

Subject: Online Form Submittal: Advisory Group Application
Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:35:56 AM

Advisory Group Application

Step 1

Application for Appointment to Whatcom County Advisory Groups

Public Statement

THIS IS A PUBLIC DOCUMENT: As a candidate for a public advisory group, the information provided will be available to the County Council, County Executive, and the public. All advisory group members are expected to be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, County staff, and each other. Failure to abide by these expectations may result in revocation of appointment and removal from the appointive position.

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| Title | Field not completed. |
|-------|----------------------|

| | |
|------------|------|
| First Name | Lara |
|------------|------|

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| Last Name | Welker |
|-----------|--------|

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Today's Date | 1/7/2025 |
|--------------|----------|

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Street Address | |
|----------------|--|

| | |
|------|--|
| City | |
|------|--|

| | |
|-----|--|
| Zip | |
|-----|--|

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Do you live in Whatcom County? | Yes |
|--------------------------------|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Do you have a different mailing address? | YES |
|--|-----|

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Mailing Address | |
|-----------------|--|

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Primary Telephone | |
|-------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Secondary Telephone | Field not completed. |
|---------------------|----------------------|

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Email Address | |
|---------------|--|

Step 2

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Name of Advisory Group | Public Health Advisory Board |
| Public Health Advisory Board | I have expertise, career experience, or lived experience in one of the areas listed above. |
| 2. Do you meet the residency, employment, and/or affiliation requirements of the position for which you're applying? | Yes |
| 3. Which Council district do you live in? | District 2 |
| 4. Have you ever been a member of this Advisory Group | No |
| 5. Do you or your spouse have a financial interest in or are you an employee or officer of any business or agency that does business with Whatcom County? | Yes |
| If yes, please explain | <p>In the past, Lara Welker Consulting has held contracts with Whatcom County projects supporting the work of the Health and Community Services Department. Currently, Lara Welker Consulting has no active contract with Whatcom County.</p> <p>For this application, my interest is in representing Aging Well Whatcom, a community initiative of the Chuckanut Health Foundation, not Lara Welker Consulting or myself as an individual.</p> |
| 6. Have you declared candidacy (as defined by RCW 42.17A.055) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the county? | No |
| You may attach a resume or detailed summary of | Attached |

experience,
qualifications, &
interest in response to
the following questions

7. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications, professional and/or community activities, and education

Please see attachment.

8. Please describe why you're interested in serving on this Advisory Group.

Please see attachment.

References (please include daytime telephone number):

Please see attachment.

Appointment Requirements

I understand and agree

Signature of applicant:

Lara R Welker

Place Signed /
Submitted



(Section Break)

Whatcom County Public Health Advisory Board Application

Lara Welker, MPH

Aging Well Whatcom – Chuckanut Health Foundation

7. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications, professional and/or community activities, and education

I have a Master's in Public Health and have worked in community health for over 35 years, mostly in Whatcom County. While my professional work has encompassed many aspects of community health, if selected to serve on the Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB), my primary focus would be strengthening the relationship between PHAB and Aging Well Whatcom (AWW), an initiative of the Chuckanut Health Foundation.

In addition to my current work with AWW-Chuckanut Health Foundation, I have expertise in healthcare access, health assessment and planning, program evaluation, coalition-building, and other aspects of public health assessment, assurance and policy development functions, as defined by the [10 Essential Public Health Services](#).

Please see my resumé, pages 3-4, for more information regarding my education and professional experience.

8. Please describe why you're interested in serving on this Advisory Group.

As noted above, my primary interest in serving on the PHAB is to support the connection between PHAB and Aging Well Whatcom (AWW), a community initiative of the Chuckanut Health Foundation. More broadly, my interest is in helping our local public health community increase awareness of and attention to aging and older adults, who comprise about a fifth of Whatcom County's population.

Public health (both nationally and locally) has traditionally focused little on aging and older adults. However, with seniors comprising an increasing portion of our community's population, this is a demographic that we cannot continue to overlook. Prevention, one of the cornerstones of public health, applies to older adults as well as to younger people, as do key social determinants of health such as housing, social connection, and access to healthcare.

AWW's vision is to build a community with the culture, physical infrastructure, social supports, and services for all of us to age well. Ways to accomplish this are outlined in the community-developed Aging Well [Community Blueprint](#). My participation in PHAB would bring an understanding of the blueprint strategies, the data that informs them, and how they could align with other community health efforts.

For more information about the Blueprint, please see the [Summary](#) and [Policy Opportunities to Advance the Health and Well-Being of Older Adults in Whatcom County](#).

The AWW Steering Committee includes representatives from the Whatcom Council on Aging and the Northwest Regional Council, Whatcom County's two primary agencies serving older adults through programs, services, and advocacy. Other sectors represented on the Steering Committee include philanthropy, housing, transportation, long term care, and healthcare. If selected to serve on PHAB, my

participation would provide connectivity to numerous organizations in multiple sectors working with and for older adults.

In addition to strengthening connections to community efforts related to older adult, my participation on PHAB would contribute to meeting its goals (and mandates) related to diversity and health equity.

[RCW 70.46.140](#) states that advisory board members must be recruited *“in a manner that solicits **broad diversity** to assure representation from marginalized communities...”* Age is an important, but often unrecognized, dimension of diversity. And due to our society’s negative views of aging, older adults are a marginalized community. When older adults are also members of other marginalized groups (e.g., racial minorities, LGBTQ+, low-income), they experience multiple layers of bias and exclusion.

