

2020 Budget and Legislation Proposals

SEPTEMBER 2019

Policy Level Proposals

Fund Foundational Public Health Services **\$16.4 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

The local, tribal, and state governmental public health system is failing to provide the most basic, core public health service necessary to adequately protect and promote the health of all Washingtonians. This proposal continues the phased approach to fully funding the Foundational Public Health Services gaps (\$450 million/biennium), starting with funding communicable disease, environmental public health and assessment services. The outcomes include reducing communicable disease and environmental health threats.

Communicable Disease Modernization **\$51,000 one-time (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

The Department of Health (DOH) is proposing legislation to modernize the control of sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens by eliminating HIV and AIDS exceptionalism, eliminating outdated statutory requirements, and ensuring the effectiveness of the public health tools available for the control of sexually transmitted diseases.

Improve Immunization Compliance **\$5.1 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Although the average immunization out-of-compliance rates for Washington kindergarteners in schools was eight percent, school self-reported rates ranged from less than one percent to more than forty-three percent. This broad range of reporting highlights inconsistencies in reporting methodology and could place schools and communities at risk for diseases that vaccines can prevent. Schools and child care centers carry the burden of ensuring children are in compliance with state immunization laws. This request is for a comprehensive system to decrease out-of-compliance

rates in schools and child care centers to better protect our communities against vaccine-preventable diseases and potential outbreaks. This system would build on use of already existing technology, provide education to health care providers, and provide outreach to parents and vulnerable communities with low vaccination rates.

Reduce Tobacco Use for 18-20 Year Olds **\$365,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Engrossed House Bill 1074 raised the minimum legal age for a person to be sold tobacco and vapor products from 18 to 21 effective January 1, 2020. The Department of Health requests funding to promote tobacco cessation and provide counseling support and nicotine replacement therapy to Washingtonians age 18-20 who currently use tobacco and vapor products.

Train and Educate CHW Workforce **\$660,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Community Health Workers (CHW) improve health outcomes and lower healthcare costs by helping people understand the healthcare system and connecting people to health services like preventive screenings, behavioral health support and chronic disease self-management. In 2018, the legislature designated funding for the department to implement the 2015-2016 Task Force Training and Education Recommendations. The 2018 CHW Task Force Recommendations were in four key areas: CHW abilities, methodology, employer support, and infrastructure. This proposal builds on the 2018 task force recommendations to implement training and education recommendations. Funding is requested to implement a training framework that is specific to the CHW workforce needs of Washington and establish training standards for the knowledge and abilities a trained CHW should have.

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Conduct Recommended Newborn Screening **\$366,000 (General Fund Local, Fund 001)**

In 2019, the State Board of Health recommends adding spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) to the mandatory newborn screening panel. Additional expenditure authority and a fee increase is necessary for the Department of Health's Newborn Screening Laboratory to conduct the required blood sample testing for this heritable condition.

Eliminate Hepatitis C **\$9.7 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Hepatitis C infections continue to rise in Washington State, despite the existence of a cure. In support of Governor Inslee's Directive 18-13, the Washington State Department of Health requests an appropriation to implement public health priorities to eliminate hepatitis C. These priorities include increased screening and linkage to care activities in high-impact settings; investments in case investigation and response; dedicated viral hepatitis microbiologists for outbreak response; and investments in state data systems to manage related case report, laboratory, and vital records information.

Reduce Suicide Rates **\$2.0 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Suicide rates continue to rise alarmingly in Washington State. The Washington State Department of Health requests resources to implement a multi-agency approach to build a more complete, responsive, and sustainable suicide prevention system. This funding will support core work in state agencies, grants to support tribal nations, a postvention study, strategies to improve behavioral health and suicide prevention in agricultural industry, community health worker training, and a campaign to create safer homes community campaigns on suicide prevention.

Prevent Infectious Disease—SSP **\$3.8 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Syringe Service Programs (SSP) reduce improperly discarded syringes in the environment, including implementing community based pickup programs and implementing syringe disposal sites where they are likely to have the biggest impacts. They further allow direct contact with drug users and the opportunity to provide access and referral to a range of available services, such as healthcare and drug treatment, to people whom otherwise are unlikely to seek access to such services. In the face of the ongoing opioid crisis, infectious diseases related to drug

use have increased significantly, and scaling up SSP is critical to address this threat. The Department of Health requests funding to rapidly expand capacity at SSPs by investing in a public safety initiative to improve access to safe syringe disposal.

Improve Patient Safety/Care Quality **\$295,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

Funding to support the Adverse Health Events and Incident Reporting program was eliminated in the 2011-2013 biennium. This program, required by chapter 70.56 RCW, improves the quality of health care by identifying medical errors and instituting changes to prevent them from reoccurring. The Washington State Department of Health requests funding to carry out the statutory obligations of the Adverse Health Events and Incident Reporting program to protect patient safety in Washington.

Reinforce Outbreak Response—Lab Courier **\$400,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)**

The Washington State Department of Health's Public Health Laboratory provides critical laboratory services that positively impact the public's health by supporting our environmental health and communicable and infectious disease investigation programs. Delivering rapid and accurate lab results to local, state, tribal and federal stakeholders is currently limited by infrastructure deficiencies. One challenge is the lack of a state funded courier system for specimen delivery. Getting quicker, more accurate lab results to disease investigators and medical providers means quicker public health action and better patient outcomes.

