



2021 NUHSA in Action

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we reflect on the challenges facing many in our community. Millions are experiencing economic distress and risk eviction, homelessness and hunger. Behavioral health needs have skyrocketed, and youth mental health is of particular concern. Human service providers have continued to extend themselves in extraordinary ways, but organizations are stretched thin to meet increasing demand, and even with additional funding, a sustained recovery remains elusive.

Over the last year, NUHSA has worked consistently to serve our human service providers, advocate on their behalf, and provide a supportive and collaborative network to share information, leverage resources and create greater impact. Together, our strong alliance of agencies, nonprofits, faith communities, city and county leaders, school districts and community members have helped meet the critical human service needs of our community.

The ramifications of the pandemic are severe, and many will continue to struggle. NUHSA, along with its members and partners, are proud to reaffirm our commitment to advocate for a strong and accessible health and human services system and will continue to lead North King County in ensuring everyone has the support needed to reach their full potential.

Year in Review

In 2021, NUHSA established 3 broad goals focused on advocacy, homelessness and affordable housing (both in terms of addressing short-term shelter needs and longer-term supportive housing). We have expanded our membership; grown our Board of Directors; increased communication with our members and the community through our newsletter and social media; and engaged with our members, partners and governments across North King County (NKC) in a variety of ways.

Accomplishments include the following:

Advocacy

- Developed a **comprehensive North King County Human Services Funding** working document that outlines funding distribution by each of our five NKC cities, organized by both provider recipient and area of service (e.g., youth & families, mental health, domestic violence, seniors, etc.), with the intent to share with city staff and elected leaders and advocate for overall increased human services funding. Accompanying materials include organization-specific materials that highlight services and needs and help 'make the case' for increased funding support.
- Served on the **Connect2Community Steering Committee** to build a unified information exchange network in King County and co-designed with HealthierHere, Unite Us and other community

organizations shared standards, practices and tools that support care coordination and improve health and wellness in our region.

- Endorsed and promoted the **King County Best Starts for Kids levy renewal** and hosted a virtual community information presentation with over 50 city and county elected officials, stakeholders and citizens to encourage support.
- Participated in **Lake Forest Park's Building Climate Resiliency forum** and **advocated for a local Climate Action Plan**. As the global climate crisis continues, increased natural disasters will have significant adverse human impacts that will necessitate more health and human services.
- Participated in **Fircrest Campus Stakeholders Planning Meetings** hosted by Rep. Cindy Ryu to reimagine and redevelop Fircrest to include affordable housing and house nonprofits.
- Provided a statement for the **Washington State Redistricting Commission** as they determined new legislative boundaries, encouraging the Commission to maintain existing provider service areas.
- Chaired the **Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy** Advisory Board, along with continued monitoring of implementation to note gaps in housing stability and advocating for directed funding that best serves our most vulnerable populations.
- Advocated for many important priorities related to eviction prevention, tenant support, affordable housing, behavioral health during the legislative session.

Housing/Shelter

Through work with Housing Development Consortium (HDC), ARCH and others, NUHSA is advancing a shelter and housing development agenda. The results are promising as cities across King County, and specifically in NKC, are partnering more and more.

- NUHSA helped coordinate and lead the **North King & Snoqualmie Valley Subregional Summit** of over 50 elected officials, community leaders and city staff and planning commissioner. This was the culmination of the *North King County & Snoqualmie Valley Subregional Collaboration for Affordable Housing* project that facilitated a deeper engagement in affordable housing strategies and related coordinated and coalition-based activities. NUHSA will continue to convene city staff and elected officials and cultivate connections between ARCH and non-ARCH cities and staff in order to share successful strategies and practices, streamline outcomes and avoid duplication of efforts.
- The pandemic left many unable to pay rent and at risk for eviction. NUHSA participated on the countywide **Stay Housed Stay Healthy coalition** and advocated for both emergency protections to keep renters in their homes and stronger permanent protections.
- In partnership with HDC, hosted **Housing as Healthcare: Solving Homelessness with Permanent Supportive Housing** and advocated for increased opportunities such as **Health through Housing**.
- Participated in the creation of the **North King County Coalition on Homelessness**, to leverage information and resources across sectors and jurisdictions in support of policies and community-based efforts to provide shelter and/or permanent housing options for those experiencing homelessness.

