Wednesday, November 30, 2022  
10:00am-12:00pm

Participants: Bebhin Gilbert (Hopelink) Judy Brown (UW Medical NW), Chris Bekkouri (Silverlake Skilled Nursing), Marwan Cameron (The Conduit) Jeaneanne Edwards (community in motion), JJ Edge (PHSKC) Lisa Arellano (Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services), Nicole McMurray (Snohomish County), Daeveene May (PCCTC), Phirun Lach (Sound Generations), Nicholas Edman (SDOT), Roz Novikova (Hopelink) Ed Engel (SNOTRAC), Tyler Verda (Snohomish County), Sammie Keller (Snohomish DEM) Julio Perez (Hopelink) Ella Liddicoat (KC Emergency Management), Tom Sharp (KC Emergency Management), Ann Kennedy (Paratransit Services), Gabrielle Hodges (Volunteer Services), Jim House (WASILC Coalition on Inclusive Emergency Planning), Jonny Prociv (CCS) Jeremy Trenhaile (KC Metro Accessible Services) Ausha Potts (Pierce Transit), Lucas Smiraldo (City of Tacoma), Sarah Mehdaova (WA Department of Health), Staci Sahoo (Hopelink), Todd Holloway (CFI), Brock Howell (Snotrac)

Staff Support: Joey (interpreter) Lynda (interpreter) Bree Boyce, Heather Clark

KC Winter Critical Appointment Transportation Procedures

JJ Edge from Public Health Seattle & King County spoke at this meeting about the King County Winter Weather Critical Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures. She would begin with an overview of PHSKC’s role during winter weather.

Public Health during Winter Weather Overview:

- Seasonal medical clinics
- Direct outreach
- Severe weather outreach
- Warning public about carbon monoxide poisoning and hypothermia
- Work with emergency management to solve issues that have health and medical impacts – transportation issues to connect people to services

Moving next to the history of the procedures, lessons learned from the 2019 snow event after action report from the RARET workgroup would spur the creation of the procedures which were created with input from key agencies. The need for these procedures was evident as, for

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example, there were 18,000 phone calls during a weather event last February with many calls going to call city halls and city emergency departments. Created documents were crafted with the goals of ensuring healthcare providers can request transportation on behalf of their patients and that these requests do not sit with human service agencies.

The next step was to create a decision tree flow chart (see slide) to guide the flow of information for these requests. Some folks may still call City Hall or emergency services. Working toward outreach to educate patients about who to contact (transit operators). The Seattle Nurse Navigation Program available in Seattle while all other jurisdictions are fielded by the Evergreen Health 24 Hour RN triage line. Transportation requests are next sent to the appropriate partner based on their Medicaid status. If additional hurdles exist, Public Health can elevate the request to RARET or the EOC for additional support depending on the circumstances. Public Health organizes this effort to help coordinate the Critical Medical Appointment Transportation Task Force. Providers must verify information (eg appointment cannot be delayed without risk) and must collect contact information, destination address, etc. The task force will instruct providers for how to take referrals. Public Health updated the procedures and includes the new Seattle Fire Nurse Navigation program for 2022. The connections facilitated by the task force to connect with partners that can help clear pathways to areas with a high number of patient pickups/drop-offs has been an asset in recent responses.

Challenges faced include the following:

- Procedures apply only in King County
- Patients may still incur costs
- Staffing challenges for providers
- 4WD/AWD vehicle fleets are limited
- Impacts on healthcare system (staff transportation)

Dean Sydnor would offer RARET’s perspective on the procedures as a set of best practices. ETPN is inspired by this process. Practically, coordination between transportation providers and healthcare providers has been hugely beneficial and the added ability to clear problem roads is key. The expanded partnerships to address snow removal is important.

Questions

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• Bree – any partners aware of something similar? Anything you would like to see at your organization?
  o Tyler Verda – Question from Bree - formalized process for healthcare providers in Snohomish? Not familiar with that in Snohomish County.
  o Ausha Potts via chat - Pierce Transit receives requests for transportation assistance during emergent events from the Pierce Co Dept of Emergency Management. I would like to see a similar plan of action for Pierce County. If there is one already established, I am not aware.
• Jonny – Don’t want providers taking on the role (triage) how can we direct people who can coordinate?
  o Dean – referring to the flow chart, if you are making sure you are in contact with me, or King County Emergency Management. Connecting your drivers within our network and having clear communication will help.
    ▪ Jonny – still taking advantage of relationships between clients and drivers would be good where possible.
• Staci – Do you see any downsides to having a formalized plan? Any denials due to the formality?
  o JJ – great question. Is it too prohibitive? From what I have seen, we are looking at the last mile. Who are we missing and how can we help with that? Calls coming into EOC’s, City Halls, etc. Our process is aimed at filling gaps in prolonged events. Our trigger for this is flexible. Metro’s ESN is one. Rather than denials, referring people to possible solutions and helping them do that. Not too prescriptive. Isn’t activated until last mile moment. One prohibitive side is longer term snow event. Snow accumulation on sidewalks. Seniors and dialysis – problematic for transportation and how to address that issue. Can end up being a referral back to EMS. Connection to road services is important. Doorstep to road is another issue that needs to be addressed.
• Bree - what type of outreach/training do you do to ensure all the right people understand these procedures?
  o JJ – in terms of providers and training, northwest healthcare response network. When a snow event happens, we do this in the moment with reminders of the resource. Have not done training directly ourselves (staffing issue). We review the plan every fall and share information to our partners. Information distribution and relying on networks (RARET) helps.

