On Tuesday, December 3, King County Executive Dow Constantine welcomed participants from across King County to a daylong meeting in SeaTac, WA on “Building a Healthier King County: A Forum at the Intersection of Community Development, Health and Human Services.” The meeting was sponsored by King County and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco with the goals of increasing cross-sector collaboration to improve health and well-being in places with the most to gain and setting the stage for future coordinated investments in healthy communities. It was an initial step in launching the 2014 work of King County’s Health and Human Services Transformation Plan.

The agenda, a video of the morning sessions, the presentation slide deck, speaker biographies, the maps posted at the forum, and other materials are available on the Transformation Plan webpage at http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/HHTransformation.aspx and a Twitter feed is at #healthierkc.

Meeting Summary
Read about the topics and materials discussed at the December 3 meeting.

Action Oriented Commitments “In the Intersection”
A selection of commitments for forward movement as expressed by meeting attendees.

About the King County Health & Human Services Transformation Plan
Learn more about the plan.

Join the Network
How to stay in touch regarding next steps.

Meeting Participants
A list of those who attended the December 3 meeting.

Health and well-being start, and are sustained, in the places where residents live, learn, work, and play.
Meeting Summary

Opening Welcome
Executive Dow Constantine opened the forum with a message of equity and social justice, stating that his core commitment in government is to make sure that every person has an opportunity to thrive and contribute—our region’s prosperity and economic well-being depends on it. He called on participants to harness the power of collective impact, and to build networks to mobilize communities. Through our innovation, creativity, and partnerships, we are in a position to “do something extraordinary.”

Better Together: Converging Sectors for a Healthier King County
Perspectives on the fields of health, human services and community development set the stage for exploring cross-sector work “in the intersection” where potential exists to make things happen that may not otherwise be possible.

Dr. David Fleming, Director and Health Officer of Public Health-Seattle & King County, explained that the US spends the most on health care among developed countries but does not have the best health outcomes. Locally, maps of King County show profound health disparities based on where one lives. For example, when comparing the 10 ZIP codes with highest life expectancy to the ten with the lowest, there is a difference of more than ten years. What is actually killing us are the underlying contributors to these conditions – factors such as poor diet, tobacco use, physical inactivity, drug and alcohol use, and adverse childhood experiences. Maps of these risk factors look very similar to those for leading causes of death, providing a disturbing window into our region’s future if we do nothing differently. He went on to explain that the leading causes of death and disability are shaped in large part by the places where people live, learn, work and play. Therefore, to affect the health of county residents, more attention must be paid to community features that affect health such as housing, food availability, transportation, parks, living wage jobs, and social cohesion—features that the community development sector is also engaged in.

Adrienne Quinn, Director of the King County Department of Community and Human Services, spoke about the power of community development and human services to transform neighborhoods and lives. Community development and human services are broad fields that encompass a myriad of activities such as affordable housing, loans to small business, community programs and facilities, social capital, financial empowerment, and service provision, and they impact the very types of community features that are of concern for population health. Adrienne shared local, successful examples of different approaches to community development including King County Housing Authority’s Greenbridge development, YWCA Family Village at Issaquah, and InterIm CDA’s work in Seattle Chinatown-International District. Community development, like the health sector, also faces challenges and recognizes that new partners and business models are needed. Getting more intentional about partnerships designed to impact health outcomes is a key opportunity.

John Moon, District Manager of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, explained that the Federal Reserve is vitally interested in economic stability and increasing...
income equality to produce more vibrant communities. Despite a long history of community development investing in low-income communities, the poverty rate has not been changing in recent decades. This is a time for the field to pause and reflect, and consider new approaches. John talked about the ways in which the health field—because it is often working in the same places as community development—has emerged as a new ally. He shared several examples of where health and community development can be “better together” (such as working on asthma-free homes, or food hubs), reviewed the complexity of layered financing in community development projects, and called for greater intentionality in building networks to strengthen collaboration.

