

## MEETING NOTES

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021  
Remote Zoom Call

Partners: Aaron Flaster (UW / Community Collaborative), Aaron Morrow (Community Advocate), April Clements (Seattle Cancer Care Alliance), Belina Van (Catholic Community Services), Dorene Cornwell (Community Advocate), Kim Pearson (PSRC), Jean Kim (PSRC) Jon Morrison Winters (Aging and Disability Services), Judy Brown (UW Medicine Northwest), Lisa Hirohata (Kaiser Permanente), Mark Smutny (Sound Generations), Marlee Fischer (EMS), Michelle Welker (Seattle Children's), Mike Bedlion (MV Transportation), Sonia Morales (Molina Healthcare)

Staff Support: Cassidy Giampetro, Dean Sydnor, and Staci Sahoo

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## WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting began at 9:35am. All attendees provided introductions and were invited to share what they are doing or planning to do to honor Black History Month.

- Aaron Flaster shared about supporting an effort to benefit Fred Hampton's estate. [The Community Ready Corps Allies and Accomplices](#) are hosting a conversation with Black leaders on Fred Hampton's legacy and the struggle for Black self-determination as a fundraising effort in solidarity with efforts to [Save the Hampton House](#). Contribute what you can and [join the event](#) on February 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Belina Van shared a link in the chat for website [Intentionalist](#), which offers a directory, guides, events, and resources that help users find and support local and diverse communities.
- Kim Pearson shared that she just joined the mailing list for a local chapter of the [Showing Up for Racial Justice organization](#) and is excited to see what events and resources the group will offer.
- Mark Smutny informed the group on his own endeavors to progress conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion, including having a conversation with a DEI-focused app called [Translator](#) which is piloting a "Walk of Privilege" feature that helps people and workplaces better understand their relative privilege.
- Other attendees shared about putting special emphasis on Black history this month within book clubs they participate in (a reoccurring intent to read [How to Be Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi this month), watching relevant documentaries, and discussing topics of racial justice with their families.

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## DEBRIEF AND DISCUSSION: VACCINE TRANSPORTATION

Cassidy reviewed the subject of transportation to vaccination sites with the Committee, including reviewing situational awareness of new large-scale vaccination sites, reviewing what providers are offering to transport clients with appointments to vaccine sites, and then sharing the current obstacles that have been noted. View the [meeting slides](#) for more information on this presentation.

During the presentation, Marlee Fischer clarified that in order to receive a vaccine at the Auburn and Kent sites, you must be a South King County resident in addition to the other criteria of being either 75+ years old, a caregiver taking care of someone who is 50 or older who cannot live independently, or being 50+ years old and over when unable to live independently or living and caring for kin.

Mike Bedlion also confirmed when discussing what services can assist people that Access is transporting older adults and people with disabilities who are not currently ADA eligible to vaccination sites. They are considering possibilities of expanding these services based on the eventual expansion of vaccination sites.

Mark Smutny of Sound Generations shared that his organization is gearing up to accommodate transportation to more sites as they open, but it is taking some time to get to work up to that level.

An attendee asked if there is a centralized resource that lists providers willing to support transportation to vaccine sites. [Find A Ride](#) has been newly updated and will serve this purpose, with a COVID-19 specific resources page being launched shortly.

After this presentation, Staci Sahoo facilitated a discussion with the Committee on unmet transportation needs related to vaccine access. She shared about the continuing efforts of the King County COVID Vaccine Mobility Taskforce, an intentional group convening the address transportation variables related to vaccination. The following conversation ensued:

- Marlee Fischer shared that Crisis Connections is hosting a COVID-19 Assistance Hotline to help older adults book vaccine appointments over the phone. She wondered if the hotline can help connect callers to transportation options.
- Kim Pearson asked what coordination has been like with the state and if they have considered compiling resources on how to assist individuals with transportation resources.
  - Staci shared that the Department of Health has reached out about Find A Ride and that a conversation is on the books to discuss this further.
- In response to [an article](#) shared in the chat about older adults without support systems being left out of vaccination efforts, Marlee Fischer shared that Mobile Integrated Healthcare providers have experienced similar concerns. She said that language barriers are compounded by technology barriers for Low-English Proficiency populations, especially with how confusing the Phase Finder resources are. Emergency Medical Services have been using taxi vouchers during COVID while provider capacity has been more limited and understanding available transportation options is more difficult for end-users.
- Mark Smutny shared that Hyde Shuttle is limited in what they can provide due to capacity constraints, as they currently don't have funding to install plexiglass in vehicles which would double the riders they could transport. He also stated that 85% of current operations happens during the 10am – 2pm hours for their meal program delivery, so capacity is constrained during these times and they want to continue serving this need. Another issue is lack of clarity on being able to shift funding to support vaccination transportation. All of this relates to being able to reallocate existing resources.
  - Mike Bedlion discussed that meetings are ongoing about the possibility of moving meal delivery to dinner hours to free up capacity during the 10am – 2pm time.
  - Jon Morrison Winters encouraged Mark and Mike to reach out to him about switching meal delivery hours if it will allow Access and Hyde Shuttles to have more capacity to respond to vaccine transportation. He does not want people to be turned away during the 10am – 2pm hours when requesting transportation to vaccination appointments because services are at capacity due to food delivery. He also stated that there could be valuable lessons learned from groups that sought to address transportation shifts to accommodate food delivery as they have managed similar issues.

