



LEARN WHAT PUBLIC HEALTH IS DOING TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF WASHINGTON'S COMMUNITIES

This document highlights the public health actions and activities across the state to implement the passage of E2SSB 5930 in 2007.

The Washington State Legislature invested \$20 million over two years to improve the public's health. State and local public health agencies are working together to vaccinate more children and prevent communicable and chronic disease. Specific performance measures for these areas were developed and are highlighted in the following pages. Data will be tracked every six months with a report to the legislature in November 2009.

■ PROTECT OUR CHILDREN FROM DISEASE

Vaccines are an effective way to prevent disease. Increasing vaccine coverage means that more people are protected from disease and the spread of disease is reduced. Public health agencies are working to increase vaccine coverage to keep our communities healthy. (See page 2 for more details).

■ LIMIT THE SPREAD OF DISEASE

Some disease, like measles or whooping cough, spread from person-to-person quickly and easily. Others, like *E. coli* or *Salmonella*, spread when people come in contact with disease-causing organisms. When these "communicable" diseases occur, it is important that public health officials are notified quickly so they can identify the sources of the disease and prevent its spread. These new funds improve the speed and consistency with which this happens so that disease outbreaks are stopped sooner and fewer people get sick. (See page 3 for more details).

■ DECREASE OBESITY AND CHRONIC DISEASE

Obesity is an unchecked epidemic in our state and a leading underlying cause of death. More than 60 percent of Washington residents are either overweight or obese. In 2006, 25 percent of Washington's 10th graders were overweight. Poor diet, lack of physical activity, and obesity lead to conditions like heart disease and diabetes. To slow the obesity epidemic, public health agencies across Washington are actively working with communities, schools, employers, childcare and community centers, and healthcare providers to help people make healthy choices in their daily lives. (See page 4 for more details).

The following pages highlight examples of the activities of local and state public health agencies are doing to improve health in Washington. Information on county activities is available online (www.doh.wa.gov/PHIP/5930PM/product.htm)

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN FROM DISEASE

Performance Measure #1 – Increase the uptake of new and under-used child and adolescent vaccines; specifically focusing improvement efforts and reporting on Varicella (chickenpox), Rotavirus, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), and pediatric influenza.

HOW WILL IMPROVEMENT BE MEASURED?

- A:** How many doses of vaccine are being ordered by healthcare providers in each county?
- B:** How many doses of vaccine have been administered and recorded in the statewide immunization registry, CHLD Profile?



State and local public health agencies across Washington are actively working to increase the number of children immunized against diseases like chickenpox, influenza, diarrheal disease, and human papillomavirus. Each local health agency identified effective strategies tailored to local communities and have partnered with healthcare providers, schools, child care centers, and community centers. Public health agencies are focusing on three common strategies. Examples include:

STRATEGY

Make it easier to get vaccinations

- Sponsor “Back-to-School” and mobile vaccination clinics
- Partner to provide onsite adolescent immunizations during sports physicals
- Collaborate with family planning and Planned Parenthood to reach adolescents
- Partner with schools to refer families requesting exemptions to local public health for education

STRATEGY

Give healthcare providers tools to improve immunization services

- Develop educational materials for healthcare providers to better address questions raised by parents
- Make it easier for providers to order and have appropriate vaccines
- Help healthcare providers use the statewide immunization registry CHLD Profile to support decisions about which vaccines to administer, for track children’s immunization history and send reminder and recall notices to parents

STRATEGY

Provide parents and communities information about vaccines

- Work with community partners and others to develop targeted media campaigns (radio, newspaper, etc.)
- Work with school nurses and others (like athletic directors) to promote immunizations
- Develop (bilingual) materials for parents, schools, and the community
- Distribute immunization information at community events, schools, childcare centers, and fairs

**VACCINES
EFFECTIVELY
PREVENT DISEASE**

Performance Measure #2 – Improve the timely, complete, effective and standardized identification and investigation of communicable disease.

How Will Improvement Be Measured?

- A:** How many cases were reported to the local health agency on time?
- B:** How many reported cases did the local health agency start investigating on time?
- C:** How many cases reported to the local health agency were investigated completely?