The session closed with highlights of ways that health reform is leading to new financing tools to address the underlying drivers of poor health. Among them are innovations and flexibility in the Medicaid program, testing ways to share savings for strategies that produce a return on investment, and the creation of prevention and wellness trust funds. Tools such as these may help to set the stage for the health sector to enter into more partnerships with community development and human services.

Panel Discussion: Working at the Intersection
Eric Liu, Founder and CEO of Citizen University, led a dynamic conversation with Colleen Brandt-Schluter, City of SeaTac; Rick Brush, Collective Health; Jim Krieger, Public Health-Seattle & King County, and Gordon McHenry, Jr., Solid Ground. The group discussed collaborative projects they’ve worked on and had a frank conversation about the importance of naming the obstacles to collaboration so that we can move beyond them. Funding silos, disconnects from community priorities and residents, and racism were among the obstacles they touched on. Not enough people in the community see the maps that show the extent of inequities in our county. People with the greatest power, wealth, and influence typically don’t live in the areas where disparities are highest, so they don’t see the problem. Despite these challenges, the panel was optimistic about how to move forward by seeing self-interest as mutual interest.

The kinds of things we’ve had a chance to talk about today are in that great exciting gray zone between the planned and the unplanned. The way that we as a region are going to show the country how this is done, the way we will change the color of these maps, is when we go out of the gray zone and into a sweet spot of intentionality and purpose about closing these gaps.

- Eric Liu

Panelists discuss collaborative projects they have worked on.
Work Session: Surfacing Projects that Move from Concept to Action

Jennifer Martin, The Seattle Foundation and Matias Valenzuela, Public Health-Seattle & King County, organized 20 tables of cross-sector leaders to look at how and where they work in King County and to identify opportunities to spur further work in the intersection of community development, health, and human services.

Gathered around large maps of King County, participants surfaced a range of opportunities, projects, and ideas. They talked about initiatives that are currently underway that could be built upon, as well as those that are in a conceptual stage. Among the highlights:

- Opportunities exist to build upon existing place-based development efforts in locations such as Yesler Terrace, Kent East Hill, Skyway, Renton, Global to Local Food Innovation District in SeaTac and Tukwila, the Lower Duwamish area, North Seattle-Meridian, Auburn area efforts, Southeast Seattle/Rainier Valley, White Center, and others.
- Several people asked for an inventory of existing initiatives and projects – some way to learn about who is working on what and make connections. “Create a resource portal down to the neighborhood level,” suggested one table, that helps residents see what tools are available for residents to work on creating healthy communities.
- Healthy food access and affordability—often with an employment nexus—was a theme at several tables. There was work taking place to enable the creation of food innovation district in SeaTac/Tukwila, a call for a goal to ensure all children have three healthy meals a day; work on policies related to farming and food policy; and a call to make it possible for ethnic groups to operate food concessions at professional games.
- Workforce opportunities were another theme: partner with students, colleges and universities to help foster the next generation of workers who will be trained in cross sector work; develop, finance, and take to scale the use of community health workers.
- Many tables touched on the importance of community engagement: think about the oral culture and traditions; make use of videos of community leaders; use community health workers to bridge cultural gaps; identify places with less strong networks and help them to build those networks. It was noted by several that the work still feels “top down” and more attention is needed to involve residents, and to intentionally reach out to partners that are outside one’s regular circle of contacts.
- Another cluster of ideas and comments centered on housing and health. Some talked about the return of investment that supportive housing with on-site health services is producing, and the opportunity to partner with Medicaid to sustain and provide more of this model. Others spoke about healthy housing policy and work on environmental conditions.
- Finally, advocacy, policy changes, and sources of financing were noted by many as critical in order for this type of work to move ahead. Local government policy work (such as comprehensive plan updates) was suggested as an area of action, as was advocacy with the state Medicaid program.
Action Oriented Commitments
“In the Intersection”

