

# Public Health - Seattle & King County, Washington

## Community Health Services Division Director



Neher &  
Associates<sup>®</sup>

# Seattle - King County Region and Government

The King County/Greater Seattle area is bordered by Puget Sound on the west and the Cascade Mountains on the east in the State of Washington, 113 miles from the US – Canadian border. Surrounded by mountains and water, protected farmlands and open spaces, the region features picture-perfect views and abundant recreational opportunities year-round. King County residents enjoy natural beauty, world class museums, a vibrant cultural scene, professional sports teams, restaurants and activities that appeal to a wide range of interests.

A few of the major attractions in the area include the Seattle Center and Space Needle; Pike Place Market; the Hiram Chittenden Locks; Woodland Park Zoo; Tillicum Indian Village; Seattle Aquarium; Waterfront, Lakeside and Sound Beaches; Pioneer Square; International District; the Seattle Symphony; Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet; numerous art galleries and theatre companies, music, food, film and arts festivals and local wineries and breweries. The region is also home to Mariners baseball (MLB); Seahawks football (NFL); Seattle Sounders soccer (MLS, 2009 US Open Cup Champions); and the WNBA 2004 and 2010 World Champion Seattle Storm (professional women's basketball). The Seattle-King County area also provides a multitude of outdoor activities including boating, fishing, golf, water sports, hiking, biking, mountain climbing and skiing. The Seattle-King County area attracts more than 9 million overnight visitors annually to the above attractions among others.

There is also an abundance of fine educational opportunities through the public and private school systems, as well as public and private two-year and four-year colleges and universities. A few of the colleges and universities in the area include: Bellevue College, University of Washington - Seattle, Antioch University - Seattle, City University of Seattle, Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, the Art Institute of Seattle, and many more.

With 2,307 square miles of water and land, King County ranks 11th in geographical size among counties in the United States and first among Washington State's 39 counties. At just over 1.9 million, the county ranks number one in population in the State, and is the 14th most populous county in the nation as well as the financial, economic and industrial center of the Pacific Northwest region. There are also 39 cities and towns in King County, of which Seattle is the largest with a population of approximately 610,000.

King County operates under a Home Rule Charter adopted by a vote of the citizens of King County in 1968 and is organized under the Council-Executive (both elected) form of government. The Metropolitan King County Council is the policy-making legislative body of the county. The County Council's nine members are elected by district and serve on a full-time basis. The County Executive serves as the chief executive officer for the county, leading the departments and about 18,000 employees and a county budget of approximately \$5 billion. Through sound financial planning, the County Executive oversees the delivery of such services as finance, human resources, communications, jails, transportation, environmental protection, parks, wastewater

treatment, licensing, and public health, etc. Other elected county officials include the Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Assessor, and District and Superior Court Judges. In 1986 the county was renamed for civil rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The King County/Greater Seattle area is a vibrant international community with residents that represent countries from around the world. It is a region that embraces diversity and cherishes the artistic and social traditions of many cultures. The area provides an excellent working and living environment for its residents and their families, and ranks among the 100 highest-income counties in the United States. King County excels in livability with a wide range of housing options, good primary, secondary and advanced educational institutions and health care facilities available to its residents.

Major business/employers in the region include: Starbucks Corp, The Boeing Co., Microsoft, University of Washington, Paccar, Inc., Providence Health and Services, Amazon.com, Inc., King County and the City of Seattle, Eddie Bauer Holdings, Inc., Savers, Inc., Alaska Air Group, Weyerhaeuser Co., Expedia, Inc. and others.

The King County/Greater Seattle area also offers a confluence of opportunities and resources that cannot be duplicated, including the University of Washington Schools of Medicine and Public Health and Community Medicine, as well as the University's Department of Global Health and the Center for AIDS and STD; numerous vibrant biotechnology companies; the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center; several nonprofit health research and prevention agencies such as Battelle Memorial Institute and its Seattle-based Public Health Center for Research and Evaluation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Seattle Biomedical Research Institute, and the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH).

## Public Health – Seattle & King County

Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) exists to achieve and sustain healthy people and healthy communities throughout King County by providing public health services that promote health and prevent disease. The Department serves over 1.9 million residents of King County including the City of Seattle, incorporated suburban cities, and unincorporated areas of the county.

PHSKC operates as a King County department, with a major contractual relationship and Interlocal Agreement with the City of Seattle, calling for mutual accountability and collaboration with City of Seattle officials (Mayor, Council, and Department of Human Services). The City of Seattle contributes financially to King County for public health services and school-based health services. King County and the City of Seattle collaborate routinely and meet regularly to discuss goals, objectives of service delivery and outcomes and to share updates on Public Health priorities of both governments. The Director/Health Officer for Public Health – Seattle & King County is also a member of the Executive Cabinet for King County and the Mayor's cabinet for the City of Seattle.

