

October 29, 2018

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Opioid Summit Highlights OCH Region's Collaborative Response to Opioid Epidemic**

Olympic Community of Health (OCH) hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual OCH Regional Opioid Summit on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Suquamish Clearwater Conference Center. We were formally welcomed to Suquamish by elected Suquamish Tribal Leaders and had over 300 in attendance from across the region, as well as neighboring counties and state and federal offices. Attendees included primary care providers, mental health providers, Substance Use Disorder providers, dental providers, American Indian/Alaska Native and tribal partners, tribal leaders, public health and local government officials, law enforcement, fire/EMS, emergency department providers, educators, students, school district staff and community members. Discussion at the Opioid Summit focused on the opioid crisis in the region and the coordinated and collaborative response to it. Dr. Susan Turner, Kitsap Public Health Officer, observed that “The expanded audience for the second summit, and the wide variety of agencies represented illustrates the readiness of our communities and community leaders to work together to reduce the impact of opioid use disorder.”

Dr. Allison Unthank, Clallam County Health Officer and Physician Manager for Addiction Medicine with the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, added that “In the last two years our three counties have made great strides toward tackling the opiate epidemic in our communities, improving prescribing practices, increasing access to evidence-based treatment and reducing overdoses. There’s a lot of work left to do, but I feel confident that through the collaboration forged by 3CCORP and the OCH, we will get there.”

The Opioid Summit featured a full slate of presenters who have been working together over the past two years; their presentations prompted important questions and lively discussion. Topics included in the agenda were focused on how the region is implementing the regional opioid response plan including 1.) preventing opioid misuse and abuse primarily through improving prescribing practices, 2.) improving access to the full spectrum of best practices for the treatment of opioid use disorder, 3.) prevention of opioid overdose, 4.) a local tribal opioid response, 5.) updated regional data, 6.) legislative updates from Senators Cantwell and Murray’s offices and 6.) how the opioid response is integrated into the regional Medicaid Transformation Project.

Commissioner Mark Ozias of Clallam County highlighted cooperation in the region’s response to the opiate epidemic, saying “Regional partners pursuing solutions to this crisis have taken collaboration to a whole new level; the work we are doing is leading the way for the entire nation.”

Learn more about the Opioid Summit and the 3 County Coordinated Opioid Response Project by visiting [www.OlympicCH.org](http://www.OlympicCH.org) or emailing OCH’s Director of Community and Tribal Partnership, Lisa Rey Thomas at [LisaRey@olympich.org](mailto:LisaRey@olympich.org).