- Mark notes that Hyde Shuttle is able to meet demand currently, but this may not be the case as new sites continue to open.
- Mike Bedlion affirmed Access’s commitment to serving those who need transportation to vaccine appointments while also sustaining normal ridership and their Transportation for Pandemic Response program to transport COVID-19 positive riders.
- Belina Van noted that Catholic Community Services is accommodating requests nicely as things start to slowly ramp up, with demand for vaccines still not matching supply, which means transportation requests are limited by this factor.
- Kim Pearson asked if there are any groups in Pierce or Snohomish Counties doing work similar to the King County COVID-19 Vaccine Mobility Taskforce.
  - Dean Syndor shared that RARET is not aware of any but is convening partners from Pierce and Snohomish Counties on a biweekly basis to gauge these needs. If a group like this exists in either country, RARET is not involved which therefore signals a gap in transportation considerations.
- Marlee Fischer affirmed Public Health’s strategy of sharing information through existing community leaders and channels being used by BIPOC communities. She would like to see work to share transportation resources shared through these pathways.

After the discussion, the group talked about what’s next for the vaccine transportation conversation. Staci shared that the King County COVID-19 Vaccine Mobility Taskforce is developing an informational memo to compile and document transportation-related needs at vaccine site. The goal will be to develop this resource as advocacy to inform other agencies about the transportation considerations they should be accounting for. Staci asked the group what needs they would like to see included in this memo, to which the group offered:

- Suggestion that sites develop pick-up locations where walk-up clients can sit after their appointment to be picked up by a provider, since they often have to wait for at least half a hour after their appointment to be picked up at times.
- Suggestion to better understand the number of people eligible for the vaccine with the number of people who do not have their own transportation or who must be served by mobile clinics because they lack transportation.
- Suggestion to have a list of resources on sites that list options for riders when a return ride is missed, so riders are not left stranded.

If you are interested in joining the King County COVID-19 Vaccine Mobility Taskforce or otherwise discussing transportation to vaccination sites, contact Staci Sahoo at [SSahoo@hopelink.org](mailto:SSahoo@hopelink.org).

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## ROUNDTABLE SHARING

Attendees went around and shared updates and announcements from their organizations.

- Cassidy reminded people of the upcoming King County Mobility Coalition meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup>, where the conversation around transportation to vaccines will continue. She also mentioned the discussion on mobility for essential workers happening at the Access to Work and School Roundtable meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Kim Pearson of the Puget Sound Regional Council reminded attendees of the PSRC’s [Inventory of Services Survey](#) that seeks to gain a variety of information from agencies operating services, mobility management, and beyond. The information collected in the survey will illuminate what services exist in the community, what the goals of existing services are, how COVID has impacted service, and more. The information will also help in updating Find A Ride. The survey is open until February 19<sup>th</sup>.

- Jean Kim of the PSRC encouraged attendees to attend and share out at the next Puget Sound Regional Council's Special Needs Transportation Committee meeting, which is happening on February 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:30am to 11:30am. Interested people can get connected about the meeting by contacting Jean Kim at [jkim@psrc.org](mailto:jkim@psrc.org).

During roundtable sharing, Mark Smutny expressed that he hopes Hopelink can participate in legislative advocacy to secure funding for a One-Call One-Click. He shared how important he sees this resource in times like these when coordination is especially important for the end-user. He would like to see the CEOs of important organizations like Hopelink take a more active role in pleading the case for funding.

- In response, Dean Syndor of RARET shared about Transportation Choices Coalition's WA Transit Advocates COVID Response call that more directly offers avenues for political advocacy.

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#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Mark Smutny and Mike Bedlion to connect with Jon Morrison Winters about shifting meal delivery responsibilities beyond 10am – 2pm time frame.
- Attendees interested in the King County COVID-19 Vaccine Mobility Taskforce can contact Staci Sahoo at [SSahoo@hopelink.org](mailto:SSahoo@hopelink.org) to get involved.

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#### **NEXT MEETING**

April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 9:30am to 11am, Zoom

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#### **ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE STAFF SUPPORT**

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