

Appendix D: Qualitative Interview Guides

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Community-based Organizations

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

1. Can you please describe the communities your organization serves.
2. Can you please state your current role at your organization and describe how you were involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
3. Looking at the COVID-19 stages, how has your role changed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a. PROBE for
 - Key responsibilities in addition to job titles
 - Date for which they started at their CBO (or phase)

Community Based Organizations

Next we would like to turn to the specific role of community based organizations.

4. As we stated earlier, the goal of this study is to assess Oregon’s public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How would you define “public health system response”?
 - a. Probe: What do you think are key elements of Oregon’s public health system response?
5. For each stage, what roles did your organization play in the COVID-19 public health response?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage

Partnerships:

6. Can you describe any important partnerships or collaborative relationships with other organizations or agencies related to your CBO’s COVID-19 response work?
 - a. Probe: what about government agencies such as local or state public health?
7. In what ways, if any, did the Oregon Health Authority and your Local Public Health Authority provide support for your CBO in the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- a. Probe: TA, communications, funding, etc.
- 8. What are the lessons learned about your partnerships that should be applied in the future?

Funding:

Now, we are going to discuss pandemic-specific funding to CBO's and use of funds.

- 9. How was funding for CBOs linked to the public health response in your community?
 - a. Probe for what agency/organization they received funding from
 - b. Probe for how this funding helped to fill pandemic response gaps in the community
- 10. What, if anything, stands out for you about the processes for receiving funding from OHA for your agency?
 - a. Probes: mechanisms for determining funding formulas and program elements, timelines for making funds available, disbursements, budget/reporting requirements, and flexibility within funding streams.
 - b. Probe for what worked well and areas of improvement

Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the enforcement of public health requirements in response to COVID-19 in the community.

- 11. From your perspective, in what ways did enforcement mechanisms work or not work?
 - a. How did you observe the enforcement of masking mandates?
 - b. What about other public health mandates, such as no indoor dining, no indoor gatherings, closure of gyms, etc.?
 - c. How was enforcement experienced in your community?
- 12. In what ways can state and local partnerships be improved to increase compliance with statewide requirements in the community your CBO serves?

Communications and messaging

Next I'd like to turn to the topic of public health communication use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. In what ways did COVID-19 related communication and messaging work or not work?

- a. Probe for community needs, response gaps, tailoring of messaging to specific communities, disseminated in culturally-specific media
- b. Probe for
 - i. communication about statewide mandates
 - ii. vaccine-specific communication
 - iii. Local requirements
 - iv. In what ways could state and local communications be improved to increase compliance with statewide requirements in the community your CBO serves?

Wrap up

That is all the prepared questions we have for you.

14. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Department of Justice

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role in [organization name].

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you (*or both of you*) how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19??
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
4. How is DOJ typically involved in public health emergency response efforts?
5. Are you able to describe other Division's at DOJ's roles in supporting the pandemic response?

We recognize that the public health system response likely shifted across the span of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purposes of this interview, we are going to be talking about the COVID-19 pandemic in stages.

< SCREEN SHARE chronological stages graphic, walk through stages. Leave graphic up as screen share during full interview, share pdf in chat if requested by interviewee >

COVID-19 Chronological Stages:

Stage 1 - *March 2020 - November 2020*: outbreak, disease investigation, implementing public health protections (masking, distancing, shutdowns), preparing for vaccination

Stage 2 - *December 2020 - August 2021*: vaccination, disease investigation, enforcing public health protections, and partial reopening

Stage 3 - *September 2021 - February 2022*: vaccinations, reopening and dealing with variants

Stage 4 - *March 2022 - Present June 2022*: total reopening, no public health protections, and changes in investigative guidelines

We will be referencing these stages during our conversation today. When answering a question, you do not need to worry so much about the exact months but rather, use these stages as a general guideline to reference responses in different periods. In addition, when answering questions here today, please only discuss the stages when you were at the [agency name] and working on the pandemic response.

6. For each stage, can you walk me through the main bodies of work you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage
7. Looking back at each of these stages is there anything that stands out to you as an area DOJ could have handled differently to bring about a better outcome?
8. Looking back at each of these stages is there anything that stands out to you as something that other sectors within the public health system could have handled differently to bring about a better outcome?
9. Are there one or two things you absolutely would do the same?

