



INTRODUCTION TO THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

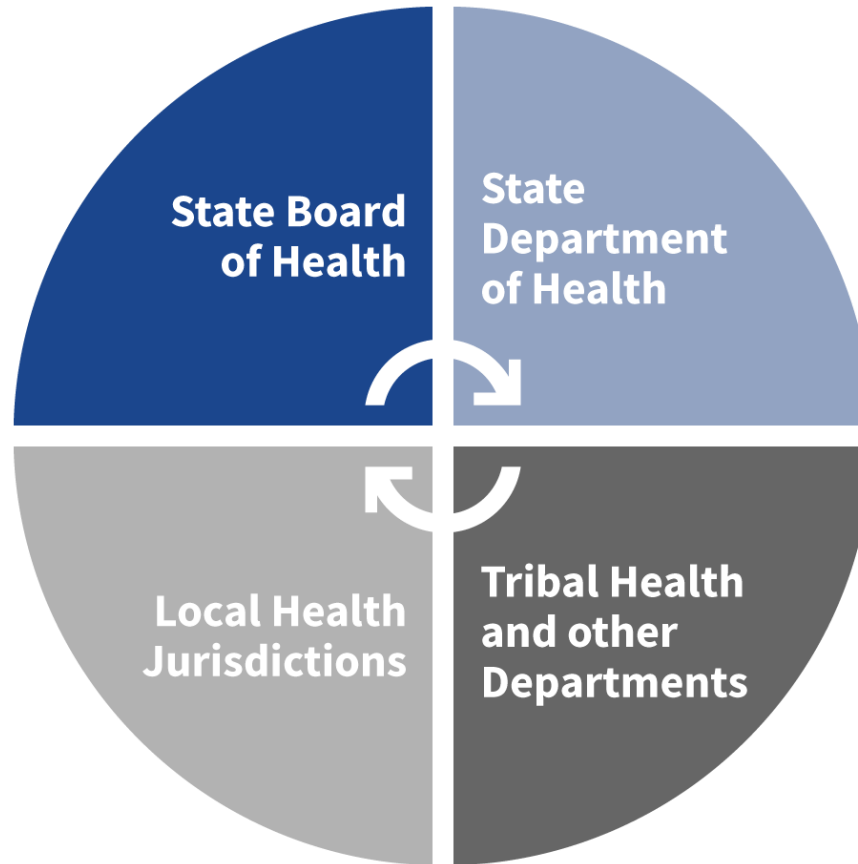
Tao Sheng Kwan-Gett, MD MPH
State Health Officer
October 16, 2025



The public health system



Washington's governmental public health system



Washington Department of Health at a glance



PUBLIC HEALTH IS ESSENTIAL



PUBLIC SAFETY

Public health helps protect everyone from communicable diseases and health threats.



166,189

water samples evaluated for contaminants



99,752

new practitioners licensed



7,185

shellfish water samples analyzed for contaminants



2,376

animal-transmitted disease samples tested



2,384

licensed health care facilities inspected for patient safety



1,480

farmworker housing inspections performed



357

cases identified as part of a foodborne outbreak

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

Public health helps ensure all children achieve their highest health potential.



FAMILIES OF
593,455

children received mailings (estimated)



CHILD PROFILE
ENGLISH **569,717** (96%)
ESPAÑOL **23,738** (4%)



196,404

women and children received WIC nutritional and breastfeeding support



APPROXIMATELY
210,545

newborn blood samples tested for congenital disorders



91%

of kindergartners immunized per current standards (2018)

HEALTHY LIVING

Public health helps ensure health equity and improve population health.