Drinking Water System Improvements **\$400,000 (Drinking Water Assistance Administrative Account, Fund 05R)**

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) receives federal funding to capitalize a state revolving fund known as the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This fund, combined with a state match and loan administration fee, supports low interest loans to public water systems and are a key infrastructure support for our state. The DOH requests additional appropriation authority of \$400,000 per biennium to enhance the loans and grants tracking data system, increase access to feasibility study funding for water system consolidations, and align funding with future staffing needs and program costs.

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Invest in Public Health Cloud

\$1.9 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)

Public health business needs require certain levels of data sharing, interoperability, disaster recovery, and modern technology only available in the Cloud. The Washington State Department of Health (DOH), in compliance with a legislative mandate to migrate to either the State Data Center or to a third-party cloud, must elect the latter for a significant portion of its application portfolio. DOH requests additional funding to deploy an enterprise cloud data center which better supports the business needs of the state's public health system.

Assure Local Water System Safety

\$492,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)

Local revenue sources are insufficient to support the implementation and regulation of smaller Group B water systems. Group B water systems provide drinking water to small businesses and communities across the state and primarily impact rural areas where larger public utilities do not serve. The Washington State Department of Health requests funding to work with local health jurisdictions to ensure approximately 13,400 Group B public water systems in this state are providing safe and reliable drinking water.

Maintenance Level Proposals

Preserve Title X Program

\$8.4 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The Department of Health's Family Planning Program administers \$13 million in combined state and federal funds annually, including about \$4 million from the federal Title X program and \$9 million in GFS to provide infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, supplies, health education, training for providers and staff to maintain quality of services, and reimburse providers for discounted services for qualifying clients. On March 4, 2019, the United States Department of Health and Human Services published the new rule that would change federal Title X regulations. The rule is being legally challenged by numerous states. This request is to replace federal dollars that Washington can no longer accept due to changes in federal Title X rules, which conflict with state law.

Restore Foundational Public Health Services Funding

\$3.2 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The legislature provided the Office of Financial Management with \$12 million in spending authority from the Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) Account in the 2019-2021 biennium to support foundational public health

services through the Department of Health (DOH). The revenue supporting this spending authority was anticipated to come from the collection of a newly enacted tax on the distribution of vapor products, created by Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 1873. Recent tax collection indicates only \$8.8 million of tax revenue would be available in the 2019-2021 biennium for this account. Therefore, DOH requests \$3.2 million GF-State to backfill this revenue shortfall, which allows the agency to fulfill the Legislature's foundational public health mandates.

Maintain the Child Profile Health Promotion System

\$1 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The federal funding which historically supported the Child Profile Health Promotion System has diminished. Along with naturally rising operational costs, there is no longer sufficient funding to fully manage and run this instrumental tool which disseminated important health information to Washington State families for the last 20 years. This proposal sustains this one-of-a-kind system that delivers critical health messages to parents, well-child visit and immunization information and reminders, and other important public health information.

Support Public Health Lab Operations

\$790,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The emergence of new and more complex public health threats and the imposition of more stringent regulation have placed increased workload demands on the staff of the Public Health Laboratory. This growth has created a funding shortfall. The Washington State Department of Health requests additional spending authority to cover cost increases related to basic operational costs, the volume of required equipment needs, and the amount of quality assurance/compliance activities necessary. These resources are necessary to maintain the lab's international/national accreditation and to secure critical food safety, radiological and shellfish biotoxin testing programs and other public health protections.

Support Public Disclosure

\$300,000 (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires state and local agencies to make certain written records available to the public for inspection and copying upon request. Legislation in 2017 amended state agency requirements, resulting in the department implementing both public records process and system improvements. This proposal requests ongoing funding to maintain these process and system changes.

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Maintain HEAL-WA Web Portal

\$964,000 (Health Professions Account, Fund 02G)

The Health Electronic Resource for Washington (HEALWA), managed by the University of Washington (UW) with funding from the Department of Health, is a web portal that supports public health by providing certain health care providers with access to the latest evidence based health care information. Costs for UW to maintain the web portal are increasing as the numbers of licensees who use the web portal increase. The Department of Health requests expenditure authority from the existing fund balance to cover the increased costs to maintain this program.

Maintain Medical Test Site Inspection Capacity

\$530,000 (Medical Test Site Licensure Account, Fund 002)

The Department of Health works to ensure that licensed laboratories provide safe laboratory services by regulating more than 4,000 Medical Test Sites (MTS). The department performs routine inspections and investigates complaints. It also provides education, technical assistance, and consultation to assist laboratories in meeting compliance with standards or regulations. Additional spending authority is needed for the MTS program to maintain inspection of licensed laboratories and protect patient safety. Without the additional spending authority, the program will be unable to keep up with the required inspection workload, posing risks to patients by not holding facilities accountable to existing standards.

Comply with HIV Reinvestment Rule

\$8.0 million (General Fund Local, Fund 001)

The federal Ryan White Care Act requires the state to reinvest all pharmaceutical drug rebate revenue it receives through its AIDS Drug Assistance Program into additional services to support those living with HIV/AIDS. DOH requests additional authority from the general fund (local) to comply with the federal requirement to reinvest rebate funds to continue providing community services, medical services, case management, and support services for people living with HIV.

Sustain Access to Healthy Foods

\$1.3 million (General Fund State, Fund 001)

The Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program will not receive the expected federal revenue in fiscal year 2021 to support the program. This program provides incentives to food insecure populations with limited incomes to select healthy food choices. The Washington State Department of Health requests a one-time appropriation to maintain the program in fiscal year 2021 at current levels.



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