Emergency management

10. Was [agency name] involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. [IF yes] Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered in operationalizing PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?
11. Was [agency name] involved in supporting vaccination efforts in stages 2-4?
 - a. [IF yes] What worked well?
12. From your perspective, what statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Implementations and Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the implementation of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

13. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about [agency name's] role in **implementing** the public health requirements?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown order, masking, social gatherings, etc.
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in implementing public health protection requirements?
 - c. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or activities you did that were effective to implement public health protection requirements?
14. What was [agency name's] role in **enforcing** the public health protection requirements?
 - a. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in enforcing public health protection requirements?
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or effective activities you experienced in enforcing public health protection requirements?
15. In what ways could the system be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?
 - a. Probe: In what ways were communications related to statewide mandates and requirements sufficient or deficient?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

16. Please describe how [agency name] coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
 - a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. OHA
 - ii. County governments
 - iii. Tribal governments
 - iv. OEM
 - v. CBOs

Overall response

17. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?

18. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?

19. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

20. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Health Care Associations

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role or job title(s) in [organization name].

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you (*or both of you*) how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. In what ways, if any, is your organization *typically* involved in public health emergency response efforts (not including COVID-19)?
4. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
5. For each stage, can you walk me through the areas of focus you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage.
 - b. In what ways did you provide support to your membership to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic during each stage?

Emergency management

6. In what ways, if any, was your agency involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered in operationalizing PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?
7. In what ways, if any, was your agency involved in supporting vaccination efforts during stages 2-4?
 - a. What worked well?
 - b. What could be improved?

8. From your perspective, what statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

9. Please describe how your organization coordinated and collaborated with partners for public health response throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
 - a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. Oregon Health Authority
 - ii. Local public health authorities
 - iii. Tribes
 - iv. Office of Emergency Management
 - v. Hospitals/health systems
 - vi. Long-term care facilities
 - vii. Schools
 - viii. CBOS
 - ix. Businesses

Overall response

10. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
11. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
12. From your experience, were there aspects of the pandemic response that were handled well by the Oregon Health Authority?
13. From your experience, were there aspects of the pandemic response that were handled poorly by the Oregon Health Authority?
14. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

15. What, if any, additional thoughts or comments, or recommendations would you like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Local Public Health Authorities

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

1. I would like to start by asking you (*or both of you*) to state your current role at the health department and describe how you were involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
2. Looking at the COVID-19 stages, how has your role changed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a. PROBE for
 - Key responsibilities in addition to job titles
 - Date for which they started at the health department (or phase)

Overall public health response

Next, I would like you to think about your LPHA's response across the different stages.

3. As we stated earlier, the goal of this study is to assess Oregon's public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How would you define "public health system response"?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?
4. For each stage, can you walk us through one aspect of the response that your LPHA performed well and another aspect of the response that did not work as well?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage and extracting one efficiency and one deficiency.

Funding

Now, we are going to discuss pandemic-specific funding to LPHAs and use of funds.

5. How was additional funding for LPHAs linked to the public health response in your community?
6. What, if anything, stands out for you about the processes for receiving funding from OHA for your agency?

- a. Probes: mechanisms for determining funding formulas and program elements, timelines for making funds available, disbursements, budget/reporting requirements, and flexibility within funding streams.
- b. Probe for what worked well and areas of improvement

Emergency management

Now, we would like to explore a little about emergency management coordination within the public health system, including distribution of PPE, where vaccines and testing were provided, and isolation and quarantine guidance.

7. In what ways did state and local emergency response coordinate with state and local public health authorities related to:
 - a. Personal protective equipment distribution?
 - b. Vaccine distribution and testing?
 - c. Public information dissemination?
8. How were different communities' needs taken into consideration for PPE distribution, vaccine distribution and testing, and public information dissemination?
 - a. Racial/ethnic, elderly and aging, sexual and gender minorities, people with disabilities, people experiencing mental health challenges or substance use disorders, people experiencing homelessness, rural, etc.
9. What worked well?
10. What statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the enforcement of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

11. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about the public health requirements implemented by your LPHA across the stages of the pandemic?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown order March 2020 - May 2020, masking, vaccinations for school attendance

12. How was your LPHA involved in enforcement of the public health requirements you described above?
13. In regards to implementing and enforcing public health protections, what would you say was the biggest success of your LPHA?
 - a. Probe for another success if it seems like they have another.
14. What were the greatest challenges your LPHA faced related to implementing or enforcing public health protections?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

15. Please describe how your LPHA coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
 - a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. Hospitals
 - ii. Long-term care facilities
 - iii. Schools
 - iv. CBOs (ask to list which ones)

Overall response

16. Can you describe one or two public health system response decisions you had to make that were particularly difficult?
17. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
18. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
19. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies at a local level?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

20. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Oregon Department of Emergency Management

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role in the Office of Emergency Management.

