



DATE: May 13, 2015

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

FROM: Emma Medicine White Crow, Chair

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR PROMOTING EQUITY IN STATE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Background and Summary:

One of the Council's statutory responsibilities under RCW 43.20.275(2) is to "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." Over the years, we have sought public comment on what the state is doing well and how it can improve in its efforts to reduce health disparities. In addition, we have received numerous briefings on state and local activities and initiatives related to health equity and social justice, including briefings on tools developed to assist agencies to be intentional in promoting equity. The Council even decided to focus on the state system as one of its priorities and included recommendations to enhance access to state services and information for people with limited English proficiency.

Recently, through our partnership with the Governor's Healthiest Next Generation initiative, the Council was given the opportunity to develop a set of guidance that state agencies, the Governor's office, and the Legislature can use to promote equity in state government policy and program decisions. This guidance will be included in the Healthiest Next Generation final report to the Governor and Legislature as well as our next update report.

Today I have asked Council staff to provide a briefing on the process used to create the guidance as well as the specific considerations that state program staff, policy makers, and other decision makers should use in an effort to ensure that state government actions promote equity and work to redress health disparities.

Recommended Council Action:

After reviewing the draft *Guidance for Promoting Equity in State Policy and Program Development*, the Council may choose to consider, amend if necessary, and adopt the following motion:

Motion: The Council approves in concept the draft text of the Guidance for Promoting Equity in State Policy and Program Development as submitted on May 13, 2015, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final version for inclusion in the Council's June 2015 Update Report.