

Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties Health Care Integration Work Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced	9:30 am, October 8, 2024 Online Via Zoom
Facilitator	Deanna Barclay
Presenters	Chelsea King, Executive Director, Oregon Health and Education Collaborative (OHEC)
Workgroup Members Present	Menna Alamia, Deanna Barclay, Andrea Bartell, Mandy Clark, Nilly Livsay, Karen Weiner
Staff Members Present	Kristi Collins, Leanne Trask
Recorded	Yes

Agenda Topics

Discussion Item	Welcome and Introductions
Workgroup members introduced themselves.	

Special Presentation	First 1,000 Days Initiative
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Chelsea King, Executive Director of the Oregon Health and Education Collaborative (OHEC), provided an overview of the OHEC and its mission. OHEC aims to unite education and healthcare partners to foster transformative cross-sector initiatives that enhance the well-being of children in Oregon, specifically from conception to age 12. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that every child has the necessary resources to thrive and shared insights from their recent learning collaborative held in Hood River.

Established two and a half years ago, OHEC focuses on the "upstream initiative," which targets the first 1,000 days of a child's life. This initiative aims to create systemic changes by integrating existing programs rather than launching new ones. Chelsea outlined five design pilots involved in the initiative, covering various Oregon regions and communities. The organization has successfully raised funds to support these efforts and is collaborating with multiple stakeholders to gather community insights for policy advocacy.

Key learnings from the initiative highlighted the need for stabilized eligibility for public benefits, more flexible funding for families, improved service coordination, investment in community health workers, and stronger partnerships between healthcare providers and community service workers. She noted the importance of universalizing access to programs to reduce stigma and address issues such as substance use disorder across all income levels.

Moving forward, OHEC plans to advocate for specific policy changes based on community feedback and will engage with agency directors and legislators to promote these initiatives. Chelsea encouraged partners to participate in the upstream initiative

and provided resources for further engagement, including their website, oregoncollaborative.org, and social media channels.

LeAnne shared that she and Kristi, representing the EL Hub and Pollywog, were invited to attend the collaborative meetings. They were able to discuss the Pollywog program. LeAnne noted that it was very interesting to hear how each community was doing the work slightly differently. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to this initiative. Chelsea followed up that the spirit of the upstream initiative is to cede power and funding directly to those in the community who are doing 1st 1,000 days and to reduce the State bureaucracy behind it.

Andrea from Young Roots Oregon raised concerns regarding the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, emphasizing the poverty trap it creates for young parents. She highlighted the significant gap between the allowable income under TANF and the financial requirements for survival, particularly for adolescents working to achieve their GEDs and facing systemic barriers to higher income opportunities. Andrea asked if there are any state conversations happening about easing this poverty trap, mentioning issues like lack of childcare, transportation, and supportive family structures. She emphasized how living in poverty and dealing with stress can really hurt young families and stressed the importance of tackling these challenges to help break the cycle of poverty.

Chelsea echoed Andrea's concerns about the challenges faced by young families, particularly the poverty spike that often occurs after the birth of a child. She discussed the "eligibility cliff" within the TANF program that discourages work by creating disincentives for earning above a certain income level. Chelsea highlighted their policy recommendation to increase eligibility, suggesting the use of the Alice Index or the self-sufficiency standard to better reflect the living costs in Oregon, aiming to support families earning up to 300% of the federal poverty level. She also mentioned Oregon's participation in a TANF Pilot program that would enable more direct financial support to communities. Specifically, Lane County is considering a pilot inspired by a successful program in Flint, Michigan, which would provide pregnant individuals with significant cash assistance to help cover immediate needs and reduce barriers to accessing support services.

Discussion Item	Project Updates
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LeAnne Trask shared an update on the Asset Mapping Project. Pollywog has visited Harrisburg, Asea, Philomath, Mill City, and Lincoln City, where they had a great time at a Hispanic celebration that attracted lots of families. They're planning a second round of events in Lincoln City to get more feedback and are also setting up gatherings in Siletz and Newport. Reporting is still a bit of a challenge since it takes time to translate and compile the data. The Philomath report is done and the Harrisburg report is being finalized. Both will soon be available online. We're also brainstorming how to best use the data that's been collected, especially concerning safety issues like kids crossing busy roads in Philomath and Harrisburg. The Oregon Health Authority is interested in this and is looking into possible funding for improvements. LeAnne invited everyone to join the upcoming events.	
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Andrea Bartell, from Young Roots Oregon (YRO), presented an overview of the organization's services to increase awareness and build connections for adolescent parents in Linn and Benton Counties. She emphasized their focus on supporting young families, including parents aged 24 and under, with key programs including:

- Parent mentoring, which pairs young parents with mentors to help them connect with resources, build parenting skills, and access support like childcare and transportation.
- Early learning coaching to help parents bond with their children through play,
- The Family Roots Housing Development Program, which recently opened the Santiam House. It is a short-term, independent group home for young pregnant or parenting people, including those coming out of foster care or involved with child welfare. Participants receive financial education and support, such as rent well certification and up to \$4,000 for housing-related needs.