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
4. How is your agency typically involved in public health emergency response efforts?

We recognize that the public health system response shifted across the span of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purposes of this interview, we are going to be talking about the COVID-19 pandemic in stages.

< SCREEN SHARE [chronological stages graphic](#), walk through stages. Leave graphic up as screen share during full interview, share pdf in chat if requested by interviewee >

COVID-19 Chronological Stages:

Stage 1 - *March 2020 - November 2020*: outbreak, disease investigation, implementing public health protections (masking, distancing, shutdowns), preparing for vaccination

Stage 2 - *December 2020 - August 2021*: vaccination, disease investigation, enforcing public health protections, and partial reopening

Stage 3 - *September 2021 - February 2022*: vaccinations, reopening and dealing with variants

Stage 4 - *March 2022 - Present June 2022*: total reopening, no public health protections, and changes in investigative guidelines

We will be referencing these stages during our conversation today. When answering a question, you do not need to worry so much about the exact months but rather, use these stages as a general guideline to reference responses in different periods. In

addition, when answering questions here today, please only discuss the stages when you were at the Office of Emergency Management and working on the pandemic response.

5. For each stage, can you walk me through the main bodies of work you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage

Emergency management

6. How were incident command structures for Emergency Management and Public Health initially set up?
 - a. Was a unified command structure with Public Health established?
 - b. Did your office/program staff participate in the MAC-G?
 - c. What were the challenges? What worked well?
7. For each stage of the pandemic, did incident command structures change?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of changes in incident command structures
8. How were equity officers/managers integrated into the incident command structure?
 - a. If they were not integrated, how was the issue of equity and access for specific populations addressed?
 - b. What were the challenges? What worked well?
9. How did OEM coordinate with state, tribal, and local public health authorities for information **sharing**?
 - a. What were the challenges? What worked well?
 - b. Probe: Are there pathways that should have been in place to improve information sharing between key partners?

10. In what ways did OEM coordinate with or provide support to state, tribal, and local public health for public information **dissemination**?
 - a. What were the challenges? What worked well?
 - b. Probe: What about coordination of public information and notifications to the community
 - c. Probe: Did you activate and/or participate in a Joint Information Center/System?

11. In what ways, if any, was the OEM involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered with PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?

12. In what ways, if any, was the OEM involved in supporting vaccination efforts in stages 2-4?
 - a. What worked well?
 - b. What were some challenges?

13. What statewide improvements in emergency management structures or systems could be made to improve future pandemic response?

Implementations and Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the implementation of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

14. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about the OEM's role in **implementing** public health requirements?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown orders, masking, public gathering restrictions, isolation and quarantine, etc.
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in implementing public health protection requirements?

- c. Probe: Which agencies did you work with in implementing public health requirements?
 - d. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or activities you did that were effective to implement public health protection requirements?
15. What was the OEM's role in **enforcing** the public health protection requirements?
- a. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in enforcing public health protection requirements?
 - b. Which agencies did you work with to enforce public health requirements?
 - c. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or effective activities you experienced in enforcing public health protection requirements?
16. In what ways could the system be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?
- a. Probe: In what ways were communications related to statewide mandates and requirements sufficient or deficient?

Overall response

- 17. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
- 18. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
- 19. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

- 20. Are there additional staff within the Office of Emergency Management that you think we should speak with about OEM's role in COVID-19 pandemic response?
- 21. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Oregon Health Authority Directors

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

As we progress through the interview, we will work through each stage. For now, we're only going to talk about stage one.

Stage One

1. Let's start with Stage One. I understand that you had extensive management and leadership responsibilities throughout the pandemic response. During Stage One, can you tell me about 2-3 of your key pandemic-response priorities? Or, in other words, what was front and center for you during this stage?
2. Can you tell me about 2-3 critical decision points OHA faced during this stage?
3. *<For each critical decision point listed by the interviewee>*
Why did you make the decision you made?
 - a. What information or resources did you use to make this decision?
 - b. Who did you consult with to make this decision?
 - c. Who did you have to get permission from to make the decision?
4. Looking back, would you have made a different decision?
 - a. If so, can you tell me more about that?