VITAL RECORDS

65,227 birth certificates

10,488 death certificates



2,025

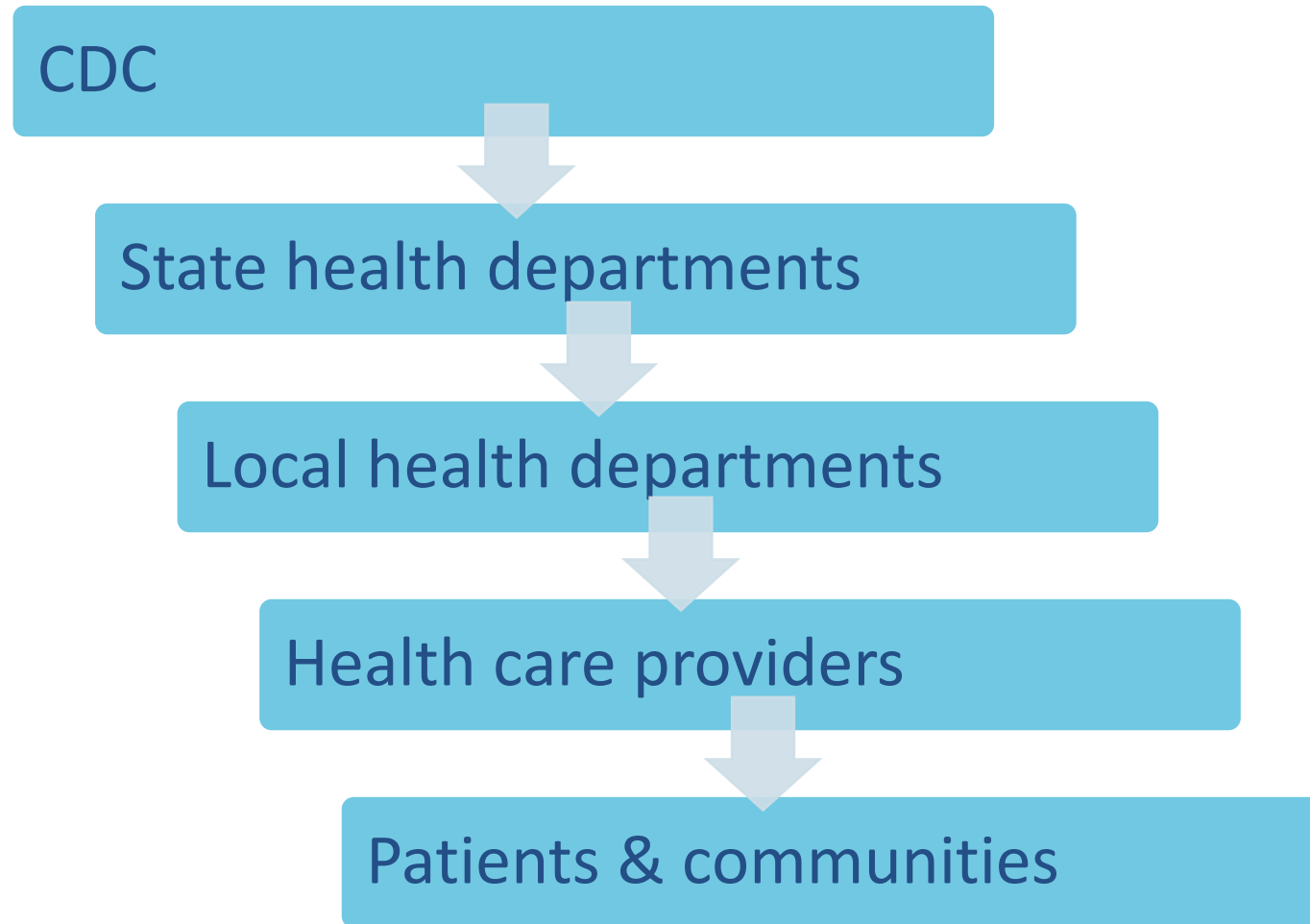
adults with prediabetes enrolled in a diabetes prevention program