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Staci Sahoo and Bebhinn Gilbert from Hopelink Mobility Management would speak to the workgroup about the status of the One-Call One-Click project last mentioned to the workgroup earlier this year. The presentation would begin with the “why?” behind the project, highlighting several situations where such a project could meet a need. These include:

- Assist older adults with transportation
- Low-income families need to reduce expenses
- Reduce isolation for those who have disabilities

They would next outline the problems the project aims to address, namely:

- Individuals – the current landscape places a burden on the rider to find a ride and the system is difficult to navigate
- Assistors – specialized transportation is difficult for users, information and referral specialists, and caregivers to understand
- Transportation providers – siloed transportation outreach to customers – efficiency of data – caught between casting too wide of a net, or being too specific in outreach
- Community – little optimization of transportation network to ensure a user gets the most appropriate ride at the lowest cost to the system.

All of this is also more complicated during an emergency event such as snow. We have many options in our transportation network, but we need better coordination and communication.

This project aims to do this, and the outline of how can be seen in the principal components of One Call/One Click:

- Service Discovery
- Rider profiles
- Intake
- Trip request fulfillment
- Payment

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The project has a ‘no wrong door’ mentality. No matter who you call, staff can refer you to someone who can assist. One Call One Click is a centralized system of service discovery and trip planning. Our trip planner will include specialized transportation options, and element of rider profiles, and can narrow in available services. For riders, this means one application/profile to share with multiple agencies so they don’t have to repeat the process for each agency. After showing a test image of the product, they noted that beta testing will be available soon. The trip planner will provide an itinerary that matches their needs. It aims to provide seamless information, but currently rider will need to contact specialized service provider to book rides. The project will be branded as Find a Ride as that is already trusted branding and we want to carry that forward.

Staci would next pivot the discussion to the overlap between Find as Ride and ETPN. Find a Ride is the consumer side of emergency transportation needs. Data will reveal gaps and needed services and will highlight need for flexibility and need for additional services.

Dialing in on ETPN integration, Staci highlighted some key points:

- **Immediate benefits**
  - Discover possible partnerships and resources

- **Coming soon benefits**
  - Triage non-emergency requests
  - Communication with users through their accounts

- **Limitations**
  - Updates may not be readily available in trip planner (snow closures) pre-planned snow routes can be accommodated, but in the moment, decisions will be a challenge to update in the system.
  - Real emergencies shouldn’t be routed through this platform.

Questions

- Lucas – is this available in Pierce County?
  - Staci – yes. Central Puget Sound. Pierce County’s will roll out a little bit differently. We are working closely with our 211 partners in King and Pierce Counties. Encourage folks to call 211, and 211 will have access to our platform

- Nicole – what is the relationship with Uper/Lyft type programs?
  - Staci – multi-modal solutions, that include those services. Payment – future version. How do emergency managers bill for services? How can we facilitate?

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We have traditional brokerage systems. We plan to address this in the future. We have talked with King County partners to figure out a payment system.

- Lucas – invite our commissioners to receive this presentation. They would benefit from learning about this platform. Our commission has been working for five years in a study for on-demand, accessible transportation. Will be sharing a report of needs soon. Pierce County, universally accessible transportation systems will address needs of people with disabilities.
  - Staci – we would like to present and would like to partner with our partners like PCCTC for such a meeting.
- Staci – we focused technology on a universal standard: GTFS. Using flex to communicate boundaries. Hoping for more flexibility (geographically) – tracking where vehicles are.
- Todd – This project is enormous. Setting aside disasters and emergency events, transportation is complex. Adding more partners will benefit the entire Puget sound region. To partners – please pull your people in. It’s heavy lifting but will be beneficial. This will have an enormous return on investment.
- Nicole – what does this look like after hours, evening hours?
  - Dean – winter weather and outlined roles – some partners have transportation providers operating at all hours. Some operate only during certain hours. Longer wait times (which for emergent needs like ER discharges, that’s hard to plan) are to be expected. Smaller pool of drivers are available off-hours. They are available, but limited.
- Dean – will one call one click address after hours issues?
  - Staci – it is a challenge. Most providers are more 9-5. It will communicate hours of operation. 24/7 available but limited. It will show available services if time of day is entered. 9-5 operators would be filtered out.
- Bebhinn – project specific page is available on the KCMC website. Please reach out with additional questions.

