

Climate and Health and Program Element 51

OHA & LPHA Learning and Discussion Session 10/04/2021

BACKGROUND AND LESSONS LEARNED:

Early local climate and health assessment and planning

Beginning in 2012, the [Oregon Climate and Health Program](#) worked with five local health departments to assess climate and health risks and develop local climate and health adaptation plans. The following are summaries of each of the plans:

- [Benton County](#) (pdf)
- [Crook County](#) (pdf)
- [Jackson County](#) (pdf)
- [Multnomah County](#) (pdf)
- [North Central Public Health District](#) (pdf)

A summary of lessons learned from these 2-year pilot projects can be found here:

- [Local Climate and Health Adaptation Planning: Lessons Learned \(2013-2014\)](#)

When asked to provide advice to other LPHAs who may be just beginning climate and health work, LPHA staff had the following guidance:

“Designate a lead who can coordinate efforts within your LPHA”.

- *LPHAs have had many different kinds of positions take on climate work, including: Healthy Communities Coordinator, Public Health Preparedness Planner, Environmental Health Specialist, Health Promotion Specialist, Communicable Disease Investigator, All Hazards Epidemiologist.*

“Assess organizational capacity and identify staff who are interested”

- *Consider using this [checklist to assess your LPHA’s organizational capacity](#) to take on climate and health work.*
- *Integrating strategies into existing strategic planning increases visibility and understanding of climate priorities*

“Identify existing teams, committees and efforts already connected to this work”

- *Frame climate change as not just an environmental issue, but a “risk multiplier” that affects all areas of public health*
- *Take a look at these [Key Messages and Actions for Public Health Partners](#) to consider how climate work intersects with existing public health program areas.*

“Explore collaborating with adjacent counties”

- *Consider conducting a regional climate and health risk assessment*
- *Engage with a regional health equity coalition and/or community based organizations to understand community priorities in the region*
- *Develop regional plans and/or lead regional initiatives to build climate resilience*

“Encourage collaboration among multiple bureaus, agencies, departments”

- *Take time to meet with partners and learn about how work can be leveraged*
- *Ask about existing and upcoming climate-related projects and how LPHAs and/or CBOs can be involved*

TAKING ACTION TOGETHER:

Recent climate and health planning and action

In 2017, the same local health partners were awarded small grants to begin implementing interventions prioritized in their respective adaptation plans. You can read a summary here:

- [Local Climate and Health Interventions: Background and Success Stories](#)

That same year, the [Oregon Climate and Health Program](#) published the first statewide climate and health plan which prioritizes state and local strategies in each of the Public Health Modernization capabilities:

- [2017 Oregon Climate and Health Resilience Plan](#)

This plan is currently in the process of being updated to inform the next five years of climate and health work in Oregon. To learn about how to engage in this planning effort, as well as to hear about other new resources and opportunities, LPHA staff are encouraged to subscribe to the:

- [Oregon Climate and Health Listserv](#) (to subscribe, a password is not necessary)

As part of OHA's Environmental Health capacity-building work, the [Climate and Health Program](#) will be conducting an annual survey to better understand the state of climate and health work in Oregon. The following are some 2021 baseline measures:

Metric (as reported by Tribal and LPHA directors)	2021 Baseline
# of CBOs that T+LPHAs have partnered with to build climate resilience – <i>this is a current Healthier Together Oregon metric</i>	13
# of T+LPHAs that have integrated EPH/climate data into their CHAs	5
# of T+LPHAs that have integrated climate-related strategies into their CHIPs	3
% of T+LPHAs that have not yet engaged in climate-related work	53%
% of T+LPHAs that have begun to engage in climate change conversations	27%
% of T+LPHAs that have begun to assess climate and health risks	10%
% of T+LPHAs that have begun to implement climate-related interventions	10%

OHA will be developing new guidance and training for tribal and local public health authorities in the coming year, including an update to the:

- [Oregon climate and health resilience planning toolkit](#)

For more information, please contact: climate.health@dhsosha.state.or.us