

NWHRN Planning Process: How the Network Develops a Planning Document

Background: The Northwest Healthcare Response Network (NWHRN) has since its inception developed written planning documents describing how the NWHRN serves its Coalition partners in healthcare emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. These documents involving partner input and validation provide an overview of the planning topic; discuss roles and responsibilities of the NWHRN and its Coalition partners; and present a unified approach to relevant organizations and officials preparing for, responding to, and recovering from incidents and events. As the NWHRN's service area has expanded, it is important to review the planning document process in order to ensure it continues to be inclusive, transparent, and provide opportunities for partner engagement while advancing Coalition strategic goals and meeting contractual deliverables.

Process: All NWHRN planning documents are initiated based on a process involving discussions and input with external partners focused on community needs. Coalition partners receive regular planning process updates and will have opportunities to provide input throughout the project's timeline. While each planning process is specific to the topic and/or service area(s) covered in the documents produced, consistencies within the planning process include:

- **Conceptualization:** NWHRN staff work with partners across the Coalition and beyond to evaluate a topic for a planning document.
- **Assessment:** A review of existing planning and other documents occurs to determine where gaps exist, and thus where planning should begin and orientate toward. Criteria for evaluating the project include the service area the document may cover; whether the topic(s) are contained in other planning documents; partner needs; and whether the idea aligns with the Coalition's strategic priorities and deliverables.
- **Engagement:** NWHRN staff leading the planning process determine who among staff and partners to consult with, engage and inform regarding the project's progress.
- **Drafting:** NWHRN will work with internal staff and partners to provide a first written draft of the planning document.
- **Review process:** After an internal review, NWHRN staff will:
 - Distribute to partners for community review.
 - Incorporate and document input from the external review. Provide partners with a summary of their collective input.
 - Validate the final product.
 - Post the document(s) to the NWHRN website and disseminate to partners
- **Next steps:** A review cycle will be developed, and a training and exercising schedule will be devised as needed.