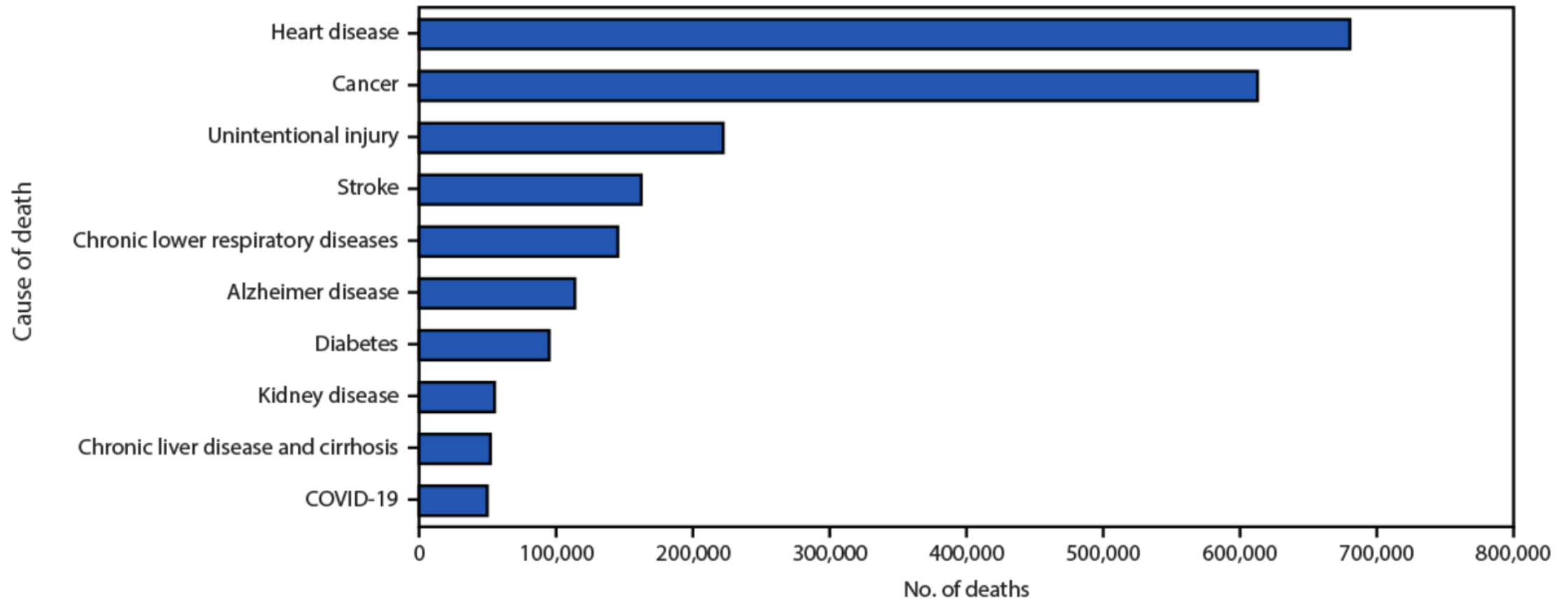
120

farmers markets accepted fruit and vegetable vouchers from SNAP participants





Leading causes of death in the United States, 2023



Priorities for Rural Health Transformation Plan



Investments in health of Tribes



Supporting essential hospital services: infrastructure, essential services, and building networks and supporting operations



Workforce investments: recruitment and retention, training, undergraduate and graduate medical education, continuing education programs



Technology: cybersecurity, AI tools, EHRs, remote monitoring, digital navigation



Prevention and care management: community programs, dementia resources, long-term care, chronic disease, transportation, mobile health



Behavioral health care: opioid treatment providers, mobile crisis services, peer supports






West Coast Health Alliance announces vaccine recommendations for COVID-19, flu, and RSV

For immediate release: September 17, 2025 (25-109)

Contact: [DOH Communications](#)

Science-based guidance will help protect families this respiratory virus season

OLYMPIA – The West Coast Health Alliance has announced [vaccine recommendations](#) for the 2025-26 respiratory virus season. The guidance includes vaccines for [COVID-19](#), [influenza](#) (flu), and [respiratory syncytial virus](#) (RSV), helping families protect themselves and their communities as these viruses spread. The [Washington State Department of Health \(DOH\)](#) COVID-19 vaccine recommendations remain unchanged since the [September 4 Standing Order](#), advising everyone 6 months and older to receive the updated COVID-19 vaccine. Washington's guidance builds on that of the West Coast Health Alliance while addressing the state's specific needs. Both approaches prioritize accessible, science-based protection. Washington's guidance ensures broad coverage and protects our communities.

Age/Condition	COVID-19	Influenza	RSV
Children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 6-23 months All 2-18 years with risk factors or never vaccinated against COVID-19 All who are in close contact with others with risk factors¹ All who choose protection¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 6 months and older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All younger than 8 months² All 8-19 months with risk factors
Pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All who are planning pregnancy, pregnant, postpartum or lactating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All who are planning pregnancy, pregnant, postpartum or lactating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32-36 weeks gestational age²
Adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 65 years and older All younger than 65 years with risk factors All who are in close contact with others with risk factors All who choose protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 75 years and older All 50-74 years with risk factors

¹ COVID-19 vaccine is available for persons 6 months and older.

² Protect infants with either prenatal RSV vaccine or infant dose of nirsevimab or clesrovimab.



