



Population Health Trust March Newsletter

Community Advisory Board to the Skagit County Board of Health

March 21, 2022

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Ensuring that people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) have more equitable access to what they need to thrive is an important aspect of population health. The 2020-2021 Community Health Assessment (CHA) recognized that individuals with I/DD were especially vulnerable to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic due to physical health vulnerabilities and their challenges with health equity. When looking at the theme areas that are the focus of the CHA and the upcoming COVID Recovery Plan, the health disparities experienced by individuals with I/DD becomes apparent.

Access to Care: Disabilities are caused by a wide range of conditions and often high-risk medical conditions are associated with disabilities. The CHA called out the damaging effects of barriers to medical care for those living with high-risk medical conditions.

Housing: A report was released this month titled "[Housing Needs for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Skagit County](#)." According to this report housing barriers faced by people with I/DD follow two broad trends, rising rents and aging caregivers. Due to these barriers, the report estimates that 80% of adults with I/DD face housing insecurity.

Economic Security: The CHA called out the economic and employment needs of those living with I/DD, stating that there is a need for "coordinated and targeted efforts on their behalf."

Community partners and Trust organizations are working hard to make Skagit County more inclusive for those living with disabilities. Whether it be through the creation of employment opportunities, educational access, increasing housing resources, improving birth to three interventions, and much more. The COVID Recovery Plan being released soon has specific strategies that aim to improve the lives of individuals with I/DD and all of us!

Here are some resources and information for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month:

Remember that using person-first language is always important when speaking to and about people with I/DD. The CDC has a good guide for this: [communicating-with-people.pdf \(cdc.gov\)](#).

Here are some local programs helping our neighbors with I/DD:

[Skagit County DD Program](#)

[Parent2Parent](#)

[SPARC](#)

[Chinook Enterprises](#)

[Sherwood](#)

[Washington Vocational Services](#)

Events:

[Transitions + Resource Fair](#)



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