

# Aging Well Whatcom Initiative

Friday, December 7, 2018

9:00-11:00 AM

At the Whatcom Educational Credit Union community room in Ferndale.

## MINUTES

### Attending:

Dr. Chao-ying Wu, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network  
Dr. Dave Lynch, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network (retired)  
Ryan Blackwell, Northwest Regional Council  
Carol Nicolay, Health Ministries Network  
Mary Carlson, Whatcom Council on Aging  
Mary Anderson, Whatcom Transportation Authority  
Pauline Smith, Executive Director, Skagit Adult Day Program  
Trisha Bannerman, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health  
Heidi Bugbee, Generations Early Learning & Family Center  
Janet Malley, Whatcom Transportation Authority  
Heather Flaherty, incoming executive director of Chuckanut Health Foundation  
Colleen Harper, Bellingham At Home  
Tonja Myers, Christian Health Care Center  
Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department

### Regrets:

Jeanne Brotherton, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Health Ministries Network (retired)  
Kristin Granstrand, Mercy Housing Northwest  
Marie Eaton, Palliative Care Institute, WWU  
Sue Sharpe, Chuckanut Health Foundation  
Rebecca Kirkland, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health  
Melinda Herrera, Rosewood Villa  
Jenny Weinstein, Opportunity Council  
Tammy Bennett, Whatcom YMCA

### What We Need is Here

*Geese appear high over us,  
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,  
as in love or sleep, holds  
them to their way, clear  
in the ancient faith: what we need  
is here. And we pray, not  
for new earth or heaven, but to be  
quiet in heart, and in eye,  
clear. What we need is here.*

*~Wendell Berry*

### Welcome and introductions

Dave welcomed the group and members introduced themselves.

### Review and approve minutes

Minutes from November 2, 2018 were approved as written.

### Aging Well Blueprint

#### 1) Framing

- Aging Well mission and guiding principles
- 8 Domains
- Takeaways from Gordon Walker's visit



## **PRIORITY IDENTIFICATION RESULTS:**

These items are as written by group members *[notes in blue italics are clarifications that were discussed, but not written by group members – i.e. Lara’s memory and interpretation = possible error!]*.

### **Advocacy and Policy**

- Embedding Healthy Aging ideals and priorities in government planning (zoning and resource allocations...) to create sustainable change.
- Strategic location of services – intergenerational (STOP isolating older adults institutionally).
- Massachusetts style age imperative *[integrate focus on aging into government planning]*.
- Maintain local control of the long-term care service delivery system (rather than managed care organizations).
- Pass all local road and transportation infrastructure development places through an “Aging Well” filter, to develop a more accessible community.

### **Health and Wellness**

- Creation of a statewide long-term care public option. LTC Trust Act. **\*\*A potential near-term win\*\***
- Food Rx – allows access to healthy food regardless of income *[health care providers prescribe]*.
- Dental care – affordable access to dental care.
- Establish church health centers to promote holistic health and treat age-related needs of seniors (see Memphis TN model) *[ACCESS to care is at the core of this item]*
- (Single payer) Medicaid for all

### **Mobility and Access, Transportation and Design**

- Transportation – to and from shopping, health care, social – regardless of location
- Transportation – decrease isolation, increase interaction
- Transportation increases for seniors and areas with high % of seniors
- Expanded, robust walkable neighborhoods in various larger communities/towns
- A transportation network not dependent on cars
- More transportation near/to rural areas where low income folks reside

### **Housing – alternate, affordable, intergenerational – the full spectrum**

- Support and enhance “Bellingham at Home” capabilities and expands area it serves to support ageing in place at home
- Alternate housing options
- Affordable housing for all ages: inclusive, attractive, integrated, accessible
- Affordable senior housing
- Affordable housing located near vital services
- More affordable housing with robust wrap around services
- Design lab – public and private – continuum housing
- Affordable safe housing
- Continuing Care Retirement Community

### **Intergenerational**

- Design lab – continuum community center *[mixed ages at a shared location]*
- Establish non-profit continuing care communities that provide health care, stimulation, transport to seniors

- Intergenerational living spaces/activities and opportunities
- Develop multi-generational housing, with ability to age in place
- Intergenerational gathering spaces
- Development of intergenerational, community-based places to “belong” (“church” for the non-churched)

### Information/navigation services (SEAS [*single entry access to services*])

- Develop website resource for “Aging Well” comprehensive information: housing resources, social services, etc.
- Info sharing/education – small group? Health/housing/sr issues
- Communication: repository of all services available in Whatcom Cty, outreach through EMS, health care providers, etc. to disseminate the information
- Navigators (a la the SEAS # for children) → make sure community members know who they can call
- SEAS for aging – housing, programs. ?WAHA?
- Clear, accessible comprehensive information on available services

### Cultural Shift

- Expand the horizon, look up, lengthen the design [*think of older adults beyond their sixties and into their eighties, nineties and older*]
- Cultural shift education...beginning at an early age and continuing through all ages
- Cultural mindshift/build community capacity in leveraging older adults’ assets/contributions
- Educational outreach to teach older adults to access existing tech to alleviate loneliness
- Determine essential touchpoints (Drs, lawyers) and find ways to engage youth and connect them to this
- Share findings from this group, continue to validate, use end of life “Blueprint” process as model; create planning tools for community partner alignment
- Share Aging Well initiative out **\*\*A potential near-term win\*\***
- Info/educational campaign – normalizing and celebrating aging (neutralize shame)
- Media campaign to highlight ageism in our culture

### Dementia Friendly

- Adult Day Care **\*\*A potential near-term win\*\***
- Support services for people with dementia and families

### Additional discussion:

- **Some things should be considered and included in ALL areas:**
  - Policy/advocacy
  - Strategic community planning [*community-level initiatives, programs and services*]
  - Equity
  - Individual agency/choice, person-centered
  - Overarching priority: increase connectedness
- **Make it clear that these are goals/future state/vision** [*not implying this describes our current community*]

**ACTION** → A Blueprint Subgroup will work on organizing today's discussion and fleshing out the blueprint. Trisha, Mary A., Colleen, Heather and Ying volunteered for this.

## Wrap up and next steps

**Group members took a few moments to reflect on Aging Well.**

**Words describing accomplishments in this first year:**

- Dedicated, loyal group
- "Aha:" it's not one age population
- The right people are at the table
- We all exist on a continuum
- Cross sectional collaboration done well
- Steadfast, keeping to plan
- "Aha:" historically we fall short by not planning for beyond about age 68
- Intelligent passion/impassioned intelligence
- Partnerships provide lens for planning around older adults
- Cultural shift to "whole community," not just older adults
- Trust
- About damn time 😊

**Words describing thoughts for next year and the future:**

- Optimistic
- Hopeful
- Solvable
- Organized ambition
- Enthusiastic
- Whatcom County just keeps getting better
- Aspiration to balance planning with action
- There will be guidance/a framework going forward
- Excited

Next meeting: Friday, January 4, 2019, 9-11 AM. The group expressed a preference for continuing to meet at a variety of partners' locations.

**ACTION** → Lara will send out a Doodle sign up for hosting meetings.