Whatcom Community Health Workers’ Network
Convened by the Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement
June 22, 2018
Unity Care Northwest, Bellingham

Present:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization (if any)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooke Eolande</td>
<td>DVSAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don Cook</td>
<td>Unity Care Northwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johanna Maybach</td>
<td>Unity Care Northwest – Dental Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Zoerb</td>
<td>Sea Mar CHC – Community Resource Navigator</td>
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<td>Laura Reardon</td>
<td>Unity Care Northwest</td>
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<td>Megan Stephenson</td>
<td>Unity Care Northwest - Outreach &amp; Enrollment (Navigator)</td>
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<td>Rafael Ayala</td>
<td>Sea Mar CHC</td>
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<td>Starleen Lewis</td>
<td>Unity Care Northwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanya Rojas</td>
<td>Educational Service District 189</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ Australia Cosby (WAHA Staff), Jessica Alvaro-Glantz (WAHA Intern), Lara Welker (WAHA Convener)</td>
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Welcome and Introductions

Group members introduced themselves; first time attendees added themselves to the CHW Connections Map, and returning people shared some observations and reflections about the map.

CHW Definition Discussion

At the May Network meeting, the group talked about creating its own definition of what a CHW is.

For this discussion, the focus was looking at the American Public Health Association (APHA) definition and exploring what some of the key words mean to us (rather than starting a new definition from “scratch”).

The APHA definition says a CHW is “…a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served.”

Community (in general):
- Finding connections with strangers
- Group with shared experiences and norms
- Who you’re close with (physically vs. emotionally etc.)
- Bond
- My neighbors/Birchwood area where I live, friends, family, aunts and uncles, mentors
- Your neighbor (residential or work place)

Communities (specific communities we work with):
- Homeless
- Anyone who needs help
- Homeless families
- Survivors of domestic violence/sexual assault/sexual exploitation – anywhere, mostly Whatcom
• Low income families
• Families and children
• Low income children in Whatcom County
• Students, families, singles, seniors
• Vietnamese/E Asian
• Latinx/indigenous
• Western students
• Latinx
• Underserved families in Whatcom; Point Roberts
• Persons of color communities
• All Whatcom residents
• Immigrants, refugees, Latino/@
• East county residents

**Trusted member (of the community):**

• No ulterior motives
• Well established relationships
• Collaborative leadership
• With knowledge, with skills
• Who determines trust?
• Am I publicly known?
• Non-judgmental
• Open, empathic and transparent
• Respect (mutual)
• Lives in the area
• Establishing trust by following through
• Only gathers information that’s “need to know”
• Working for a health clinic – does reputation matter?
• Trusted individuals and/or trusted organizations

**Unusually close understanding (of the community):**

• Based on lived experience
• Immersion: training, stories, shared experiences
• Shared experiences
• Not overtly political but has clear interest areas
• Does not formally work for a community organization
• Uniquely close
• Lived experiences, “they thru ____________.” A LOT of exposure with community (authentic exposure); you got a presence

**Health & Public Health** still to be discussed – all this good dialog took the entire meeting!

➔ Next Whatcom CHW Network meeting Friday, July 27, 9:00-11:00 AM at the **Roosevelt Neighborhood Center, 2303 Moore St.** (Alabama and Moore St, at end of the block; just across I-5 from Trader Joe’s.)