Public Health – Seattle & King County provides a wide variety of regional services that protect and promote the health of all county residents, as well as hundreds of thousands of workers and tourists who





enter the county each day on business and pleasure. The Department provides a broad range of services that includes: Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Clinical Health Services, Services for Specific Community Needs, and Health Promotion and Prevention. The department provides a number of clinical services that are intrinsic to its population-based prevention efforts. The department operates in a complex environment that also includes 45 different spoken languages, numerous acute care hospitals, and international air and seaports. More specific services include restaurant and drinking water inspections, hazardous waste disposal, communicable disease control, sexually transmitted disease and tuberculosis control, HIV/AIDS prevention, chronic disease and injury prevention programs, health education and promotion, emergency preparedness, pandemic flu and disaster planning, family planning, maternal and child health programs, and clinical health services for low-income and uninsured residents. In addition to a Chief Administrative Officer (Finance, HR, Compliance, Administrative Support, etc.) and a Chief of Staff, other major reports to the Public Health Director/Health Officer include: Assessment, Policy Development and Evaluation; Policy, Community Partnerships, Communications; and Preparedness. Major divisions of the Department include: Environmental Health Services, Jail Health Services, Emergency Medical Services, Prevention Services and Community Health Services.

The Metropolitan King County Council has established a King County Board of Health representing the County and Cities. The current Board of Health is constituted as a federated body with ten (10) voting members and one (1) nonvoting member. Eight of the ten voting members are elected officials – 3 from the Metropolitan King County Council (whose votes are weighted as two votes), 3 from the Seattle City Council, and 2 from the suburban cities of King County. The 2 remaining members are health professionals that are selected by the other members of the Board. A third professional serves as the nonvoting member. The functions of the board are to set county-wide public health policy, enact and enforce local public health regulations, and carry out other duties of local boards of health as specified in state law including enforcing state public health statutes, preventing and controlling the spread of infectious disease, abating nuisances and establishing fee schedules for licenses, permits and other services.

With a total agency budget of approximately \$325 million, about 1,500 employees in multiple sites, and a service population of over 1.9 million, Public Health – Seattle & King County is one of the largest public health departments in the nation.

PHSKC is nationally recognized as one of the best major metropolitan health departments in the country, with a reputation for innovation and excellence in science-based public health practice. Epidemiology, data and scientific principles are central drivers of the Department's public health policies and practice. The Department is looking for a Director of the Community Health Services Division who (as a key Division Head) can assist the Director of Public Health/Health Officer in providing leadership that will not only continue this excellence, but strengthen it to address the many local and global public health challenges faced by the region.

For more information about the department, visit <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health.aspx>

## Director of Community Health Services

Community Health Services assures the provision of clinical health care services in King County through policy and planning work with partners and through the direct provision of clinical services. Community Health Services include parent-child health services, preventive and primary care services, oral health, homeless health care, youth health services, integrated behavioral health services, outreach, family planning, WIC, refugee services, and pharmacy services.

The Director of Community Health Services is a key Division Director within the Public Health Department and is responsible for the largest Division in the Department with an annual budget of over \$100 million and 800 staff/employees.

In addition to the broad based services mentioned above, some of the major programs reporting to the Director of Community Services include: Public Health Centers & Field Operations (multiple sites and facilities), Community Health Services Quality, Special Projects (Dental, Family Planning, Nutrition, Primary Care, Maternity Support, Nurse Family Partnership/White Center Early Learning Initiative (NFP/WCELI), Social Work, etc). Regional Projects, Access & Outreach, Child Profile, Community & School Based Programs, Health Care for the Homeless (HCHN), Finance and Administration and other support services (Business Office/Decision Support, Application Support & Training, HR, Procurement, Finance & Infrastructure Support, Administrative Support, etc.) and Triple Aim. The Director also works in close collaboration with the Clinical/Service Chiefs (Chief Medical Officer, Dental Director, Chief of Pharmacy, and Nursing Director).

The Community Health Services Director will take the lead in setting the strategic direction for the Division to help assure that residents of King County have access to quality health service that helps prevent the leading causes of poor health, reduces health disparities, and increases the number of healthy years lived. The Director is also expected to be a leader in the Department and community in helping to assure quality clinical health care services throughout the County.

In addition, he/ she is responsible for partnerships with Community Health Centers, hospitals and other health care and safety net providers; coordination and partnerships with agencies providing social and wrap around services that help improve the health of the population through integrated care management; developing and leading innovative community health programs; and designing and overseeing clinical operations at multiple public health center sites.