Throughout Washington, state and local public health agencies actively work to prevent and manage communicable disease outbreaks. Public health professionals are responding more quickly to each report, investigating more thoroughly, and evaluating the data more effectively to prevent future disease. Examples of other strategies being employed include:



STRATEGY

Improve public health communicable disease investigation programs in every county

- Update the investigation guidelines for each disease and train public health staff on timely and complete case investigations, record review and evaluation
- Analyze state and local data to determine effective community interventions to improve disease investigation and prevention
- Improve PHIMS, the statewide computer system, used to report and track disease

STRATEGY

Make it easier for healthcare providers and labs to do their part in disease reporting and investigation

- Provide easy to use information and training about disease reporting and guidelines
- Provide updates about disease investigations, trends, and data
- Implement PHRED, the automated disease reporting system, in more labs

STRATEGY

Focus efforts to reduce sexually transmitted disease

- Investigate and follow up on reported cases
- When treating people with a sexually transmitted disease, provide them with medication to give to their sexual partners to reduce the spread of disease
- Increase community awareness about prevention of sexually transmitted diseases through media campaigns

IMPROVED INVESTIGATIONS LIMIT THE SPREAD OF DISEASE

DECREASE OBESITY & CHRONIC DISEASE

Performance Measure #3 – Develop and implement effective community and healthcare system interventions to address obesity and its resulting burden of chronic disease. Interventions may target worksites, schools, communities, or primary medical care.

HOW WILL IMPROVEMENT BE MEASURED?

A: How many and what type of activities and interventions have been implemented by each local health agency to address obesity or chronic disease and associated risk factors in the community?

State and local health agencies across the state are applying promising research findings to reduce obesity in their communities. The strategies affect where we live, work and play; examples of each are listed below:

STRATEGY

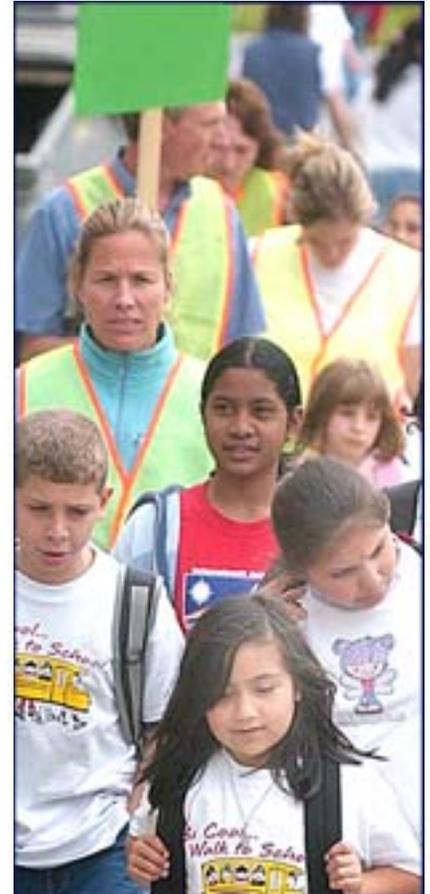
Change the system that makes us unhealthy (environmental and policy changes)

- Support community coalitions to develop obesity prevention plans and share best practices information about obesity with the community
- Partner with healthcare providers and community centers to offer classes including “Living Well with Diabetes”
- Work with employers to offer employees opportunities for physical activity and healthier food choices at work

STRATEGY

Partner with school districts and others to keep kids healthy

- Participate in school district coalitions to address obesity prevention and healthy habits
- Establish fee waivers for schools meeting nutrition policies (eliminating sugary soft drinks and adding salad bars)
- Implement “Safe Routes to Schools” and “Walking School Bus” programs



STRATEGY

Create healthy environments that support people in choosing healthy foods and getting moving

- Support farmers markets, community gardens and healthy menu choices
- Help ensure streets and trails are safe for walking and bicycling
- Conduct community classes on healthy cooking and diabetes

HEALTHY HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTS HELP DECREASE OBESITY AND CHRONIC DISEASE