

## DAFN Workgroup meeting

July 15, 2024

### Agenda

<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
<b>Moving forward on priority topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency response</li></ul>
<b>Workgroup Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gaggle Workgroup</li><li>• WA Portal Page</li><li>• Member Survey</li></ul>
<b>Agenda for next meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access Standards for ADA and 504 compliance</li><li>• 988</li></ul>
<b>Gratitude Share</b>

### Meeting Recap

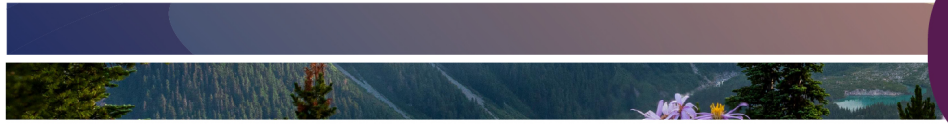
We started with a quick recap of how the workgroup would explore next steps in each of the four priority areas previously identified:

- Social isolation and mental health
- Disaster preparedness/Emergency response
- Transportation
- ADA and 504 Compliance

### Emergency Response Discussion

We then had a discussion with Claire Grant, Resiliency and Preparedness Strategist, Office of Resiliency and Health Security, DOH. Claire's presentation emphasized the following points:

- By all metrics--frequency, duration, intensity, days of heat wave season, heat waves in Washington State are becoming more severe and preparedness is necessary.
- Heat related emergency department visits are up sharply this year vs. previous years.



- She highlighted the importance of educating vulnerable populations, such as older adults, children, pregnant persons, and those with chronic illnesses or who are unhoused, about signs of heat-related illnesses.
- Claire also noted that certain neighborhoods, known as 'heat islands', are more prone to high temperatures and are often inhabited by people of color and low-income backgrounds, making them more susceptible to heat-related illnesses.
- Additionally, she discussed the health risks associated with smoke exposure, particularly for individuals with pre-existing chronic lung and heart conditions, and the recent spike in heat-related emergency department visits in Washington State.
- The process of developing responses to these worsening heat and climate-related issues is evolving and not yet where it needs to be. Claire pointed out several efforts in process, but highlighted the limitations of what is currently available.
  - [emPOWER, a project funded by HHS](#) that uses medicad data to track where individuals are dependent on electrical medical equipment.
  - [Washington Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#)
  - [Washington Air Quality Guide for Public Health Actions for Wildfire Smoke](#)
  - [Emergency information specific to vulnerable populations](#): This includes specific information for:
    - [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)
    - [Medical Needs](#)
    - [Mobility Disability](#)
    - [Psychological and Emotional Needs](#)
    - [Visual Disabilities](#)

The ensuing discussion with workgroup members emphasized the following points:

- Many in the disabilities community also have reduced income and/or in low-income housing. Lack of income and the restrictions placed by housing communities management on things like air conditioning units can make it hard for those in these communities to follow the recommended guidance for preparing and responding to heat crises.
- David shared several proposals to address some of these issues including:
  - Providing vouchers for sunblock curtains
  - Ensuring every apartment has an approved air conditioner, and
  - Purchasing Dyson air purifiers for families [Claire responded to this suggestion with the description of a program that is distributing portable air cleaners.]
- David also had several suggestions about the [site with disaster preparedness tips for the deaf and hard of hearing](#). These included:
  - Adding a link to a site with instructions on how to build an emergency preparedness kit.
  - Creating videos for the deaf and hard of hearing

- Emphasizing the importance of these individuals reaching out and letting neighbors know that they might need support in the event of a disaster as part of preparedness recommendations

## Next steps

- Claire to reach out to the volunteer management person about recommending ASL training for DOH emergency volunteers.
- Claire to consider adding information about sun-blocking curtains to the DOH emergency preparedness website.
- Claire to explore options for a community meeting between the Deaf community, DOH, and Emergency Management Division on emergency shelter planning.

## Gaggle Listserv

Nilofer shared that there were now 19 members in the Gaggle group. David expressed frustration that the group was currently serving more as a place to post information and there was no discussion happening of the issues raised in posts.

Nilofer offered to set up threads related to the four priority areas prior to the next meeting.

## Changes to Compensation

Nilofer discussed proposed changes to the compensation process which include:

- Workgroup members would only be asked to fill the compensation form when they join the workgroup or if they need to make changes to their compensation status.
- Participants are asked to enter their name in the chat at the beginning of each meeting so that it is easier for us to track who participated and needs compensation.
- A revised compensation form will be shared with all participants.

## Discussion of the WA Portal's DAFN Page

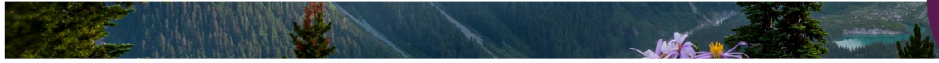
Nilofer shared that a new landing page for the workgroup had been set up on WA Portal. The page is here: <https://waportal.org/disabilities-and-access-functional-needs-workgroup>. All workgroup members are encouraged to read and review prior to the next meeting so we can discuss it.

## Items for the Next Meeting

Nilofer flagged that the next meeting would include two guest speakers:

- Javier Ruiz - DOH's new Civil Rights and Americans with Disabilities Act Program Manager
- DOH's 988 team – re: 988, mental health, and crisis response

Participants were asked to reflect ahead of time on the following questions:



- What questions do you have for them?
- Are there particular issues you want to be sure are part of the discussion?