

# Community Paramedics:

An Opportunity to Support Patients After Clinic  
Visits



Abigail Ahyong, MD (PGY-2), she/her  
Swedish Cherry Hill Family Medicine Residency  
Port Angeles Rural Training Program





No Disclosures



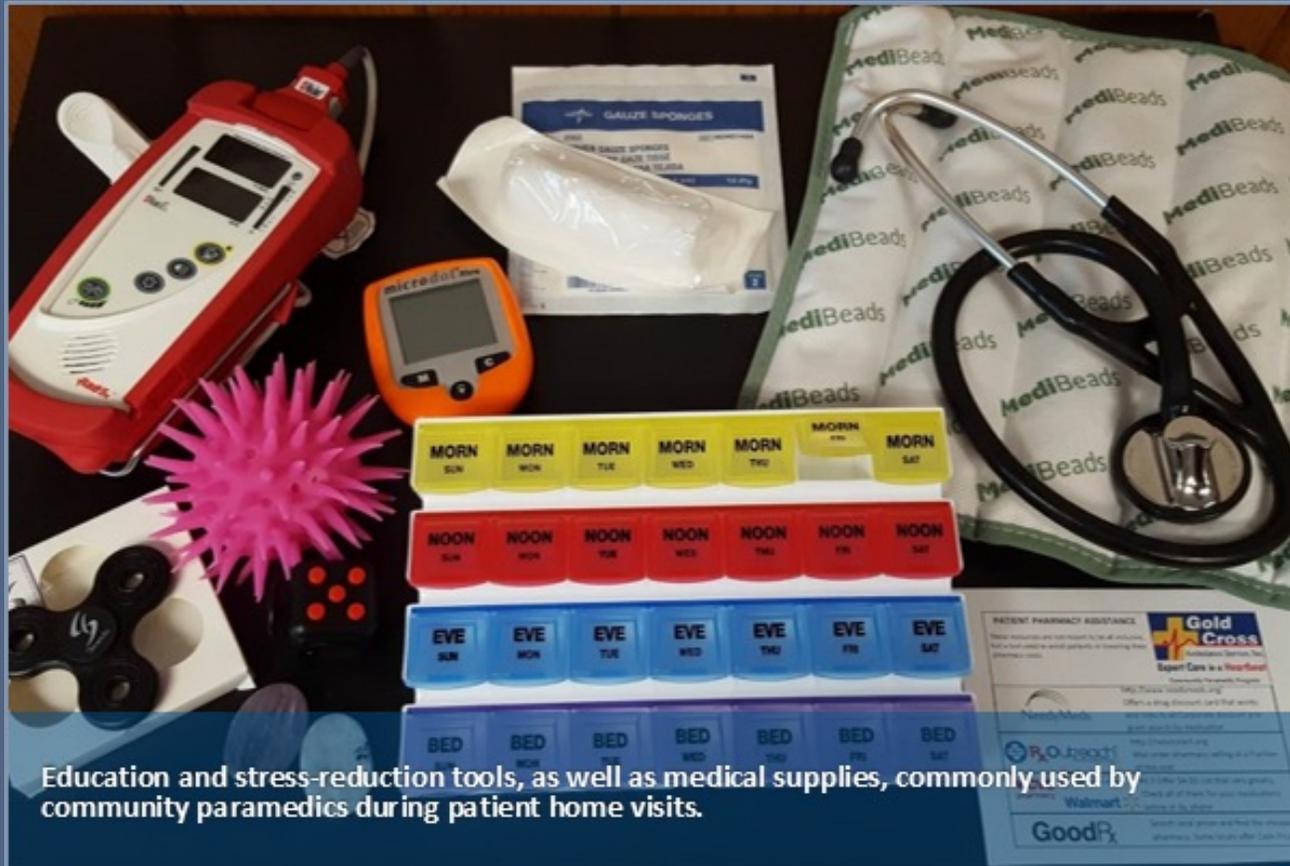
# Land Recognition

I acknowledge that we are on the stolen lands and aboriginal territories of the Salish, Kootenai, and Kalispel people.