**RARET ANNOUNCEMENTS**

After these presentations, Dean would pivot to news items from RARET, highlighting that the next newsletter coming out aims to address winter weather and will include:

- General Winter Preparedness: [Ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Winter Driving: [RARET](http://www.raret.org) & [WSDOT](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov)

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MEETING NOTES

- Snohomish County: [Response, Shelters, and Alerts](#)
- King County: [Resources, Shelters, and Alerts](#)
- Pierce County: [Resources, Shelters, and Alerts](#)
- Transit: [King County Metro, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, Snoqualmie Valley Transit](#)

For a chat with NWS that will cover salient tools for transportation related concerns, join us Dec 14th for a standalone meeting. Registration link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAvd-Gprj0iGN9jGTqtCkk_XO-hU9ILZMA](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAvd-Gprj0iGN9jGTqtCkk_XO-hU9ILZMA)

ETPN project winter launch information

Working on formalizing this. Aiming to have a more formalized, resilient process. Would like to roll this out in January or February. Would like to have at least ten transportation providers with a footprint that covers all three counties. Aiming to finalize a flowchart soon. We will contact partners once the documents are finalized.

Email Dean if you want more information about ETPN and if you want to become involved. Ready to join? Reach out to Dean and let him know. You will be asked to review documents and evaluate the program. It’s a network that is still formulating and partners can influence its development.

ROUNDTABLE

To cap off the meeting, there would next be a roundtable where partners could provide brief winter updates if they had them. Partners shared the following information:

- King County Emergency Management – Tom Sharp – Not a lot new from what we have been doing. One thing we do well is communicating with other departments in cities and towns, and with national weather service. When we see an event coming, we convene with departments to see and let people know what is happening and what we need to be prepared for.
  - Dean – communication is key, so that is definitely a best practice.
- Tyler – Snohomish County Human Services – big part of our cold weather response is activating and supporting cold weather shelters. We maintain a list of open shelters. Busy November and we have staffing capacity issues but we are working it out. Difficult during sustained events.

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Difficult to find people willing to work overnight. No one has been turned away. Transportation side of things – many cold weather shelters use rideshare programs when needed. If one shelter reaches capacity, transporting to another shelter can be difficult but we are getting through it. Staff gives each other rides, etc. We have reached out to Community Transit and Everett Transit and they can provide bus tickets, which helps. Generally cold weather shelters close down in the morning (multipurpose centers). Transportation in morning is an issue and bus tickets are helpful. Transit providers have given rides for free to warming centers in the past, which is an enormously helpful policy. Would be helpful to have that be more developed policy in King County if possible.

- Ausha – via chat - No new major updates from Pierce Transit besides we are currently providing free rides to warming shelters through Dec 3 per request of PC DEM. Encourage our riders to register for text/email alerts regarding route changes due to extreme weather events. Reminder of the importance to be seen during hours of darkness when waiting outdoors for transit.
- Todd – we are working on robust issues that have to do with emergency management and transportation. We recognize the pandemic taught us that getting vaccines to people where they are is an issue. Getting information into a centralized location is helpful. RARET helps with that. Combine shelter locations with transportation and power outage maps. One area to pull from. Looking and comparing where people are who have limited digital access so we can help them make plans if their power goes out. Will never be a solved problem, but we can make improvements.
- Jim – New bill to introduce to committee this month that is hoping to improve communication accessibility and technology. ASL accessibility for emergency communication. Also for deaf/blind community. The goal is to smooth out communication barriers, regardless of location.
- Jeremy – Metro Access is doing annual emergency transportation training and putting out information on social media about winter weather travel.
- Todd – Bebhinn – heads up – OC/OC has been doing a great job with accessibility. When it comes to emergency alerts, Jim House will be a wonderful addition to add input. Working on accessible alerts and warnings is something he does well.
  - Jim – happy to work with you on that.
  - Phirun – had to close down half our routes yesterday due to the weather.

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ACTION ITEMS
- Responsible Person/Party –

NEXT MEETING

January 25th, 2023 RARET Workgroup

December 14th, 2022 – RARET standalone event with NWS. Registration required (link is in the announcement section of these notes)

CONTACT

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