Membership requirements specified in [RCW 70.46.140](#) (and reaffirmed in Whatcom County Code [24.01.051](#)) state that the board shall *“Use a **health equity** framework to conduct, assess, and identify the community health needs...”* Health equity is a lens and a practice that can and should be applied to older adults as well as other demographic groups.

In summary, our community in general, and our local public health community in particular, can do more to consider both the needs of older adults and the assets they bring to our efforts. I hope to contribute to this by strengthening the link between PHAB and Aging Well’s Blueprint and Steering Committee.

9. References (please include daytime telephone number):

- 1) Heather Flaherty, Executive Director, Chuckanut Health Foundation, (360) 224-7313
- 2) Chris Orr, Executive Director, Whatcom Council on Aging, (704) 617-2712
- 3) Bethany Chamberlin, Planner, Northwest Regional Council, (360) 684-4477

LARA WELKER, MPH

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- ♦ Over 30 years of experience in community health improvement
- ♦ Leadership in partnership development, collaboration, and community building
- ♦ Extensive experience with program planning, management, and evaluation
- ♦ Exceptional interpersonal and written communication skills; bilingual English-Spanish
- ♦ Demonstrated ability to collaborate with diverse people, groups, and organizations

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lara Welker Consulting, Bellingham WA | 2016-present

Community health improvement consultant, specializing in supporting collaborative and multi-sector initiatives.

Recent projects I have led or supported:

- ♦ Aging Well Whatcom, Chuckanut Health Foundation | 2017-present
- ♦ Oral Health Local Impact Network, North Sound Accountable Community of Health|2023-present
- ♦ Whatcom Community Health Insights data platform, Whatcom Health & Community Services|2023-2024
- ♦ Strategic Planning Community Partner Workgroups, Whatcom Council on Aging | 2022
- ♦ Healthcare Coalition for COVID Response, Whatcom County Health Department | 2020-2022
- ♦ Dental Clinic Feasibility Assessment, Bellingham Technical College | 2020
- ♦ Advance Care Planning Community Assessment, NW Life Passages Coalition | 2019
- ♦ Community Health Worker Network, Whatcom Family and Community Network | 2018-2019

Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement, Bellingham, WA | 2009-2016

Program Manager

Provided oversight and leadership for healthcare access programs, including new program implementation and evaluation; responsible for grant proposals, compliance and reporting; hired, trained and supervised staff; led process to develop of shared values and build positive organizational culture.

Prevention and Wellness Services, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA | 2003-2009

Campus Community Coalition Coordinator

Organized collaborative projects to reduce student high-risk alcohol use; oversaw the Coalition's daily operations and communications, developed membership and workgroups with campus and community stakeholders; led strategic planning and program evaluation; supervised staff and volunteers.

Shasta County Public Health Department, Redding, CA | 2000-2002

Community Development Coordinator

Developed partnerships between local health department and rural community groups; guided community health assessment and strategic planning processes, and implemented health promotion projects and initiatives. Also provided leadership and training for Community Health Advocates (lay health promoters).

Sea Mar Community Health Center, Bellingham, WA | 1993-2000

Clinic Health Educator & Outreach Coordinator

Provided health education to patients as part of primary care team at Federally Qualified Community Health Center; developed, implemented and evaluated education programs regarding diabetes management, smoking cessation, family planning and other health issues; coordinated health outreach to migrant farm worker camps.

Migrant Education Program, Laurel & Lynden, WA | 1989-1998**Community Health Educator**

Developed and implemented health curriculum for K-12 migrant summer school; provided academic and social support for migrant farmworker students in middle and high schools.

Whatcom Food Bank Network, Bellingham, WA | 1992-1993**Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator**

Planned, coordinated, and evaluated food security outreach program for low-income residents; developed referral networks with community social service providers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SKILLS

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND FACILITATION

- ♦ Outstanding facilitation skills for meetings, trainings, and other group work
- ♦ Extensive experience in developing and sustaining strategic partnerships and coalitions
- ♦ Unique ability to bring together diverse stakeholders to work toward a common goal
- ♦ Experienced in strategic planning for programs and organizations
- ♦ Highly skilled at working as a member of multidisciplinary and collaborative teams

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- ♦ Experienced in developing grant proposals, and managing and evaluating grant-funded programs
- ♦ Skilled at program implementation and leading outreach initiatives and service expansions
- ♦ Seasoned and effective supervisor; experienced with performance review and improvement planning
- ♦ Proficient in capacity-building for staff, including lay health promoters and peer educators
- ♦ Innate drive to build sustainable organizational infrastructure, such as staff development, creating policies and procedures, and fostering a mission-based organizational culture

TEACHING AND TRAINING

- ♦ Deep understanding of theories of change and approaches to motivating change
- ♦ Experienced at planning and delivering workshops and trainings
- ♦ Strong knowledge of key health topics including nutrition, oral health, chronic disease management, and sexual health; skilled at researching content
- ♦ Ability to create documents, graphics, and Power Point presentations to communicate complex information and concepts; skilled use of tools to ensure appropriate literacy level

EDUCATION

Master of Public Health, Health Education and Promotion Specialization, 2002**University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Seattle, WA**

Thesis: "A Case Study of Partnership Development between a Local Health Department and a Grassroots Community Group."

Bachelor of Science in Community Health Education; Minor in Spanish, 1992**Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA**

Community Health Internships: Colorado Migrant Health Program, Delta, Colorado; Secretaria de Salud (Ministry of Health), Chiapas, Mexico