

Community Collaborative Meeting

January 8, 2025

Next meeting:

Zoom Meeting on [February 12, 3:30 - 5:00PM](#)

We are working to find balance in the benefits and costs associated with translation. If you would like to share this or any part of our materials with an audience in another language, please email Community.Collaborative@doh.wa.gov and we will work with you to translate into the language(s) needed.

Estamos trabajando para encontrar un equilibrio entre los beneficios y costos asociados con la traducción. Si desea compartir esto o alguna parte de nuestros materiales con una audiencia en otro idioma, por favor envíe un correo electrónico a Community.Collaborative@doh.wa.gov y trabajaremos con juntos con usted para traducir al idioma o idiomas necesarios.

Meeting Recap

Agenda

3:30 – 3:35	Welcome, Land Acknowledgement
3:35 – 3:50	Public Health Advisory Board recommendations
3:50 – 4:20	Conversation with Secretary of Health, Dr. Shah
4:20 – 4:55	Department of Health Budget Update
4:55 – 5:00	Gratitude and Close

Actions

- Join other Collaborative members in building an education plan for legislators, email Community.Collaborative@doh.wa.gov.
- Two members offered to be a resource for Collaborative members:
 - Maiko at Front and Centered maiko@frontandcentered.org
 - Megan Moore, Washington State Public Health Association, megan@wspha.org or (253)400-7101.

Opening

Collaborative members were welcomed by Cyril Walrond, one of DOH's Community Collaborative Thought Partners, Chair of the Carceral Health Equity Workgroup, and Executive Director of the Northwest Community Bail Fund. Participants were asked to add their name, organization, and an issue they plan to highlight with legislators in 2025. Cyril led a land and labor acknowledgment followed by



recognizing the hard work that the members of the Collaborative engage in and their support for those working for collective liberation.

Public Health Advisory Board recommendations

Alice Fong, CEO at the Center for Ethical Leadership, presented the Public Health Advisory Board's (PHAB) Recommendations for Public Health Emergency and COVID-19 Responses report. This report produced three final recommendations, each accompanied by a set of specific actions which can be found in the [full report](#).

- (1) Adequately fund capacity to build and sustain relationships and partnerships
- (2) Identify and sustainably fund streamlined data and communication systems
- (3) Prioritize community integrated health and emergency response planning that supports improved system capacity, funding flow, and decision-making

The speaker mentioned that the board is rotating its' members to involve diverse perspectives. The report will be shared with the community for feedback. For further questions, Alice Fong can be contacted by email, alice@ethicalleadership.org.

Several Collaborative members commended Alice and PHAB for the intentional way that they had created a process that helped to ensure accountability to community. Cyril Walrond, the facilitator, reinforced that *"Accountability is taking the time to do things that take time."*

Resources:

[Public Health Advisory Board Recommendations for Public Health Emergency and COVID-19 Responses](#)

Conversation with Secretary of Health, Dr. Shah

Secretary of Health Dr. Shah expressed gratitude for the Community Collaborative members and their commitment to equity. He acknowledged the leadership, policy, and fiscal changes happening at the local, state, and federal levels and potential challenges associated with these changes. He also emphasized the importance of staying connected, uplifting community voices, and advocating for crucial public health services in the face of potential budget cuts.

Dr. Shah said, ***"You have continued to remind us of the importance of community. The community voice, the voice of people. The voice of everyday people who live in the state of Washington, who spend time in the state of Washington, who may just be here for a short period of time in the state of Washington. But they are still all our people. And I want to just recognize the importance of that equity work."***

We discussed strengthening the state's language access support, community engagement commitments, and staying engaged to propel public health improvement efforts. Community members raised concerns that the new budget won't contain many of things that are priorities for those at the community level.

Collaborative members thanked Dr. Shah for his dedication to health equity in Washington and engaging with the collaborative and his willingness to connect with community directly. One Community Collaborative member shared: "Thank you too sir. Under your leadership, we saw equity more at play.



Your entire team has been amazing empowering us to lead our own affairs and add our voices to the decision making process about matters that affect us.”

Another said, “I just wanted to add to the thank yous, Dr. Shah. I want to thank you for your willingness to show up. You know, some of us have worked with you and DOH for a number of years, but during your era, we were able to meet you talk with you, ask you questions. You listened to us and It's very commendable. And I just want to say thank you for that because it's only together that we can accomplish all this wonderful work that we're doing.”

Finally, Dr. Shah discussed his plans, which include taking a break to rest and recharge while staying committed to living in Washington State and helping where he can.