This area was also frequented by other tribes including the Niitsitapi (Blackfeet), Newe (Shoshone), Apsáalooke (Crow), and Ka'l gwu (Kiowa).

I honor the original stewards of this land and their descendants, many of whom continue to live, work, teach, create and learn in this community. I am committed to showing gratitude for the land and its Indigenous peoples by respecting and remembering this in our thoughts and actions.

# Objectives



Education and stress-reduction tools, as well as medical supplies, commonly used by community paramedics during patient home visits.

- Concept of Community Paramedics
- Community Paramedic Services
- Community Benefits
- Medical Education
- Implementation & Community Organizing

# Community Paramedicine

## 2 Principal Models:

### Primary healthcare model

“Focuses on providing services to help prevent hospital readmissions, including post-discharge care, monitoring chronic illness, and targeting specific high-risk patients.”

### Community coordination model

“Connect patients to a primary care physician and other social and medical services.”

# Community Connections

- Providing and connecting patients to primary care services
- Completing post-hospital follow-up care
- Integrating with local public health agencies, home health agencies, health systems, and other providers
- Providing education and health promotion programs
- Providing services not available elsewhere in the community





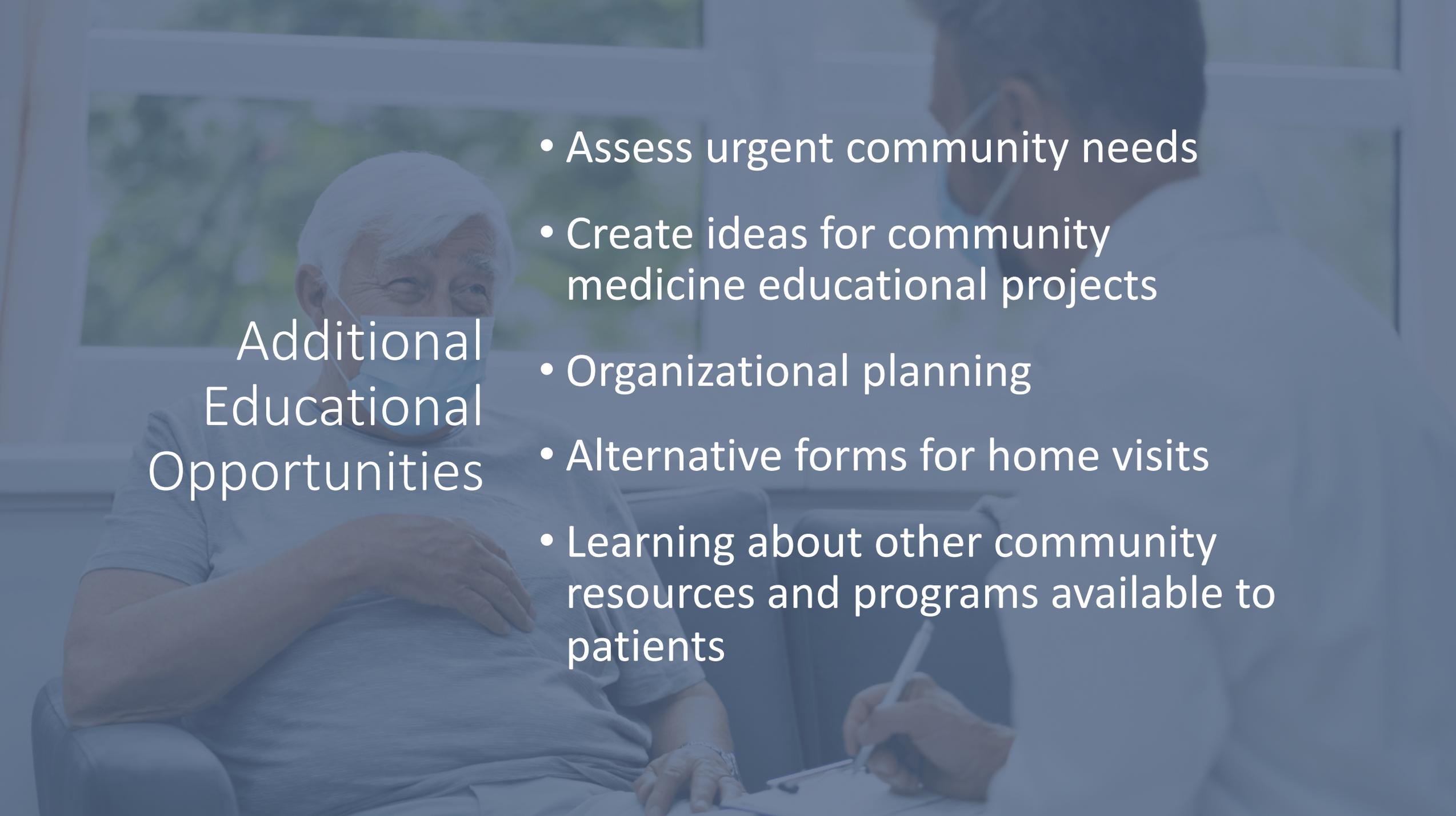
# Services

- Blood Draws
- Medication Administration & Reconciliation
- Blood Pressure Monitoring
- Chronic Disease Management
- Immunizations
- Oxygen Saturation Checks
- Weight Monitoring (CHF)
- Wound Care
- Referrals
- Resource Management

What training benefits can paramedics and residents gain from community paramedics programs?

# Community Paramedics & Resident Training

- Understanding health and social needs of community members, especially vulnerable populations
- Follow-up patient care, condition & coordination
- Point-of-care procedural training
- Medication and health education



## Additional Educational Opportunities

- Assess urgent community needs
- Create ideas for community medicine educational projects
- Organizational planning
- Alternative forms for home visits
- Learning about other community resources and programs available to patients