Over half the meeting attendees used feedback forms to submit action-oriented commitments that describe where they saw specific opportunities to move forward on cross-sector collaboration. Below is a sample of specific commitments from attendees:

- Build partnerships with housing organizations (from a Medicaid managed care plan).
- Maintain connection to Global to Local to further a food innovation district (from a city government).
- Serve as a voluntary advocate for playing more broadly at the intersections of human services & community development in the developing Food Innovation District in SeaTac/Tukwila.
- Deliver early stage entrepreneurship readiness training in poverty communities, including in food and health sectors.
- Advocate for involvement in the goal that all children have three healthy meals a day. Identify new partnerships that cross sectors to address social determinants and community benefit.
- Reach out to several of today’s participants for potential collaboration.
- Support development of sustainable funding for community health workers.
- Explore mechanisms to account for cost savings generated by prevention and re-invest in sustaining and expanding community health initiatives.
- Participate in discussions about finance-driven strategies to capture future economic value for present application.
- Work to grow partnership with Public Health that is focused on the Yesler neighborhood revitalization.
- Commit $50-100k predevelopment financing to a project in south King County that links affordable/equitable housing to healthier outcomes, including good transportation linkages, for residents. Want it to be in a community that visualizes “opportunities” for residents.
- Use the Sunset Area Community Revitalization area effort as a means to better address healthcare as part of community development.
- Share innovations and successful practices in serving very high needs, high-cost individuals who use public services. Combinations of supportive housing and behavioral health services can have significant, lasting, beneficial effects on individuals and communities in which they live.
- To continue to have cross-sector conversations about the overlap between transportation, housing and human services at the city level and south King County level with the purpose of integrating in the city's comprehensive plan.
- Engage and nurture individuals' leadership from low income communities of color to elevate their voices and take action. We are currently working on healthy food affordability/access and living wage green jobs.
- Will work on partnerships to integrate health and housing in Rainer Valley and Kent, where we have several hundred affordable apartments specifically, we hope to launch or sponsor community health workers in these south end local cities.
- Share lessons learned from New Holly, Rainer Vista and High Point. Build visible collaboration at Yesler Terrace.
- Conduct competitive grant making of approximately $1.5 million in 2014 to address health care access and outcome disparities in King County. (Pacific Hospital PDA).
- Engaging our neighborhoods to work on reaching out to all in their area regardless of race, financial status, age, gender, class. Everyone has a strength and we want to focus and channel. Also bring in youth and mentor new community leaders.
- Assist with ACA enrollment activities in the County.
- Provide cultural competency trainings to providers of people of East African heritage.
- Strive for innovation and equity in all the work I do.

“Think like an epidemiologist and act like an investor”
About the King County Health & Human Services Transformation Plan

VISION: By 2020, the people of King County will experience significant gains in health and well-being because our community worked collectively to make the shift from a costly, crisis-oriented response to health and social problems, to one that focuses on prevention, embraces recovery, and eliminates disparities.

The Transformation Plan ("Plan") charts a five-year course to a better performing health and human service system for the residents and communities of King County, Washington. At the community level, the Plan calls for improvement of community conditions and features because health and well-being are most deeply influenced by where people live, work, learn, and play. On a parallel path, at the individual/family level, the Plan calls for strategies designed to improve access to person-centered, integrated, culturally competent services when, where, and how people need them.

To help jumpstart the Plan’s implementation, the King County Council approved a 2014 catalyst fund of $500,000. In early 2014, the County will work with community advisers to develop guidelines for the use of the fund and how it will advance the work under the two early strategies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRANSFORMATION PLAN

Join the network of people and organizations who support the vision of the Transformation Plan. Write to HHSTransformation@kingcounty.gov to be added to the network and receive future updates.

You can also find a copy of the Plan and stay informed by visiting www.kingcounty.gov/exec/HHSTransformation

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