

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, December 17th, 2019

10:00am – 12:00pm

Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management

Participants: Alex Hatcher (Center for Independence North) Ann Kennedy (Paratransit), Blake Guyen (Rooted in Rights), Bree Boyce (Hopelink), Camille Heatherly (Hopelink), Chris Bekkouri (Bethany Skilled Nursing), Christy Grant (Snohomish County Human Services), Deborah Witmer (City of Seattle), Ellen Montanana (City of Bellevue), Ivan Tudela (Pierce County DEM), Jeremy Trenhaile (King County Metro), Jim House (CIEP), Lanai Tua (First Transit), Lisa Hull (North Sound 211), Major Chauncey Hodge (Defense Coordination), Marianna Hanefeld (SNOTRAC), Mike Ryan (SHS Zone 1), Nick Solari (Seattle-King County Public Health), Nicole Johnson (Pierce County DEM), Randy Fay (Snohomish County DEM), Sara Sisco (Hopelink), Todd Holloway (Center for Independence South)

Staff Support: Melissa Brown Rotholtz

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting began at 10:00am. Pierce County DEM staff provided emergency instructions.

UPDATE: STEERING COMMITTEE

Melissa Brown Rotholtz, Hopelink/RARET

Melissa shared that the RARET workgroup has been transitioning towards a steering committee model to better reflect the regional distribution and diverse perspective of RARET workgroup stakeholders. A benefit of this transition is that bimonthly workgroup meetings will have more space and time for information sharing and project updates, rather than strategic conversations.

Steering Committee Role

- Provide leadership to the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET).
- Make strategic decisions regarding the direction and prioritization of the RARET Action Plan.
- Ensure accountability to RARET Action Plan projects and grant deliverables.
- Review and approve project schedules, scope, and goals.
- Guide the development of RARET bimonthly meeting agendas.

In November, RARET staff support sought nominations from workgroup members to serve on the Steering Committee. Workgroup members then voted on the proposed nominations, choosing to 'confirm,' 'abstain,' or write-in comments/alternate preferences.

The nominations and confirmations are below for the following affiliations:

- King County: VACANT
- Pierce County: **Ivan Tudela**, Pierce County DEM

- Snohomish County: **Randy Fay**, Snohomish County DEM
- Emergency management: **Mike Ryan**, King County Zone One Coordinator
- Transit Agency: **Jeremy Trenhaile/Anne-Marie Jehle (alternate)**, King County Metro Accessible Services
- Transportation Provider: **Tammy Mason**, Hopelink Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- Health and Human Services: **Rebecca Lis/Susan Pelaez (alternate)**, Northwest Healthcare Response Network
- End users/community advocates: **Aaron Morrow**, Community Advocate

Melissa shared the next steps for the steering committee and requested any comments or feedback from workgroup members.

1. RARET staff will seek replacement for King County affiliate position
2. Steering Committee will host first launch meeting in early January
3. Steering Committee will review proposed 2020 RARET workplan
4. Steering Committee will report out at bimonthly meetings regarding strategic decisions

Discussion

- Deborah Witmer noted that she did not self-nominate but did receive a request to represent the King County affiliation. Deborah expressed that she does not have a robust network of connections throughout King County that would facilitate adequate distribution of information about Steering Committee decisions.
- Deborah also noted that Mass Care services is not represented on the current Steering Committee affiliation list.
- Deborah asked if the Cities of Seattle or Bellevue need specific representation given their affiliation with the Urban Area Securities Initiative (UASI) funding, which led RARET previously.
- Randy Fay added that the core UASI group has shifted, with new staff and vacancies, and as of the recent funding cycle, only three of the original five projects received funding. Currently, there is more uncertainty regarding UASI representation on the RARET steering committee.
- Deborah asked how the group felt if the King County representative was from the City of Seattle. There were no objections.
- Marianna Hanefeld expressed that the agencies represented on the Steering Committee are too King County-centric. She wants the Steering Committee to reflect a regional perspective.
- Melissa asked if workgroup members would be interested in proposing alternate affiliations (e.g. adding Mass Care, removing King County-specific representation if the Committee already skews towards King County). There was some interest in these proposed changes.
- Deborah advocated to separate 'health' and 'human services' and add a 'mass care' affiliation. Deborah also nominated Christy Grant (Snohomish County Human Services) for the mass care role. Nick Solari supported the idea to separate health and human services.
- Randy thanked Mike for his leadership with the RARET workgroup as a co-chair. Mike will be continuing with the Steering Committee, representing emergency management.

PROJECT UPDATE: ADVERSE WEATHER DRIVING RESOURCES FOR TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Melissa Brown Rotholtz, RARET/Hopelink

Melissa updated meeting participants on the recent RARET project to create a centralized online platform to equip regional transportation providers and/or drivers with tools that will increase driver availability during adverse weather. This webpage will be hosted on the current RARET website, www.kcmobility.org/raret.

The goal of the project is to increase the number of drivers available to assist with transportation in adverse weather events. Following the February 2019 snow event, surveyed transportation providers reported a 51% decrease in available drivers.

RARET staff requested adverse weather driver training resources from local transportation providers and compiled a series of topics and materials to display on the webpage. Melissa distributed the drafted content packet to meeting participants.

Current topics include:

- Preparing your vehicle for inclement weather
- Winter Tires, Traction Tires, and Snow Chains
- Driving in Inclement Weather
- Driver and Passenger Safety
- Situational Awareness
- Additional Resources
- Request a training
- Submit feedback

Currently, RARET staff has been in the process of working with our web developer to launch the website. When available, it will be distributed to RARET partners for review and distribution.