- Partnered with the City of Shoreline, St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church and Lake City Partners to host the **Shoreline Severe Weather Shelter**, now in its third year. NUHSA helped recruit and train 12 volunteers, purchased supplies and will oversee volunteer coordination throughout the Nov.1-March 30th timeframe. Last winter, the Shoreline Severe Weather Shelter was open 11 nights, serving between 2 and 11 individuals each night.
- Advocated for the successful development of **The Oaks**, a 24/7 and long-term North King County shelter in Shoreline that opened in April and provides case management and services for homeless individuals.
- Convened faith leaders and advocates to learn more about **alternative housing options** that could be implemented in NKC, including Pallet Shelters and safe parking sites, and advocated for a new location for **Camp United We Stand**, an itinerant camp hosting up to 30 individuals in an organized tent community.

Partnerships

- NUHSA has worked closely with the emerging **King County Regional Homelessness Authority** to share information, provide connection and leverage resources to support NKC providers.
- In partnership with the Cities of Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, along with the Rotary Club of Lake Forest Park, ensured ongoing support for the **YouthCare Resource Navigator** who provides case management and resources for homeless youth ages 14-22.
- Actively participated in the **Shoreline Community Court** as Court Navigator volunteers.
- Participated on procurement process and scholarship review panels for **Health Care for the Homeless Network**, **Shoreline Community College** and **Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy Advisory Board**.
- Staff and board partnered and collaborated through participation on the **King County Alliance for Human Services; Sub-regional Human Services Collaboration; North King County Mobility Coalition; and Northshore Human Services Coalition**. This year NUHSA also joined the **Bothell Kenmore Chamber of Commerce** to deepen its connections into the community.
- Partnered with other area organizations on the **King County Alliance for Human Services Racial Equity Committee**, a year-long exploration of the Alliance's role in racial justice that will help inform NUHSA's work in addressing racial equity and help determine how we operationalize our values for real impact.

Monthly meetings provide opportunities for NUHSA members, the Board of Directors and community advocates to learn about area services and organizations and build a foundation for partnership and collaboration.

Presentations included:

Gordon McHenry, President & CEO; **United Way of King County**

Barbie Collins Young, Executive Director; **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – Eastside**

Amy Hart & Fergie Rodriguez, Case Managers; **Dispute Resolution Center (DRC)**

Chris Lovings, Community Engagement Manager; **Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP)**

Maggie Harger, North King County Mobility Coalition; **Hopelink**

Michell Lloyd, Safety, Security & Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative Lead; **King County Metro State Representative Lauren Davis** (32nd Legislative District)

State Representative Gerry Pollet (46th Legislative District)

Sara Jaye Sanford, Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation (APDE); **Public Health Seattle King County**

Amy King, CEO/Founder; **Pallet**

Brooke Knight, CEO; **Northshore Senior Center**

Cathy Murahashi, Education & Advocacy Manager; **Community Homes**

Neba Zaidi, Community Engagement & Outreach Manager; **New Beginnings**

Sharissa Tjok, Community Health Services Manager; **International Community Health Centers (ICHS)**

Adrian Domingues, Chief Data Officer, **Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB)**

NUHSA hosted speakers and prioritized meeting discussions that reflected current issues and member needs. We identified gaps and leveraged resources to better connect and serve our community. Monthly meetings provided:

- A focus on **NKC human services needs** with an overview of the 2021-2022 King County Community Health Needs Assessment Report and training to navigate the site and identify data specific to NKC.
- Multiple opportunities for cities to share priorities and distribution processes of **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding**. As cities make decisions around utilization of ARPA funding, NUHSA has advocated for investments in human services organizational capacity and infrastructure.
- Regular updates on city and county **eviction prevention efforts, legislation and tenant support**.
- Information sharing on **school re-opening** efforts related to basic needs support, including food access, rental assistance, behavioral health/counseling, testing/healthcare, transportation, childcare and remote learning. Key was connecting school districts with human service organizations, particularly as we transitioned into summer.
- Supported **NKC public transportation and mobility services and resources**, including a focus on reform efforts to improve equity and access.

Other presentations provided a focus on **mental health, domestic violence, seniors, NKC's COVID response** and **supporting those with disabilities** through housing and services.

Events

Affordable Housing Week (May)

Partnered with Housing Development Consortium to advocate for *Affordable Housing Week*.

2021 Human Services Awards (Dec.)

Honored 12 individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the health and welfare of our community by advocating for health and human services and strengthening our community through their initiative and leadership.

NUHSA is invested in supporting our community and ensuring that all North King County residents have access to a strong and accessible health and human services system.

Join us!