WASHINGTON STATE COVID-19 VACCINE STANDING ORDER

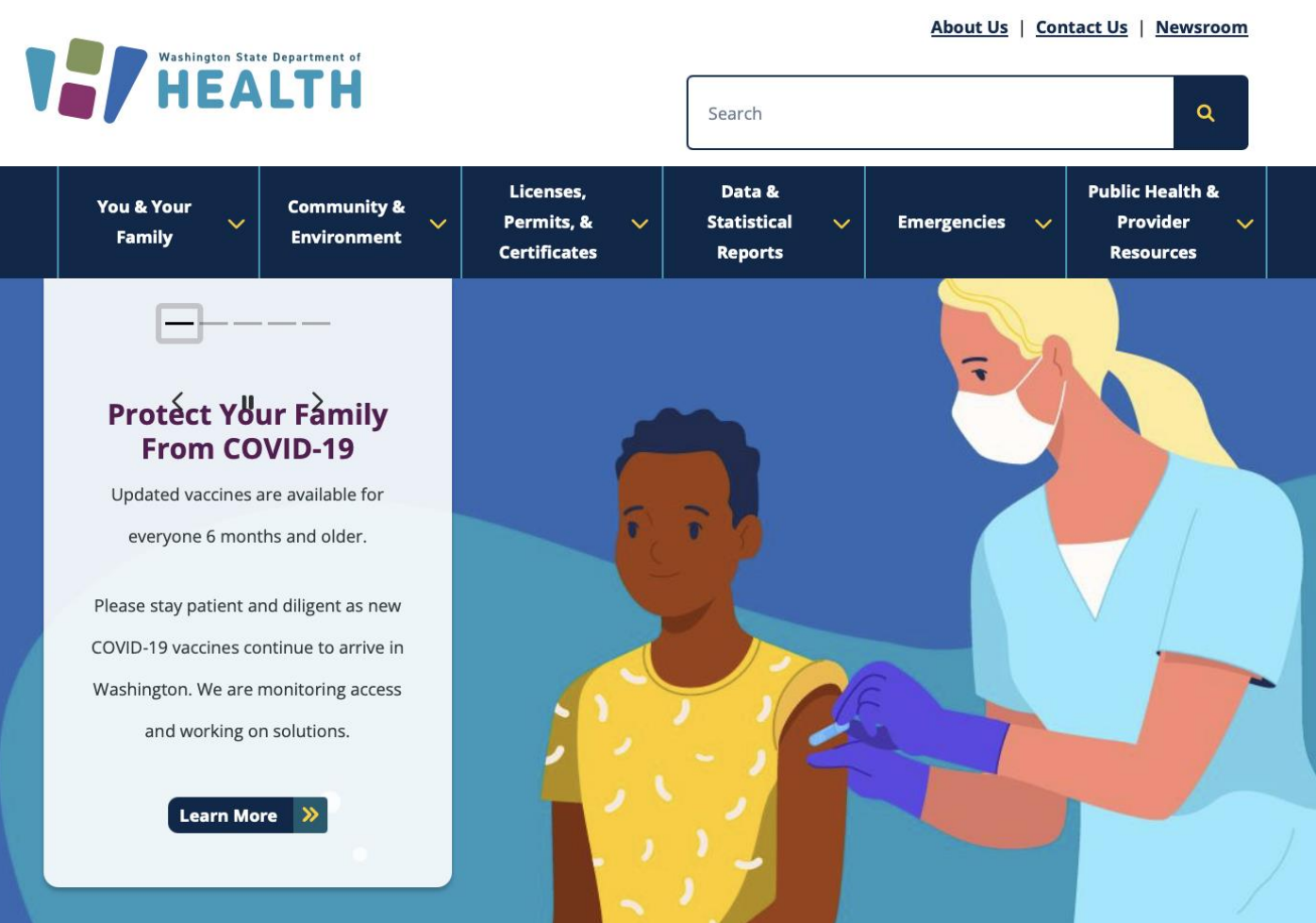
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Vaccine Standing Order

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/4/2025

AUTHORITY: This standing order is issued under [RCW 43.70.183](#), which authorizes the Secretary of Health or their designee to issue a prescription or standing order for any biological product, device, or drug for purposes of controlling and preventing the spread of, mitigating, or treating any infectious or noninfectious disease or threat to the public health.

PURPOSE: To reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19, this statewide COVID-19 vaccine standing order authorizes qualified health care providers to vaccinate persons aged 6 months and older, including pregnant individuals.





Washington DOH website

doh.wa.gov

- Information
- Guidance and resources
- News releases
- Data

In this section

Injury and Violence Prevention

Data

EMS and Trauma Regions

It's About Respect

Older Adult Falls

Contact Us

Evidence Based Exercise Classes

Fall Prevention Advocates

Fall Prevention Resources

Falls in Washington

Finding Our Balance: 2018 Washington State Action Plan for Older Adult Falls Prevention

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL)

Older Adult Falls



[Fall Prevention Resources](#) | [Finding Our Balance](#) | [Stay Active and Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#)

Preventing slips, trips & stumbles

Falls are a growing health problem for older adults, and there are many myths about falling. The most important message we can share with our communities is that falls are preventable.

[Senior Safety](#)
[Falls in Washington](#)
[Fall Prevention Advocates](#)


Contact and Connect

[Contact us](#) | To get important information about older adult falls, you can [subscribe to our newsletter](#).

Falls Prevention

Go to: doh.wa.gov
and search “falls prevention”

- Exercise classes
- Advocacy
- Resources
- Data and statistics

Good company makes life better

Social connection looks different for everyone. But the benefits are often the same. **Spending time with friends and family protects your well-being and mental health.** The quality, not quantity, of your relationships matters most.

For older adults, friendship and connection can be harder to find. Find Your People, created by the Washington State Department of Health, helps you find ways to connect with people of all ages.

Find your people



Find Your People Campaign

findyourpeoplewa.org

- Explores life events and impacts on social/emotional health of 55+ adults
- Supports suicide prevention by strengthening social connection
- Used surveys, interviews, and focus groups for campaign development

social
connection ↔ health



To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.