



**DATE:** September 9, 2015

**TO:** Members of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities

**FROM:** Emma Medicine White Crow, Chair

**SUBJECT: UPDATE—PROMOTING EQUITY IN STATE GOVERNMENT**

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**Background and Summary:**

Statute requires that the Council “conduct public hearings, inquiries, studies, or other forms of information gathering to understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health disparities” (RCW 43.20.275(2)). Over the years, the Council held forums to obtain input into what the state is doing well and how it can improve in efforts to reduce disparities. It has received briefings on state and local health equity and social justice efforts and tools. In addition, the Council adopted the state system as a specific priority and included recommendations to improve access to state services for people with limited English proficiency in our June 2014 Update.

More recently, through our partnership with the Governor's Healthiest Next Generation Initiative, the Council included guidance for state agencies, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature to promote equity in state government policy and program decisions in our June 2015 Update. The guidance focused on sample language that could be tailored and included in state policies, plans, programs, budgets, rules, grants, contracts, and requests for proposals to ensure state resources are used equitably.

While policy language plays an important role in promoting equity, achieving equity in state government requires a more comprehensive framework. During this agenda item, staff will provide an update on the Council's Promoting Equity in State Government project. Council members will have an opportunity to share input into the future direction of this work.

**Recommended Council Action:**

None at this time.