He/she will lead the Division in achieving a higher quality, more cost-efficient, accessible health system, while being innovative and strategic about future directions, roles, and service delivery models during a time of substantial change and reform in the health care system. Candidates should have strengths in high-level management, external relations, and oversight of clinical operations.

Appointed by the Public Health Director/Health Officer, other duties/responsibilities of the Community Health Services Director include:

## **Leadership**

- Strategically positioning the Community Health Services Division to establish the partnerships, services, and business practices that will enable it to improve the health of the population, enhance the quality of services, and contain costs.
- Building cohesive, dedicated, highly effective teams, and providing the tools, systems, and resources that create a supportive team environment and inspire commitment.
- Setting high standards of performance, pursuing aggressive goals, and persisting in the face of obstacles.
- Developing and maintaining strong and effective relations with labor.
- Working with the Chiefs of Medical, Nursing, Dental, and Pharmacy services to assure high quality and safe patient care that is driven by evidence and that complies with applicable rules, regulations, and statutes.
- Actively working to eliminate the root causes of inequities by taking into account equity and social justice impacts in Division decision-making and programs.

## **Strategic Partnerships and Stakeholder Relations**

- Convening and collaborating with partners in the community health system to build systems of care that improve access to quality, affordability, and integrated health care.
- Participating in the development and implementation of a more accountable and cost-effective health care system for underserved populations.
- Maintaining strong liaisons with diverse groups of stakeholders, such as community health centers, health plans, hospitals, local and state government, behavioral health organizations, schools of medicine and nursing, and state and regional primary care associations and representing Public Health in a range of national, regional, and state organizations, commissions, task forces, and groups.
- Effectively communicating with both internal and external partners, including other Public Health Divisions, other County departments, regional and local governments, elected officials, the media, and residents of King County.
- Communicating honestly, being consistent, following through on commitments, and creating an atmosphere of integrity, marked by fair and respectful behavior.

## **Management of Division Programs, Operations, and Finances**

- Recommending, developing, and implementing new and revised policies and programs that respond to strategic goals.
- Overseeing the change management process, including successful communication strategies, involving others in the implementation of change, and monitoring and reinforcing process and success. Creating an environment that encourages original and innovative solutions.
- Providing leadership to assure effective budget management and adherence to applicable federal, state, and local rules, regulations, and statutes concerning personnel, expenditure of funds, third party billing and reimbursement, program operations, grants management, and professional practice requirements.
- Assuring the presentation of clear and complete information to various governance and advisory bodies as a basis for sound, appropriate guidance and decision-making regarding policy, program direction, and strategic priorities.
- Facilitating community involvement in aspects of program service delivery when possible and maintaining communication with health care providers and community leaders.
- Recommending and implementing organizational and administrative changes and improvements in the Division and Department as appropriate.
- Formulating and implementing actions to establish quality standards and measures to continuously improve services of the Division.
- Performing and assuming other duties and related work responsibilities as assigned.

## **Issues and Challenges**

A few issues, challenges and opportunities for the Director of the Community Health Services Division of Public Health - Seattle & King County include:

- Provide pro-active leadership, rather than reactive, in response to pending Health Care Reform.
- Review and monitor federal and state funding related to ongoing revenue, future anticipated revenue losses, ongoing subsidization



and maximization, and potential new sources of revenue and income. Also address the current economic climate/funding issues and impact on public health services by examining other than traditional funding sources and looking at more entrepreneurial approaches.

- Support the on-going development, up-dating and implementation of the Public Health Operational Master Plan and its objective to develop a sustainable operational and financing model for the provision of essential public health services.
- Continue monitoring and improvement of service delivery and improve on the sometimes “siloed” nature of divisions and programs within the Public Health Department
- Continue recruitment, development, and retaining a skilled staff in the Division that reflects the diversity of the community while also addressing the “aging” of the work force in some disciplines and the resultant need for more succession planning.
- Update strategic planning and service delivery documents relative to the Division.
- Provide Department, Division and communitywide leadership to improve response to cultural barriers and health disparities for improvement of service delivery to all parts of the community.
- Examine the Department and Division’s role in providing clinical services, particularly primary care services, and work with community providers to assure access to care for vulnerable populations and best use of mutual resources.
- Work on the evolving nature of clinical service delivery during a period of significant change, evolving financing systems and options, and respond strategically to changes and opportunities as they occur.
- Continue to build on strategic partnerships, collaborative relationships, and innovation, and facilitate communication between King County, City of Seattle and suburban cities; between public health and the health care and other related service systems and between practitioners and the research and academic communities.
- Enhance QA, business operations and efficiencies within the Division to assure that services meet community standards for quality, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Qualifications

### Education

- A degree from an accredited college or university in public health, public administration, management, business, or disciplines directly related to public health, such as epidemiology, medicine, preventive medicine, health services, environmental health, healthcare administration, or related field. A Master’s Degree is preferred.

