

Access to Health and Wellbeing Workgroup Meeting

Wednesday, February 4th, 2026 9:30am-11:00am on Zoom

Presenters:

Matthew Weidner, King County Metro, Senior Planner, Accessible Services

Heather Clark, Program Manager of Coalitions, Hopelink Mobility, Storymap Project

Attendees: Belen Herrera - Seattle DOT, Karen Hartman - Kirkland Senior Council Transportation Committee, Emily Horton – HCA NEMT, Phirun Lach – Sound Generations, Vy Mai – Project Access Northwest, Ray Thomas – Camp United We Stand, Emily Horton – HCA NEMT, Judy Brown – UW Medicine NW Care Coordination, Blake Matthews – Seattle Aging and Disability Division, Lissette Gutierrez - Molina Healthcare Community Connector King County, Angie Kitheka – Volunteer Services CCS, Julio Perez – Resident Services Coordinator for Seattle Housing Authority, Jean Kim – PSRC,

Staff Support: Heather Clark (facilitator), Nicole Ross (notetaker) Staci Sahoo, Roz Novikova, Grace Georgitsis, Chitra Subramanian, Meg Cronister, Ysabel Yu, Laura Loe, Sandy Phan

Matthew Weidner, Access Certification Enhancements

- must be prevented from using the fixed route service to be eligible for Access
- try to provide same opportunities that people have on fixed routes, law says you have to reflect what the local service is
- If you can take a bus there, you can take para transit, provides same service to everyone regardless of destination and intent
- 8-10 page paper application, not accepted in electronic formats, has to be manually entered into database (errors occur)
- Applications are moved to Harborview by bike carrier, stuck in old process, 100% paper based
- In response, King County has started access certification enhancement program
- Access is limited because someone has to answer phones to answer questions, check status of applications, etc
- Right now disability information is also all on paper, to determine eligibility
- Project status: Internal/ external testing at this point, lots of internal training at this point,
- with enhancements social workers will have ability to complete applications online for clients and track status of multiple applications, clients will be able to check status through the portal
- Go Live scheduled for February 23rd

- QR code shared for testing purposes, will take you to test Access Transportation Application
- Phone number or email address required to use online application, if applicant doesn't have phone number or email they can still apply via paper application.
- Handwritten applications can now be digitized, huge time saver
- If you complete a paper application you can go in and create a digital account, so you can check updates online
- If you're a current user that should translate
- Some built in language translation functionality, only English speakers in office
- User profile, some options to change profile
- Will be able to submit supporting documents, privacy protected
- Feedback can be provided until February 23, 2026, send feedback to MTDacetest@kingcounty.gov
- Ask is to spread the word about the tool, new program about Access Application
- **Questions:**
 - **Judy Brown:** Question about how it has been tested for those with vision impairments. 2nd question: Going to Harborview is a barrier? Asking about requirements to be assessed every 3 years. Is that going to change? What about permanent disability that is not going to change?
 - **MW:** Being blind is not necessarily a definitive qualifier for Access. As of right now, there are no plans to change. Suggested reaching out to council members to share that concern.
 - **Karen Hartman:** The medical screening at Harborview might be tweaked a bit for health screening, assessment wondering if they have made any decisions about other locations where someone could have that done?
 - **MW:** Clarified that it's a functional evaluation, not a health screening. There are no plans to change that right now. Suggested reaching out to council members to share that concern.
- **Laura Loe:** Sharing about a case study in WA state where they are trying to move away from having to be reevaluated to qualify for services as the evaluations can be a barrier.
- **Staci Sahoo:** After the evaluation process, what is the user experience? Users will receive emails about 60 days ahead of time to remind them that the application is coming up and it will need to be re-submitted. Some of the existing information will be repopulated now that it's digital. Is the initial survey still available?
- **MW:** Those questions have been rolled over into the application. Staci has found that the initial assessment has been helpful before client is asked to submit personal data

- **Heather Clark, Storymap Project**
 - Looking for stories about how people use transportation, ex. Judy Brown's story about having to go to Harborview every 3 years to qualify for Access. Traveling to Harborview is a barrier.
 - If you know someone who might be able to share a story for this project, please share the [interest form](#) with them

- Particularly interested in sharing common issues, open to other ideas as well
- Interested in feedback on this form, particularly suggestions for improvement.
- Informed consent form, interested in feedback on this form as well
- Lyn is thinking about coming up with a list of guiding questions
- Lyn will conduct interviews w/ participants
- Lyn will edit stories
- Total participant time is about 3 hours
- Storymap will be used as a tool for advocacy
- Compensation will be available for those who share their stories
- Goal is 10-20 stories, but having more would be okay

Questions:

- Grace Georgitsis: Can we push this out to our groups yet?
- **HC:** We want to get feedback first.
- Laura Loe: How did it come about?
- **HC:** Curious about stories where people need a medical chaperone, where people need same day access to medical care, etc.
- **Staci Sahoo:** If you hear a story you can encourage people to share their stories.
- **Judy Brown:** Shared a story about a client who's mother can no longer access telehealth because of a change in insurance, getting to an in-person appointment is a barrier because client has a broken pelvis
- **Jean Kim:** Can connect to a list of organizations where they have heard cross county stories about barriers to accessing timely medical care.
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Roundtable:

- RTAP event happening on 3/14 in North Bend
- CTN Open House at Redmond Office on Wednesday 2/11 10AM-11:30
- National Federation of the Blind of Washington Convention February 26- March 1, 2026

- **KCMC Quarterly Meeting**
 - **Feb 17th , 2026 9:30-11:30am on [zoom](#)**
- **Access to Health and Well Being Workgroup**
 - **April 1st, 2026 9:30-11:00am on [zoom](#)**