Discussion:

- Consider multilingual needs of target audience. If translation is not an option currently, ensure that the language used is simplified for limited-English speakers.
 - Deborah suggested prioritizing multilingual information to the top of the page, with Take Winter by Storm translated resources.
- Still need to identify promotion avenues.
 - Jim, Deborah, and Marianna expressed interest in promoting the webpage to their networks.

If RARET workgroup members have further suggestions for content additions or layout edits, please contact Melissa Brown Rotholtz at MBrown@Hopelink.org or 425-943-6730.

KING COUNTY WINTER WEATHER MEDICAL TRANSPORT PROCEDURES UPDATE

Nick Solari, Seattle-King County Public Health

Nick Solari from Seattle-King County Public Health presented on the King County Winter Weather Medical Transportation Procedures, which were recently finalized. In October 2019, Robin Pfohman presented on the update process, which was initiated following its first implementation for the February 2019 Snow Event. Seattle-King County held multiple forums with key stakeholders to update the medical transportation procedures.

Nick shared the goals and scope of the procedure revision process:

1. The procedures apply to King County operations.
2. The procedures apply to provider referrals for patient transportation.
3. Healthcare staff transport and BLS/ALS transport is not currently addressed by the plan.

This process also highlighted the need for an activation of a Winter Weather Mobility Taskforce, which would:

- Manage provider requests for critical medical appointment transportation
- Monitor ongoing critical medical appointment transportation efforts of each Task Force agency
- Maintain a current list of locations and contact information of participating agencies and personnel

Nick shared the previous and updated flow chart, which outlined the process for triaging and fulfilling transportation requests from medical providers. Previously, an individual requesting transportation to a medical appointment could be connected to this ride request line through 2-1-1, EOC/jurisdiction hotline, or a public safety answering point (e.g. 911).

In the updated procedures, healthcare providers and medical care triage agencies will be the only entities that can request transportation on behalf of a client. These providers must verify the following criteria:

- Appointment cannot be delayed or rescheduled without putting individual at acute risk
- Transport to/from locations within King County
- Individual cannot access everyday transportation services; no personal transportation options
- No form of medical care needed during transport
- Individual can meet dispatched vehicle without driver assistance
- Medicaid eligibility (determines end point of referral)

Medical providers will collect:

- Name and contact information of staff making the referral
- Name and contact information of the individual being transported
- Address for pick up and drop off locations
- Time and date of the medical appointment
- Estimated duration of the medical appointment
- Medical equipment or devices to be transported with individual

When trip requests are screened for Medicaid eligibility, medical providers will determine if the request will be directed to Hopelink's non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) program (for Medicaid-billable appointments) or to King County Metro Access Paratransit, which may be able to accommodate for critical medical transportation needs in a winter weather event. This response capability is still under discussion at King County Metro.

A gap identified by Public Health was that when someone calls 911, 2-1-1, or public safety answering points, they will not be directed to Hopelink or Access to fulfill the trip but will instead have their trip fulfilled by a private ambulance service. Medical providers should screen and submit trip requests through the proposed procedures to avoid misuse of ambulance services.

Discussion

- Was end user feedback incorporated into the feedback process?
 - Patient feedback was not collected in the update process.
- What if Access or Hopelink does not have adequate transportation resources to fulfill trips?
 - King County may seek transportation resources from the EOC or RARET. If no transportation is available, 911 may be escalation point.
- How will these new procedures be communicated?
 - Seattle-King County Public Health, in partnership with the Northwest Healthcare Response Network, will distribute information to all medical providers in King County to educate their staff on the new procedures.
- What should human service providers do if an someone calls with a medical transportation request?
 - For safety purposes, an unqualified individual should not decide whether an individual's medical transportation request is 'critical' or 'life-sustaining' or offer health advice or information.
- How many people does Seattle-King County Public Health anticipate may use this service?
 - There is currently no data available that would predict how many people would use the service. In February 2019, 6 rides were coordinated for individuals upon request of their medical providers; however, that limited number could be due to a variety of factors, including limited agency knowledge of the service.
- Will these procedures be expanded to include staff transportation?
 - It is unclear if this will be a capability given limited resources and operating capacity of existing options. Agencies with staffing concerns should engage in continuity of operations planning (COOP) to identify agency-specific plans to transport critical staff.

Nick acknowledged that while these procedures are specific to King County operations, they can serve as a model or a launch point in which Snohomish and Pierce county can modify to their systems and needs. Several partners expressed interest in modifying the procedures for regional response capabilities.

For more information about the King County Winter Weather Critical Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures, please contact Nick Solari at Nicholas.Solari@kingcounty.gov.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

Melissa Brown Rotholtz, RARET/Hopelink

Melissa expressed that the workgroup should take the time to celebrate our achievements and reflect on the 2019. Melissa distributed handouts with a list of 2019 achievements, sharing some of the highlights:

- Launched monthly workgroup newsletter;
- Participated in February 2019 Snow Response;
- Hosted Regional Emergency Transportation Coordination Workshop in June 2019; and
- Partnered with University of Washington students to prototype a regional, centralized road conditions database.

Melissa thanked the RARET workgroup partners for their dedication and commitment to the workgroup.

ACTION ITEMS

- Melissa will schedule first Steering Committee meeting in early/mid-January.
- Jim House, Deborah Witmer, Marianna Hanefeld, and other RARET members will distribute the RARET Adverse Weather Driving Resource page to their networks when available.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, January 22nd, 10:00am – 12:00pm
Bellevue Hopelink (14812 Main St, Bellevue, WA 98007)

REGIONAL ALLIANCE FOR RESILIENT AND EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION CONTACT

Staci Haber, interim
SHaber@hopelink.org
(425) 943-6769

Melissa Brown Rotholtz, staff support
mbrown@hopelink.org
(425) 943-6730