



Population Health Trust February Newsletter

Community Advisory Board to the Skagit County Board of Health

February 2025

The robins and tree frogs are singing their hearts out in the valley. That must mean that spring is right around the corner, right? I think we all know better than to be lured into a false spring, but we can still enjoy these mild, sunny days when they come our way.

While we wait for “true spring” to arrive, Trust members have been busily collecting and reviewing local data as part of a Community Health Assessment (CHA). For readers that are newer to the process, a CHA is a way to identify the health needs of our community. By systematically collecting and analyzing data on health status, local resources, and social determinants of health, the CHA helps the Trust make informed decisions on ways to improve wellness in Skagit. It also helps foster collaboration among community partners. Once completed, the CHA will serve as the foundation for strategic planning and the development of subsequent Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs).

A CHA is generally conducted every five years. Skagit’s last [CHA occurred during the pandemic \(2020-2021\)](#). It identified 7 key themes: equity, housing, access to care, behavioral health, child care, economic & fiscal security, and food security. For our current CHA, we are approaching data collection as a *refresh*, considering that so many of these themes are still relevant. We are reviewing, analyzing, and synthesizing assessments conducted by Trust and other community organizations such as:

- PeaceHealth’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
- Community Action’s 2024 Community Needs Assessment
- Skagit/Islands Head Start’s Community Assessment
- Skagit County Public Health’s Homeless and Housing Plan
- City/County Comprehensive Plans

In addition to this review, the PHT is utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data to better understand issues such as access to care and specific population needs. We have conducted a series of focus groups to better understand the barriers Spanish-speaking individuals experience when accessing care in the community. We are pairing that with a large data set from Skagit Regional Health to help identify both health issues in our community and the resources and referrals provided to them. We will be hosting a series of focus groups with youth-serving organizations to learn more about wellness challenges for youth. We also plan to engage with the community to gather input on factors that promote good health and identify areas that present health challenges.

Once all the data is collected, we will analyze, look for gaps, and collect additional data needed. From this, we can begin to identify our community’s most significant health challenges and develop strategic plans (CHIPs) to address them. Be sure to check out future newsletters to hear updates on the process.

Thank you for your partnership in keeping Skagit County healthy!



The Population Health Trust was founded in 2015 and is the Community Advisory Board to the Skagit County Board of Health. For more information, check out our [website](#).

Population Health Trust

Phone: (360) 416-1524