



Meeting Minutes #11- Spokane Health Equity Task Force

Date: August 15, 2024

Time: 10 am PT

Location: Zoom

Present:

- Todd Holloway
- Jenni Jones
- Jim House
- Sarah Nuss
- Darlene
- Simone Ramel-McKay
- Aerius Franklin

Meeting Facilitators:

- Denise Grimm (Dee)
- Dawn Skaggs
- Robin Albrandt
- Allysa Rapadas

Executive Summary:

- Data collection is ongoing with 47 client surveys and 21 provider surveys completed. Key findings include communication barriers, lack of emergency preparedness information, and a disconnect between provider training and client experiences of discrimination. Environmental factors such as air pollution and extreme heat disproportionately affect areas with high populations of people with disabilities.
- Major gaps identified include lack of communication accommodations, difficulties in getting accessibility needs met during emergencies, and economic hardships for people with disabilities. Todd and SPEAKER_02 emphasized the importance of addressing intersectional marginalization, improving digital equity, and considering the spectrum of disabilities when planning services.
- Next steps include continuing survey collection, completing data analysis for the September meeting, exploring digital equity funding opportunities, and leveraging the "Nothing About Us Without Us" act. Dawn Skaggs plans to bring additional research tools and existing data from other jurisdictions to enhance the study.



Meeting Notes:

Meeting Introductions

- Robin Albrandt welcomed attendees and introduced the meeting.

Review of Data Collection Progress

- Data collection involves three main sources:
 - Quantitative data (census information and community health assessments)
 - Surveys (ongoing)
 - Input from Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on the ground
- Current survey completion status:
 - 47 completed client surveys
 - 21 completed provider/partner surveys
- Spokane task force has more client surveys than provider surveys, which is noted as positive
- Robin Albrandt emphasized the importance of continuing to share the survey with partners and friends to gather more information

Demographic Data Overview

- Focus on demographics related to equity, health, and disaster preparedness
- Key statistics presented:
 - Number of households without a vehicle
 - Percentage of population without religious affiliation (noted as very high nationally)
 - Hardship index (including poverty rates, household income, unemployment rates, homelessness)
 - Mental health indicators (e.g., 1 mental health provider for every 205 clients)
 - 33% of Spokane population considered obese
 - Food insecurity rates
 - Violent crime statistics
 - Mortality indicators (with unintentional injury as a notable third leading cause in Spokane)

Survey Results Summary

- Provider survey results:
 - Nearly 50% reported lack of communication accommodations as a major challenge
 - 70% of providers said they had taken implicit bias training
- Client survey results:
 - 72% reported people making assumptions about their disability or difficulty having their disability-related needs believed
 - Identified issues with getting accessibility needs met during emergencies

- Reported lack of information about where to go or what to expect in emergencies
- Disconnect noted between provider perceptions and client experiences, particularly regarding implicit bias and discrimination
- 5% of survey respondents identified as Native American, Alaskan, or Indigenous

Discussion of Gaps and Barriers

- Todd highlighted:
 - The importance of increasing client survey participation to amplify voices of people with disabilities
 - People with disabilities often feeling invisible in community discussions
 - Intersectional marginalization, particularly for LGBTQIA+ individuals with disabilities
 - Need for cultural competency and ongoing learning in addressing these issues

Communication and Accessibility Challenges

- Emphasized:
 - Communication access issues for deaf and hard of hearing individuals
 - Need for various options beyond just ASL, including captioning services and hearing systems
 - Importance of effective message dissemination and community preparedness
- Digital equity identified as a crucial area for improvement
- Importance of utilizing the "Nothing About Us Without Us" act in Washington State to ensure representation
- Todd noted challenges in reaching older populations who may not be comfortable with digital surveys or QR codes

Data Collection and Research Challenges

- Highlighted difficulties in categorizing disabilities:
 - Spectrum of disabilities makes it hard to pinpoint specific needs
 - Challenges in identifying how individuals self-identify (e.g., hard of hearing vs. deaf)
 - Importance of focusing on required resources rather than specific disability categories
- Dee Grimm noted variations in demographic information across different surveys
- Mentioned age as an additional factor contributing to disability-related needs
- Dawn Skaggs highlighted WID's expertise in disability-inclusive research:
 - Plans to bring in additional research tools and existing data from other jurisdictions
 - Potential to replicate qualitative data collection methods for Spokane region in Year 4

Environmental and Climate Factors

- Dawn Skaggs mentioned EPA climate justice information for Spokane:
 - Some large zones in Spokane have over 30% population of people with disabilities
 - These areas are in the 99th percentile for exposure to air pollution particulates
- Todd highlighted ongoing discussions about extreme heat and wildfire smoke:
 - Gaps in data collection and science regarding these issues
 - Changes in overnight cooling patterns affecting physical health
 - Ripple effects on social and health determinants

Housing and Economic Concerns

- Dee Grimm shared information from the National Low Income Housing Coalition:
 - 75% of extremely low income renter households have a severe cost burden
 - 22% of those severely cost-burdened are people with disabilities
- Economic hardship indicators mentioned in demographic data, including poverty rates and unemployment

Tribal Inclusion and Outreach

- Robin Albrandt reported:
 - Outreach efforts have been made to tribal communities
 - Many tribal members in Spokane are "urban," not living on reservations
 - 5% of survey respondents identified as Native American, Alaskan, or Indigenous
- SPEAKER_03 offered to reach out to tribal communities they're working with, though noted they may not be in Spokane
- Dawn Skaggs welcomed any outreach to tribal voices, whether on reservations or in urban settings

Next Steps and Action Items

- Continue gathering survey responses, particularly from clients, over the next couple of weeks
- Complete the data collection and analysis for the next meeting in September
- Review and incorporate task force input into the final report
- Explore opportunities related to digital equity funding and grants
- Consider ways to leverage the "Nothing About Us Without Us" act in Washington State
- Address the disconnect between provider training and client experiences, particularly regarding implicit bias and discrimination
- Todd to bring data on battery backup systems for people with medical equipment from research with the state of Colorado and the University of Colorado Denver
- Continue to think creatively about data sources, including environmental and housing information

[End of Meeting Minutes]