On Friday, April 10th, PSU’s Social Determinants of Health Initiative and the Institute for Sustainable Solutions hosted a Research to Action Symposium focused on substance abuse. The symposium brought together academic researchers, policy-makers, and representatives from the health department and community agencies. The goal was to come up with concrete next steps for collaborations related to substance abuse, with an emphasis on projects that are likely to lead to action. A total of 45 participants engaged in this all-day event.

The day began with 18 introductory presentations about attendees’ expertise, current projects, and perspectives on future directions to address substance abuse. Then a leadership panel reflected on what they had heard from the group and discussed what they felt were the most important directions for the field of substance abuse. Panelists included David Labby, Chief Medical Officer, Health Share of Oregon; Roberto Orellana, Associate Professor, PSU School of Social Work; Rachael Solotaroff, Chief Medical Officer, Central City Concern; and Dwight Holton, Executive Director, Lines of Life. The entire group then participated in a group exercise to choose topics for discussion for the remainder of the day. Final breakout sessions included: Primary Care Delivery; Root Causes, School Climate, and Youth Prevention; Medication Treatment and Influencing Payers; and Justice System, Housing, Community Engagement and Trauma. At the end of the day, each break-out group reported a brief summary of their discussion:

The **Primary Care Delivery** discussion centered on education and system redesign, specifically within prescribing opioid treatment and the need for research, guideline development, opioid prescribing policies, training practices and documentation. The group felt that necessary next steps were to build collaborations with patient advocates, CCO’s, pharmacies, Oregon Health Authority, and medical home visitations.

The **Root Causes, School Climate, and Youth Prevention** discussion explored what health policy looks like and how to cover substance use within the school environments, highlighting the connection between school climate and parent involvement. This group would like to develop parent involvement methods to help parents of 3-5th graders have open conversations with their children about health, particularly attuned toward substance use prevention. Besides partnering with schools, the group thought about expanding their reach to community centers and organized public spaces.

**Medication Treatment and Influencing Payers** examined incentives and support to address substance use and establish accountability through a cost benefit analysis. This group would center on each county within the Portland metropolitan area, their successes and compare that data to the CCO’s metrics. This project would entail mixed methods and share information across counties for potential replication. **Next steps** involve creating a concrete research project, create a 1-page proposal and identify a group representative to pitch the idea to a healthcare payer.

**Justice System, Housing, Community Engagement and Trauma** convened around women who experience trauma prior to entering the justice system and believe stable housing is an essential component to success. Probation Officers play a critical role as gatekeepers to accessing multiple services for women who experience trauma and are involved with the justice system. **Next steps** include developing a project on trauma informed care training with probation officers and assessing effects on recidivism rates.