# Implementing Community Paramedics

## Organizing Cycle

Relational  
Meetings &  
Listening/



Reflection

Google

community health needs assessment \_\_\_\_\_



Evaluation



Action

# Clallam County



# 2019

# Community Needs Assessment

# 2022

## Areas of Opportunity Identified Through This Assessment

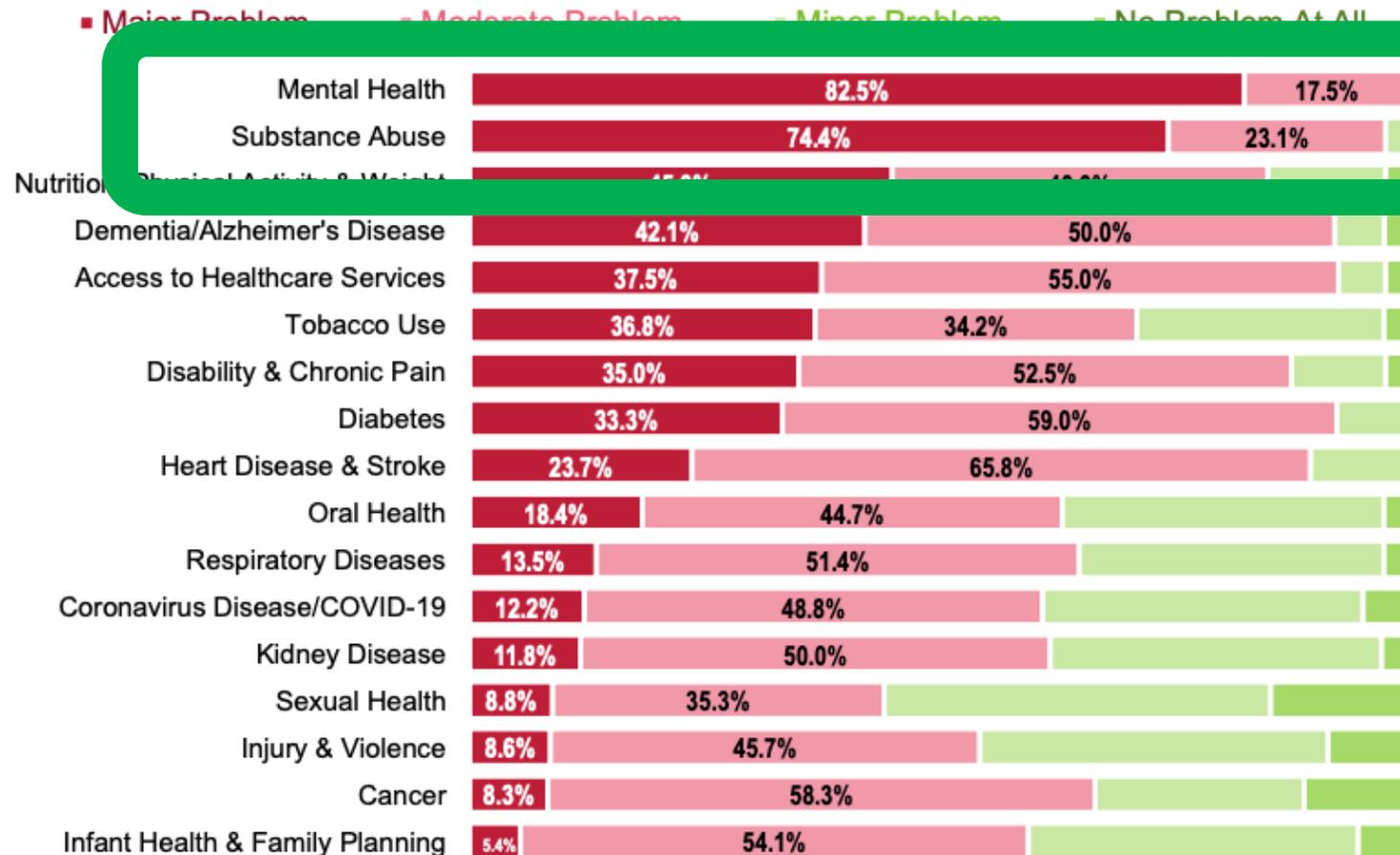
<b>Access to Healthcare Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of Health Insurance (Adults &amp; Children)</li> </ul>
<b>Diabetes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diabetes Prevalence</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Diabetes ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Heart Disease &amp; Stroke</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading Cause of Death</li> </ul>
<b>Infant Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infant Deaths</li> </ul>
<b>Injury &amp; Violence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unintentional Injury Deaths</li> <li>Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicide Deaths</li> <li>Mental Health Provider Ratio</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Mental health ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition, Physical Activity &amp; Weight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Food Access</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Nutrition, physical activity, and weight ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Oral Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor Dental Health</li> </ul>
<b>Potentially Disabling Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability Prevalence</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Dementias/Alzheimer's disease ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Key Informants: Substance abuse ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Tobacco Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cigarette Smoking Prevalence</li> </ul>

## AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFIED THROUGH THIS ASSESSMENT

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to Access (esp. Other Clallam County)</li> <li>Inconvenient Office Hours (esp. Greater Port Angeles)</li> <li>Routine Medical Care (Adults)</li> <li>Emergency Room Utilization (esp. Other Clallam County)</li> <li>Ratings of Local Health Care</li> </ul>
CANCER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading Cause of Death (All Cancers)</li> <li>Lung Cancer Deaths</li> </ul>
DIABETES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diabetes Prevalence</li> </ul>
HEART DISEASE & STROKE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading Cause of Death</li> <li>Heart Disease Prevalence</li> <li>High Blood Pressure (esp. Greater Sequim)</li> </ul>
INFANT HEALTH & FAMILY PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infant Deaths</li> <li>Teen Births</li> </ul>
INJURY & VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unintentional Injury Deaths               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including Motor Vehicle Crashes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
MENTAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicide Deaths</li> <li>Diagnosed Depression (esp. Greater Port Angeles)</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Mental health ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
NUTRITION, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & WEIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Food Access</li> <li>Access to Recreation/Fitness Facilities</li> <li><i>Key Informants: Nutrition, physical activity, and weight ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>
POTENTIALLY DISABLING CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability Prevalence</li> </ul>
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Key Informants: Substance abuse ranked as a top concern.</i></li> </ul>

