

Orcas Island Health Care District Strategic Planning Update

August 23, 2022

Since we last conferenced, HFPD has conducted listening sessions both in Spanish and English with families with children at home. Top issues are desire for a pediatrician and extend hours (walk-in? urgent care?), lower costs, less wait time, and a sliding fee scale that is consistently offered.

- To date- 12 persons have participated, 4 more scheduled for next week. 9 had no insurance.
- In each case, the conversation quickly shifted from discussing their children's health care to general health care issues on the Island.
- Key takeaways to date, for Spanish speaking:
 - If they want their child to be cared for by provider "that understands children", and specifically a pediatrician, they go off island.
 - If they think it is an emergency they will try to access the Clinic first, but will be prepared to go off Island. Conversely, many believe that they will be told to go off Island, and because they have no insurance they don't want to be billed 2x; they just go without a local stop first.
 - "Double billing" was mentioned frequently; as was the need for the providers to have warm handoffs to ensure that they are referred to the right place the first time. If not, more visits, equate to more \$.

Themes continued:

- There is a strong perception that local clinic providers are not caring (seems to be commingled with amount of time spent and perceived lack of warm handoffs).
- There is excitement that the new clinic provider is bilingual, but she is reported to already be too busy for easy access. Discussion about a new front desk person that is bilingual as well.
- Lots of examples cited about charges at the clinic—including for visits supposedly cancelled 2 weeks in advance.
- Don't want to feel rushed in the appointment
- Wait times to appointments are long— 1 month or longer. “It was better when there were 2 clinics”.
- Extended hours, and ideally 24/7 urgent care
- Looking for information on how services work/coordinate with others and how much they cost.
- Going off island now, often involves an overnight hotel

Suggestion on
current draft goals:
Clarify the
District's role with
the community
and with the
Clinic.

- Assure OIHCD's goals are highly relevant to the clinic operator.
- **GOAL 1: ISLANDERS HAVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**
 - Objective 1.1 In partnership with Island Hospital, OIHCD establishes access related operating performance standards, and after review of the Clinic's annual budget and reports on the financial position of the Island Health Orcas clinic; OIHCD uses tax revenues to subsidize the right number and mix of primary care providers working at productivity levels that are appropriate for the island's patient panel.
 - Objective 1.2 OICHD regularly solicits community input to measure access, and uses that input to refine staffing and access performance standards for the Orcas Island Clinic