



# Pacific North West Border Health Alliance

## Providing a Collaborative Approach to Public Health Preparedness

### INTRODUCTION

The Pacific North West Border Health Alliance (PNWBHA) is a cross border coalition of the States of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington, the Provinces of British Columbia and Saskatchewan; and the Yukon Territory. The State of North Dakota and the Provinces of Alberta and Manitoba have also been invited to participate. PNWBHA's primary goal is to provide leadership in the integration of health sector preparedness and response initiatives at all levels of government, including Tribal and First Nations, throughout the Pacific Northwest.



### BACKGROUND

In 2004 British Columbia and Alberta signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with respect to collaboration on the use of available public health and health services resources during emergencies. A similar memorandum of understanding was signed between British Columbia and Washington State in 2006.

Since 2004 the Washington State Department of Health and the British Columbia Ministry of Health Services have jointly sponsored an annual Pacific North West Cross Border Public Health Workshop on emerging public health issues, including pandemic influenza.

The MOU creating the Pacific North West Border Health Alliance provides the framework for collaborative work, including mutual assistance and inter-agency and interdisciplinary collaboration in the Pacific North West.

### VISION

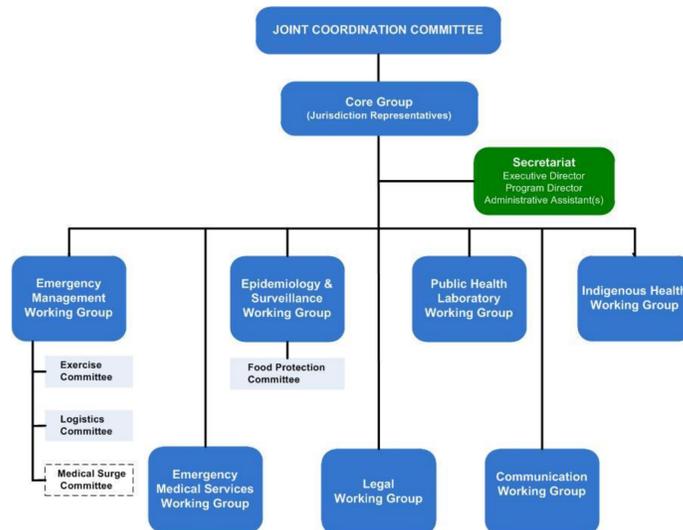
A seamless cross border and cross jurisdictional public health surveillance and emergency response network in the Pacific Northwest.

### MISSION

To provide a forum for inter-jurisdictional collaboration in identifying and promoting "best practices" of the participating jurisdictions to prepare for, respond to and recover from the impacts of a health incident or other emergencies or disasters.

### GOVERNANCE

A Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) designed to enhance the working relationship among member states and provinces/territory is the operational component of the Alliance. The JCC, comprised of a Core Group (jurisdictional representatives) and eight Working Groups, is co-chaired by a Canadian and United States representative.



Note: Secretariat is administratively supported by the WA Department of Health and BC Ministry of Health

### TASKS

To maintain an organizational structure that provides leadership in the integration of public health preparedness and response initiatives at all levels of government, including Tribal and First Nations, throughout the Pacific Northwest.

To prevent and/or mitigate the potential impact of a health incident, such as; a naturally-occurring pandemic; a devastating environmental or geological event; or a terrorist attack with chemical, biological or radiological weapons, through dynamic and open collaboration.

To respond to surge capacity demands on health systems and health resources efficiently and in a cost effective manner when health emergencies arise in any PNWBHA jurisdiction; and

To assess current and explore future areas of collaboration that could result in efficiencies when providing health services in all Alliance jurisdictions.

### WHAT WE DO

Identify opportunities to improve collaborative early warning infectious disease surveillance and surveillance information sharing between the participating jurisdictions

Develop plans to address surge capacity demands on health systems and resources, including a 24/7 response protocol between participating jurisdictions that would identify appropriate contacts and their roles.

Assess current and explore future areas of collaboration that could result in efficiencies in the provision of health services

Conduct an annual Cross Border Public Health Preparedness Workshop.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Conducted eight (8) cross border public health preparedness workshops
- ▶ Created Exercise, Logistics, Medical Surge and Food Protection Committees
- ▶ Launched an Indigenous Health Initiative
- ▶ Joined the CA-US Pan Border Public Health Preparedness Council (PBPHPC)
- ▶ Developed public health information and laboratory capacity sharing Memorandums of Understanding
- ▶ Interoperable emergency communications initiative gained momentum
- ▶ Developed guidelines for cross border movement of Emergency Medical Services staff and resources



### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact us if you have any comments or questions:

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