Department of Health Budget Update

Amy Ferris, Chief Financial Officer at the DOH, presented an update on the current budget process, the proposed budget by Governor Inslee, and the next steps in the legislative process. She also explained the role of the Office of Financial Management (OFM) as a key collaborator in the budgetary process. Amy highlighted the projected budget shortfall of 10 to 12 billion dollars and the measures taken to address it, including a freeze on hiring, contracts, goods, and services. There are exemptions to the budget freeze and processes developed at DOH to determine exemption eligibility.

She also mentioned Governor Inslee's proposed revenue source proposals, a wealth tax, and an increase to the business and occupational tax, [although since the meeting Governor Ferguson has shared his priorities, stating he does not want to raise taxes and instead is looking to additional budget cuts](#). Amy shared that the Department of Health must support Governor Inslee's budget and any adjustments proposed by Governor-elect Ferguson. She acknowledged that many proposals and needs were not included in the budget and encouraged community partners to continue their work and send messages to local officials.

Cyril led a discussion on the gaps for community-driven public health programs crucial to residents of Washington. He reminded the Collaborative that the budget is a moral document, and that “it speaks to the values, the investment, and what the commitment is moving forward. But while the Department of Health has to submit these portions while the state decides on where funds will be allocated, it's ultimately the people that has the power in those situations. And we as a people can demand that our funds go to the places that best serve us.”

There are limitations to what the OFM and DOH can do, but Amy encouraged community partners to engage in bringing priorities to their local legislators. Community members highlighted how to engage in budget advocacy and there was much excitement around the idea of Collaborative members connecting and coordinating to support community's ability to understand current budget proposals and actively engage to ensure legislators are aware of community needs and priorities.

Sample comments from participants:

- “Think about educating your geographic community on the same issues you educate your elected reps about because you need them to understand your issues and the programs that are helpful when they vote.”



- “As Dr. Shah mentioned before, we are kept in "silos of excellence" and I can't help but think that the budget's lack of community funding serves to place us in islands of isolation”
- “I think that it takes us being accountable to each other, to the communities that we represent, that we steward, that we're a part of, and make sure that we speak up when it comes to things that don't reflect what our true needs are as community.”
- Unfortunately, that can undo the amazing work we collectively did together over the years. Very worrying.
- I still would like to see the Department of Health to have a direct language access on the front page of the front page of the Department of Health web site.

Public Health Programs and the Governor's Proposed Budget

Included

988 Call Centers - \$13.2m in SFY25 and \$35.7m in 2025-27

988 IT System - \$37.95m in 2025-27

Fruit & Vegetable Incentive Program - \$6m in 2025-27

Reproductive Health Services - \$617k in SFY25 and \$617k in SFY26

Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) - \$6.4m in 2025-27

School Based Health Centers - \$2.4m in 2025-27

Behavioral Health Workforce - \$3m in 2025-27

Not Included

Most decision packages, including Community Engagement and Investments

Resources

- [Governor Elect Bob Ferguson Budget Priorities](#)
- Use the [Washington State Legislature website](#) to match what aligns with your priorities with the session calendar
- [25-27 Biennium Governor Inslee Proposed Budget Highlights](#)
- [25-27 Biennium Governor Inslee Proposed Budget](#)
- [Agency budget requests and decision packages](#)

Upcoming Legislative Education Opportunities

- Jan 17-18: [LGBTQ+ Advocacy Day](#)
- Jan 15 to March 26: [2025 Advocacy Days](#) with The Arc of Washington, Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council (WADDC)
- Feb 6: [Head Start & ECEAP Advocacy Day 2025](#)
- Feb 11: [Children's Alliance – Have a Heart for Kids Day](#)
- Feb 13: [APIC Wash](#)
- March 6: [Washington State Public Health Association 2025 Legislative Education Day](#)
- March 10: [Latino Legislative Day](#)
- March 14: [Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day](#)
- March 14: [Statewide Poverty Action Network](#)



Closing

Cyril expressed gratitude to the collaborative for holding an important and inclusive space for important discussions. Melissa offered to help convene a directory of contacts from the collaborative. She thanked Cyril for assisting with the meeting today and closed the meeting with the following quote,

“Hope and fear cannot occupy the same space. Invite one to stay.” – Maya Angelou.

The next Community Collaborative meeting will be on [February 12, 2025 from 3:30-5 p.m.](#) and will include a Look Back/Look Ahead exercise, discussion on the Urban Indian Initiative and the crisis hotline 988.