



What We Heard...

Notes from the OHWN Network Meeting, September 2017

Oceanside Health and Wellness is Growing

The Oceanside Health and Wellness Network (OHWN) is expanding! More members are joining, creating a solid foundation for collective action on key community health priorities. In order to welcome the new members to the table, OHWN hosted a Network meeting on September 21, 2017. Twenty-five community members gathered at Arrowsmith Lodge to meet one another, discuss areas of shared interest and hear about OHWN's strategic plan and upcoming activities. We posed a few questions to the members and the following is what we heard.

Why did you join OHWN? What do you see are benefits for you to be part of the Network?

Community-based solutions

Participants told us that having a community based network is a benefit to Oceanside - it can bring the community together. Local foundations can support the work and there can be a stronger community representation on key issues.

"OHWN is community-based – this aligns with our organization in serving the local community."

Collaboration

We heard that collaboration is a key benefit of the Network. Identifying and building relationships with community partners will lead to better services, stronger connections and wise actions.

"We develop better solutions through collaboration."

Prevention

People want to see more energy directed to prevention – to address the social determinants of health and prevent poor health.

"Moving from crisis care to prevention is the right direction."

Recognize the health issues that need attention

There is a recognition that some health concerns in our region need to be urgently addressed, from child poverty to seniors' health, to mental health and substance use.

"I was shocked to learn the child poverty numbers in our region."

Catch OHWN announcements, updates, and invitations to community events - ensure you sign up online to become a member and receive our e-newsletter: www.rdn.bc.ca/join-ohwn

What is most important thing the Health Network can do together?

Bring people together

Convening meetings and opportunities for Network members to share information and find solutions is a core message we heard at the meeting. It is important to bring together non-traditional partners such as the business community – together we are stronger.

"Need to work together locally – not wait for government or larger organizations to 'fix' things for us."

Share information

Participants talked about the importance of developing and sharing common messages, communicating to the public, and keeping Network members informed of local data and key issues.

"Start the communication! Raise awareness!"

Catalyze collective impact – address gaps, reduce duplication

OHWN has an important role to play in catalyzing collective impact by providing opportunities to break down the silos and invite organizations to work together on shared priorities. This will help to reduce duplication and fill gaps.

"There is too much competition for resources and information – we need a synergistic approach with agencies/individuals working together."

What do you think you can contribute?

With the diversity around the room, everyone is able to bring something to the table. Here are a few of the responses:

- "Access to funds"
- "Human resources, data, training"
- "Public affairs, public relations – getting word out"
- "Bring together ideas, leverage resources in government and health care"
- "Bring new, grass roots perspectives"

OHWN will host Network meetings throughout the year. The next one will be in the Spring of 2018.