# Community Needs Assessment

## Key Informants: Relative Position of Health Topics as Problems in the Community



# Organizing Cycle



**Cur**  
Who &  
advan  
What  
Who t

**Disruption**  
Who and What is/c

he

pt

# Evaluation

- Did the program reduce medication errors or adverse drug events?
- Did the program reduce home safety hazards, like fall risks?
- Did the program connect patients with a primary care provider/medical home?
- Did the program effectively teach patients how to manage their chronic health conditions?
- Did the program connect patients with other beneficial local services (Meals on Wheels, physical therapy, and others)?

# Port Angeles Fire Department Community Paramedicine Evaluation

Initial Goal: to provide services to at least 150 people each year

2021

402 people

- Needle Exchange Program
- Harm Reduction Program

2022

748 people

- Mental Health Resources
- First Aid & CPR Classes
- BP Monitoring Program

**86% increase in 1 year!**

“We recognize that a disconnected and siloed health care system is not serving individuals or the community well.”

Recognizing that 80% of what impacts a person’s health occurs outside of the health care system...[we need] to provide whole person care by connecting patients with housing, food, transportation, employment, and other support services in addition to ensuring their health care needs are met in a timely manner.

The goal is to provide provide the right care at the right time and the right place”.

# Appreciation



Kristin Fox

Port Angeles Fire  
Department  
Community Paramedics



Brian Gerdes



Effective Examples of Community Paramedics Programs:

<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/topics/community-paramedics>

# Organizations to Donate to:



<https://mtcf.org/giving/our-funds/snowbird-fund>



<https://www.facebook.com/MTNDNFood>



<https://circle-ed.org/donate>

# Sources

1. Antje. (2022, September 12). *System map template*. The Commons. Retrieved February 26, 2023, from <https://commonslibrary.org/system-map-template/>
2. *ID Community Toolkit*. Idaho Department of Health & Welfare. (2019, May). Retrieved February 26, 2023, from <https://publicdocuments.dhw.idaho.gov/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=6739&dbid=0&repo=PUBLIC-DOCUMENTS&cr=1>
3. Melmed, M., & Weller, K. (2021, February 16). *Shifting from Reactive to Proactive*. Northwest Regional Primary Care Association. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from <https://www.nwrpca.org/news/552229/Shifting-from-Reactive-to-Proactive.htm>
4. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *EMS Agenda for the Future*. Columbus, OH: US Department of Transportation and Department of Health and Human Services; August, 1996.
5. Pearson, K., Gale, J., & Shaler, G. (2014, February). *The Evidence for Community Paramedicine in Rural Areas: State and Local Findings and the Role of the State Flex Program*. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.ruralcenter.org/tasc/resources/evidence-community-paramedicine-rural-areas-state-and-local-findings-and-role-state>
6. PRC. (2019). (rep.). <https://www.olympicmedical.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2019-PRC-CHNA-Report-Clallam-County-WA.pdf>. Retrieved February 23, 2023.
7. PRC. (2022). (rep.). *Olympic Medical Center*. <https://www.olympicmedical.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2022-PRC-CHNA-Report-Clallam-County-WA.pdf>. Retrieved February 26, 2023.
8. Rural Health Information Hub. (n.d.). *Community Paramedicine*. Community Paramedicine Overview. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/community-paramedicine#:~:text=Community%20paramedicine%20is%20a%20relatively,underserved%20populations%20in%20the%20community>.
9. *Rural Health Information Hub*. Rural Project Examples Addressing Community paramedics. (2020, May). Retrieved February 2, 2023, from <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/topics/community-paramedics>
10. Rural Health Information Hub. (n.d.). *Organizational buy-in/partnerships for community paramedicine programs*. Organizational Buy-In/Partnerships for Community Paramedicine Programs - RHIhub Toolkit. Retrieved February 26, 2023, from <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/community-paramedicine/4/buy-in-partnerships>

Thank you