



OVERVIEW

The state of Washington has a focus and commitment to bring data systems together, engage partners, and build efficient, collaborative data systems and structures. In 2022, the University of Washington Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) Project conducted interviews with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and local health jurisdiction (LHJ) staff to inform a gap analysis. The gap analysis resulted in a series of DMI roadmap recommendations related to system interoperability, communications, data governance, and workforce training.

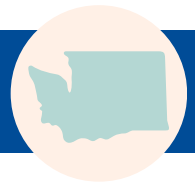
As DOH focuses on bringing data systems together and engaging the partners who use these systems more regularly, the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) will engage communities to expand stakeholder reach and get broader input into the data modernization roadmap.

Participation in the [21st Century Learning Community](#) (21C) supports the Washington Department of Health (DOH), the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) and its members, and partners to carry out DMI recommendations and expand reach and engagement.

Centering Health Equity and Well-Being in Narrative Change

In Washington, there are many ongoing cross-sector conversations discussing equity and how to center it in Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) projects that are developed and funded. Washington is thinking through and developing a community engagement strategy for their data modernization efforts, focusing on how to best engage communities most impacted by structural racism and health inequities. More work is needed in this area to truly center equity, but participation in 21C and engagement with partner is a starting point.

Washington is continuing existing efforts to build an environment that encourages and supports community input to shape government services and describes communities in ways that emphasize assets and share aspirations.



Prioritizing Equitable Governance and Community Engagement

There is system wide commitment to addressing better governance and co-decision making in Washington. Recent state collaborations with the American Indian Health Commission, on behalf of Tribes, created a Tribal Umbrella Data Sharing Agreement (TUDSA). The TUDSA formally recognizes Tribal data sovereignty, which improves data access for Tribes and Tribal epidemiology centers and provides structure to support Tribal approval before Tribal or American Indian/Alaska Native data is published, shared, researched, or analyzed. In addition, there are ongoing discussions on the promise, successes, and challenges in working together as an FPHS enterprise system to promote Tribal data sovereignty, improve data transparency, and reduce health and data inequities that will impact future efforts.

The four pillars of governmental public health in Washington – the Washington DOH, Tribal health departments, local health departments, and the Board of Health – are working together to create a system that:

- Promotes Tribal data sovereignty;
- Improves data transparency; and
- Reduces health and data inequities.

Ensure Measurement Captures & Addresses Structural Racism & Other Inequities

The governmental public health system in Washington is committed to working with system partners and Tribes, and has invested in data transformation and workforce development by allocating Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) funding to increase epidemiologist and assessment staff capacity across the state. This investment ensures staff have the knowledge and resources to work effectively, and all counties and communities can assess the health of their populations. These efforts should result in more Community Health Assessments that center equity and processes that engage communities most impacted by inequities and address structural racism.

Learn more about the Equity in Data Systems Transformation cohort [here](#).