

To: King County Council Members

Re: Community Response to Health and Human Services Transformation Plan

Dear King County Council Members:

The King County Alliance for Human Services is committed to the vision that all people across King County have access to the services they need in order to realize their full potential.

Alliance members were honored to be part of developing the Health & Human Services Transformation Plan that will guide program funding for community health and human services. While we appreciate the effort and vision of the plan, we are concerned that it does not outline a plan for creating a new revenue source for regional community health and human services. We believe this is paramount to the successful implementation and hope that the Council will commit itself to finding the necessary funding.

People are suffering because we do not have the resources necessary to help them. Any new plan, no matter how visionary, requires a strong foundation on which to build. The plan before you lacks the resources required to succeed. And in this case, people will continue to suffer needlessly.

This is an opportunity to correct that. A plan to improve the health and well-being of King County residents, reduce racial disparities, and improve population health must include adequate resources to achieve the vision created by council (Council in Motion 13768).

We urge you to consider the following issues and make the needed changes in the plan before you accept it.

- No wrong door, no closed door. Services must be available for any King County resident, not only those who enter the system through proposed pilot projects, established collective impact efforts, or the medical or mental health system. For this reason, services must be adequately funded inclusive of and beyond those entry points.
- Doing yet another study of need is antithetical to efficient and effective use of resources. We have the information now: established reports and surveys from across the county have long identified the needs in our communities. Together, the County and the community also have the capacity now to bring this information together to create an initial allocation plan for a new revenue stream for these services. We need to call on these resources and act immediately in response to the urgency of the needs.
- The plan calls for the development of a transformation fund, stating, "To the extent new revenue tools are developed they should be used to establish a 'transformation fund' that assures investments support the move toward version 3.0 of an integrated health and human services system." It is critical to the successful delivery

of services that new revenue is not limited in allocation to a transformation fund, but is instead allocated according to need for services.

- The plan points to the Affordable Care Act as initiating savings within the current health care system as well as generating new funding opportunities. It must be made clear that these ACA related opportunities, even if realized, are focused on medical and mental health systems and are not designed to address the long-standing needs for regional human services, nor does it develop a strategy to fund human services critical to the success of this effort.

We are honored to participate in a process that will produce real outcomes for the people we serve. We believe in the power of good government and prudent leadership and we thank you for both in these tough times.

Sincerely,

Merril Cousin and Mike Heinisch, Co-Chairs, on behalf of
Participants of the King County Alliance for Human Services

cc: King County Executive Dow Constantine