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Island County Environmental Health Initiative (ICEHI)

- Current Status of Environmental Health at the Local Level
- Our Solution- the PACE-EH Model
- Our Expectations for this Project

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Island County

- Small Rural Health Department in Washington State
- Comprised of 5 islands, NW of Seattle
- Over 200 miles of shoreline
- 14 EH Professionals
- EH programs generally fee and grant supported

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Traditional Environmental Health

- Traditional environmental health tends to be well-meaning yet regulatory in nature.
- Sometimes a disconnect occurs between those charged with enforcing the regulations & those being regulated
- Public doesn't always understand the intent or reasoning behind the regulations

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Why Change?

- **Advantages of Community Involvement in decision-making and priority-setting based on data are...**
- **Better public understanding of relationship between regulations and the prevention of disease**
- **Increased public support for environmental health programs**
- **Increased access to local non-governmental resources**

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Our Solution: *PACE-EH*



A tool offering local health officials guidance in conducting a community-based environmental health assessment and creating an accurate profile of a community's environmental health status

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Why use PACE-EH?

- “National” standards and models, if they exist, are often not appropriate for local users
- *PACE EH* works (in part) due to its adaptability
 - urban vs. rural facilitators, tribal communities
 - facilitator-driven vs. community collaboration
 - large-to-small scale undertakings
- *PACE EH* is most useful when combined with additional support and guidance

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More reasons for PACE-EH

- Nationally recognized model
- Builds collaboration within local communities around EH issues
- Operationalizes the 10 Essential EH Services at the local level
- Helps communities assess, prioritize and develop solutions to local EH concerns

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Implementing PACE-EH

- The Island County Health Department and the citizen-based Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB) jointly applied for a CDC grant to implement *PACE-EH* in Island County
- Island County was awarded a CDC “Building Capacity Grant” for the 3-year project

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Some Challenges

- **Data limitations**
- **Lack of consensus**
- **Scientific view v. public perception**
- **Authority**
- **Indicators**

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Key Objectives of *PACE EH*

- Evaluate Environmental Health Conditions
- Target Populations at Risk
- Set Priorities



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PACE EH Process

Provides:

- Constituency-building
- Assessment function
- Match resources to needs
- Power-sharing with the community
- Focus on local situations and solutions
- Ground-up policy development process
- Database development

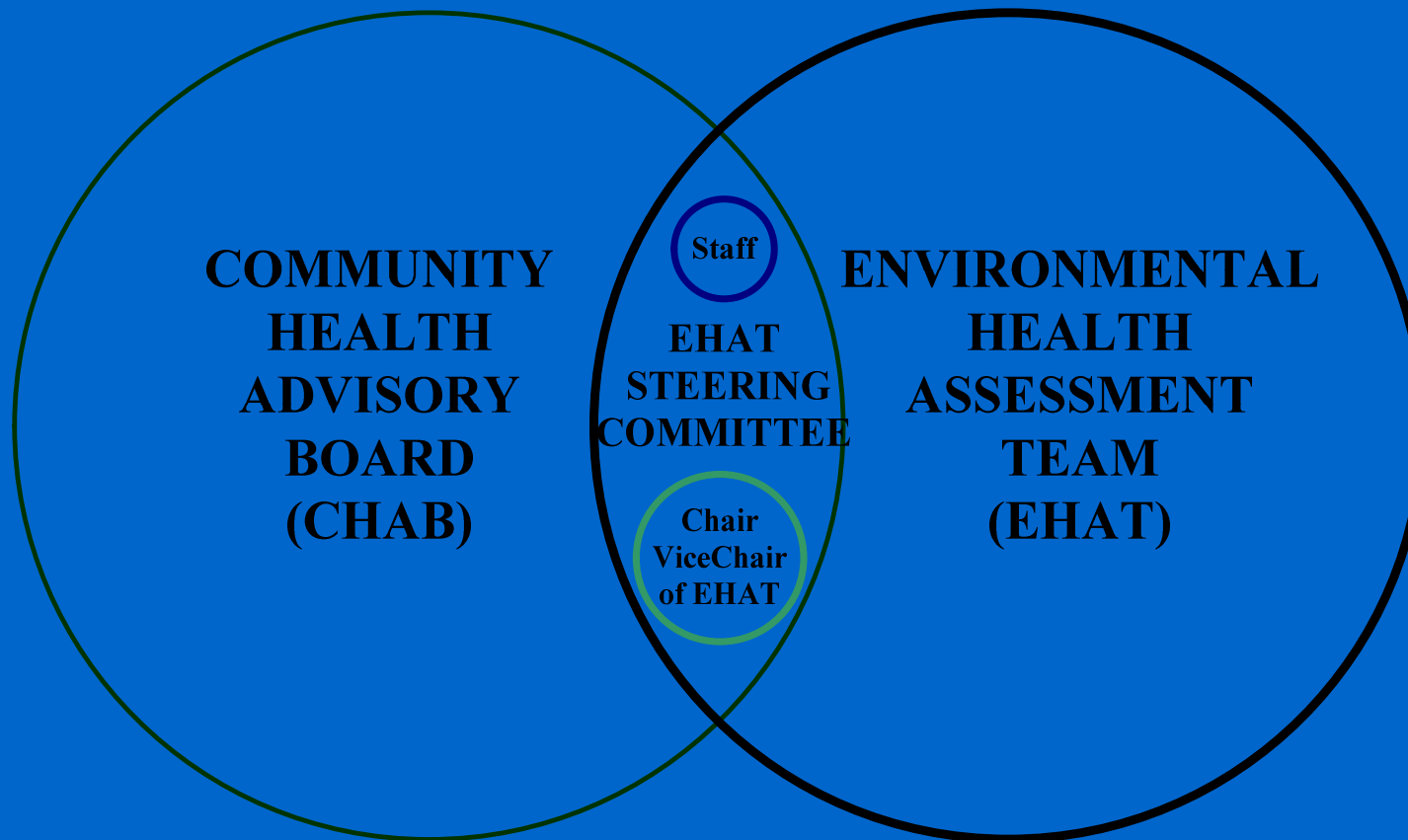
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Where are we at now?

- **Defined our community (Island County)**
- **Determined the current capacity within our Community**
- **Mobilized a Community-based Environmental Health Assessment Team (EHAT)**
 - Steering Committee is already in place
 - Members appointed by the County Board of Health
 - EHAT members meeting monthly
- **Set Goals & Objectives**
- **Interacting with the Local Board of Health**
- **Generating List of Environmental Health Issues**

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Structure and Evolution of EHAT



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Expectations & Objectives:

- ⇓ Implement a community-based environmental health assessment (using *PACE-EH*)
- ⇓ Measure a wide range of environmental health indicators
- ⇓ Increase data storage and retrieval capacity
- ⇓ Make policy recommendations based upon data & community input
- ⇓ Develop new relationships with the public
- ⇓ Educate staff and community



The Goals of the ICEHI...

1. Quarterly Interaction with elected officials on the Board of Health on Environmental Health issues
2. Constructing a policy development procedure with elected officials and citizens
3. Get the community thinking about EH issues from a science based perspective



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The Goals of the ICEHI...

4. Build trust & good working relationships between the community and Health Department
5. Involve the community in assessing and prioritizing EH needs based on data to develop solutions to community concerns
6. Increase capacity in the 10 Essential Environmental Health Services in Island County

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[Return to PACE-EH](#)