### Experience, Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate should have progressive, responsible experience in public health or community health and familiarity with management of clinical health care delivery in a public health department, health services organization or comparable organization. He/she should also have extensive knowledge of management, public health principles, and service delivery, assessment strategies, techniques, and evaluation/quality improvement tools and techniques as they apply to public health practice. In addition, this person should have experience/knowledge/skills in:



- Principles and practices of public and business administration.
- Direct oversight or at least a general knowledge or awareness of clinical management.
- Culturally competent health improvement strategies for low-income, underserved, and vulnerable population groups.
- Healthcare Safety Net Systems for low-income, uninsured, and under-insured populations.
- Health services administration, including principles and practices of healthcare financing, health information technology, and program management.
- Legislative process and policy decision-making, including working with elected officials, local, state and federal agencies.
- Evaluating funding sources and determining the appropriate courses of action to keep programs, projects, and services funded and responding timely and appropriately to established guidelines and requirements.
- Supervision, including team building, training, performance, change management, conflict resolution and labor relations techniques and principles.

- Budgetary principles and practices, and understanding of policy and information issues in a complex public service agency.
- Building community and business based collaborations and coalitions to improve the public's health.
- Emerging issues and strategies related to public health service delivery.
- Understanding a broad range of health issues as they relate to diverse populations.
- Managing a large, diverse staff and personnel management including the ability to coordinate and delegate, supervise, train and develop staff, assess staff capabilities, handle/prevent personnel problems, and optimize staff skills and communication.

In addition, he/she should be able to:

- Express ideas effectively, both orally and in writing and have strong public relations skills.
- Serve with honesty and integrity, and establish and maintain effective working relationships with the general public, consumers of service, co-workers, other agencies and organizations, and members of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds regardless of race, religion, age, sex, disability, political affiliation, or sexual orientation.
- Demonstrate success managing in a complex service environment and a commitment to equity and social justice.

The selected individual will also be required to pass a thorough background investigation, and comply with state and federal law related to protecting privacy and security of health information.

### **Management Style and Personal Traits**

The successful candidate will be someone who is approachable, open to staff and the community, is able to engage easily in critical thinking to solve complex problems, and is able to translate big picture vision and goals into long and short range plans that are comprehensive, realistic and effective. He/she should be a team builder and leader with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to mobilize the leadership of staff and colleagues, have excellent verbal and written communication skills, and be comfortable in a diverse and complex organization and community. He/she should have a good business orientation, be results oriented, pragmatic and credible while at the same time able to demonstrate an understanding of health disparities and social determinants and implementation of effective programs and policies that eliminate health disparities.

The person should be politically astute, an active listener who is engaging and collaborative, and sensitive to the needs, feelings, and opinions of others. He/she should also, however, be decisive and able to make tough decisions when necessary. In addition, the person selected should be a good strategic thinker who can also analyze complex scientific and managerial problems, issues, challenges, and opportunities, evaluate alternative solutions, and adopt effective courses of action. He/she should appreciate new technology, and have strong follow-through on projects and programs to ensure appropriateness, efficiency, completion, and quality. Finally, he/she should have a commitment to public service, and be a champion of good public health services for all citizens (especially the underserved) on a local, regional, and national level.

### **Compensation**

The salary for this position will be dependent upon experience and qualifications. King County offers an excellent fringe benefits package for the employee, spouse/domestic partner and dependents. The current salary range is approximately \$119,000 to \$151,000 annually. Details are available upon request.

Relocation assistance may be available to the selected candidate.

### **How to Apply**

If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please submit a detailed resume as soon as possible to:

Robert Neher, FACHE, President or  
Lawrence Davenport, EdD, Executive Vice President

#### **Neher & Associates**

299 Westlake Drive  
Suite 200  
West Sacramento, CA 95605

Telephone: (916) 443-2421  
Facsimile: (916) 443-5949

Applications are preferred electronically at:

[robertneher@executivesearchneher.com](mailto:robertneher@executivesearchneher.com)

Should you have any questions with regard to your own interest, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact us at the numbers above. The position will be open until filled; however, it is advisable to apply as early as possible.

***King County is an employer that embraces diversity. An Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer. Female, minority and disabled candidates are encouraged to apply.***