Andrea highlighted the organization's focus on inclusivity, mentioning that all services are available in Spanish and cater to the entire family unit, including fathers. She also emphasized their GED and youth education re-engagement programs, which help young parents stay in school and complete their education, offering childcare and transportation support.

Andrea discussed partnerships with local community organizations, including Linn County Public Health and community health clinics, aiming to improve access to healthcare, reproductive services, and mental health care for young families.

She encouraged partner to refer young parent to Young Roots Oregon.

Work group members asked if YRO was accepting donations of cribs and other baby furniture. Andrea explained they don't have the storage space for those types of donations but could use outside toys for children.

Menna Alamia from IHN presented details about their care management program specifically designed for prenatal, postnatal, and pregnant members. She explained that IHN provides free care coordination and case management services for these members, with a focus on helping them access resources like food, housing, and healthcare.

The program also offers an internal assessment system, where nurses work closely with high-risk members to monitor their health and ensure they receive appropriate care. Referrals to services such as WIC, doula programs, and home visiting nurses are made based on each member's needs. Additionally, IHN helps connect families with important resources like car seats and transportation assistance.

Menna emphasized that they work in collaboration with members' primary care providers, OB-GYNs, and other healthcare professionals to ensure a coordinated approach to care. For higher-risk patients, the program provides regular assessments,

at least once per trimester, and participates in weekly meetings with Dr. Saint Germain, the OB medical director for Samaritan, to review any urgent concerns.

Transportation support and appointment coordination are also part of the program, helping members combine appointments to make it easier to manage their healthcare visits. Bi-monthly interdisciplinary check-ins include a behavioral health provider, especially for postpartum support, and referrals to behavioral health services when needed.

Yvonne, one of their nurses, focuses primarily on clinical support for high-risk members, while care coordinators handle referrals and making connections to various services. Menna encouraged anyone who knows an IHN member who could benefit from the program to reach out, providing contact information and resources for referrals.

Kristi Collins shared with the workgroup that the 2024–2028 strategic plan is now available on the Early Learning Hub website (blearlylearninghub.org). This plan aligns with the statewide strategic plan, Raise Up Oregon, and includes goals that connect with the work this workgroup is doing.

there are three goals in the new strategic plan that align to the work of this workgroup.

Goal 2: Pollywog will serve as a regional referral system for health-related social needs (HRSN), and will receive funding further to develop this work as part of the 1115 Waiver. LeAnne will provide updates on its progress and bring those updates to the workgroup.

Goal 3 focuses on home visiting programs. The Hub plans to leverage existing workgroups covering healthcare and early learning home visiting instead of creating a new one. They will contact home visiting programs to identify overlap in existing meetings and work to support these regional programs. This effort will also incorporate work coming from Portland State University around home visiting alignment statewide.

Goal 4 addresses Connect Oregon and Unite Us. The region is working to identify barriers to utilizing Unite Us as a referral system. Some funding will be provided to the three health departments to support their Family Connects programs, which will use Unite Us to enhance referral pathways.

Kristi encouraged everyone to explore the strategic plan on the website for more details and to reach out to her with any questions.

Discussion Item	HCI Business
LeAnne shared about the October Parent Newsletter and Halloween & Harvest Event Guide, which were published this month.	
She informed the workgroup about work on the 2024 Holiday Resource Guide. It includes information about holiday meals or gifts, food pantries and community meals, hygiene and clothing closets, thrift stores, housing and laundry assistance, and any other assistance programs in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. Over 140 organizations have	

been contacted, and 85 resources have agreed to be listed. The guide will be published on Friday, November 1st.

JumpStart Read for the Record is on October 24th this year. The EL Hub purchased 225 books in English and 100 in Spanish and has distributed them to local classrooms and care groups.

LeAnne shared an update on the CCBF grant. Pollywog was awarded 10% of the requested amount. Those funds will be used to get Pollywog staff trained as Certified Community Health Workers (CHWs) which will help us serve as a regional referral system for health-related social needs (HRSN).

LeAnne introduced Nilly Livesay, the new Parenting Success Network (PSN) Director.

Nilly Livesay shared how excited she is to connect with everyone and learn more about the different partnerships. She admitted that funding seems to be getting tighter everywhere but assured the group that she's committed to supporting their work.

She also encouraged everyone to keep her in the loop about potential opportunities to collaborate, especially when it comes to going after more funding.

Discussion Item	AI Note Takers
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LeAnne discussed some bad experiences with AI notetakers in meetings. She shared how one of these notetakers emailed her entire contact list without her permission, promoting itself. Removing it from their system was difficult, and it even showed up in other meetings. LeAnne stressed that while these notetakers might seem useful, they can pose serious privacy risks, especially when dealing with sensitive data like HIPAA or FERPA-protected info. She mentioned that the Early Learning Hub won't allow AI notetakers in meetings unless it's a paid service for accessibility reasons. Kristi shared that many free AI services can claim ownership of the data and emphasized the EL Hub's policy to block AI notetakers in all EL Hub-related meetings to protect privacy.

Next Meeting	9:30 am, November 12, 2024 Online Via Zoom
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Meeting Adjourned	11:01 am
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