Collaboration Portal](#) (WA Portal) is a knowledge-sharing platform for partners working to improve health and wellness across the state. The site was created by local health care providers, educators, public health and community-based professionals as a continuously evolving platform to meet the needs of communities.

### Learn more about WA Portal [here](#) or explore a few of WA Portal's key features, including:

- **Partner Page:** Share initiatives and guidance about your organization and work, such as videos, calendar links and resources, with your peers.
- **Collaborative Space:** Send and receive secure files and messages within your workgroup.
- **Resource Library:** Explore and contribute professional resources and tools to promote accessibility for health and wellness professionals.

## Quick Links



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