



Cowlitz County Local Forum Summary

January 5, 2016

The Cowlitz County Health and Human Services Department continues to build out their Office of Healthy Communities while focusing on three main priority areas related to improving community health; healthy starts, healthy habits, and economic and educational opportunities.

Michael O'Neill, the Health Communities Lead, provided a sample of the data the department collects regarding the progress of the community health priorities. The group reviewed some of the data collected related to the healthy starts priority area. Using this data, the Office of Healthy Communities can continue to track progress of programs designed to target these community health disparities and alter programs as needed.

The purpose, strengths, and value of continuing the local forum advisory board was discussed, including a discussion regarding the possibility of restructuring meetings. All members agreed that the value they receive from an external partner of the Cowlitz Health and Human Services Department is great and all members will continue their participation in some capacity. Employees of the Office of Healthy Communities shared the idea of using this local forum in an advisory capacity for the work their team is completing on the building of the new office. The advisory board would continue to play the role of sounding board for ideas, work plan development, and project implementation for the new office and staff.