Stage Two

5. Now looking at Stage Two, what were 2-3 of your key priorities? Or, in other words what was front and center for you during this stage?
6. Can you tell me about 2-3 critical decision points OHA faced during this stage?
7. *<For each critical decision point listed by the interviewee>*
Why did you make the decision you made?:
 - a. What information did you use?
 - b. Who did you have to consult?
 - c. Who did you have to get permission from to make the decision?
8. Looking back, would you have made a different decision?
 - a. If so, can you tell me more about that?

Stage Three

9. For Stage Three, what were 2-3 of your key priorities? Or, in other words, what was front and center for you during this stage?
10. Can you tell me about 2-3 critical decision points OHA faced during this stage?
11. *<For each critical decision point listed by the interviewee>*
Why did you make the decision you made?
 - a. What information or resources did you use to make this decision?
 - b. Who did you consult with to make this decision?
 - c. Who did you have to get permission from to make the decision?
12. Looking back, would you have made a different decision?
 - a. If so, can you tell me more about that?

Stage Four

13. For Stage Four, what were 2-3 of your key priorities? Or, in other words, what was front and center for you during this stage?
14. Can you tell me about 2-3 critical decision points OHA faced during this stage?
15. *<For each critical decision point listed by the interviewee>*
Why did you make the decision you made?
 - a. What information or resources did you use to make this decision?
 - b. Who did you consult with to make this decision?
 - c. Who did you have to get permission from to make the decision?
16. Looking back, would you have made a different decision?
 - a. If so, can you tell me more about that?

Pandemic Response

17. Now, I will walk you through a list of factors that may or may not have affected OHA's pandemic response. This list was created based on responses from LPHA administrators.

<Interviewer switch screen share to responses scale>

Please rate each of these factors on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being "Not a challenge at all" and 4 being "This was a significant challenge that negatively affected OHA's ability to respond."

(Potentially rotate response)

1. Staffing surge capacity at OHA for the public health response
2. Challenges with data/or data infrastructure
3. Identifying and applying internal decision-making frameworks for centering equity in pandemic response (i.e., equity impacts of shut down orders)
4. Ineffective previously established collaborative relationships between elements of the overall public health system (local, state, community)
5. Ineffective previously established relationships with other state government agencies
6. Ineffective collaborative relationships within OHA
7. Administrative issues with receiving or distributing funding
8. Inconsistent guidance from federal government
9. Politicization of COVID-19 response
10. Balancing or prioritization of non-COVID-19 related public health issues
11. Ineffective communication and coordination systems internally or externally
12. Staff overall well-being (e.g., burnout, mental health, physical illness, threats)
13. Other (anything you thought was a major challenge that wasn't on this list): _____

<For factors rated as a 4, probe>

- Why was this factor challenging? and
- How did it affect the OHA's ability to respond?

18. [BADEN AND HARGUNANI ONLY] From your perspective, what role did CCO's play in the public health response to COVID?

19. What do you think is the biggest lesson learned from Oregon's public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Wrap up

Those are all of the prepared questions we have for you.

20. What, if any, additional thoughts or comments, or recommendations would you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Oregon Health Authority Staff + Managers

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

1. I would like to start by asking you to state your current role at the Oregon Health Authority and describe how you were involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
 - a. Probe for
 - i. Level of decision making (specific to COVID-19 response)
2. How has your role changed throughout the stages of the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a. PROBE for
 - Key responsibilities in addition to job titles
 - Date for which they started at the OHA (or phase)

Public health system response

Next, I would like you to think about OHA's public health response to COVID-19 across the different stages of the pandemic.

3. As we stated earlier, the goal of this study is to assess Oregon's public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How would you define "public health system response"?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?
4. Can you walk us through one aspect of OHA's public health responses that you were involved in that you believe went well and another aspect of the response that did not work as well? Please do this for each stage of the pandemic that you were working in your current position.
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage and extracting one efficiency and one deficiency.

Funding

Now, we are going to discuss pandemic-specific funding and use of funds. Again, if you are unable to speak to any of the questions from your personal involvement in Oregon's public health system response, please let us know and we will skip that question.

5. How did the allocation of federal funds through OHA support local and Tribal COVID-19 response activities?
6. What, if anything, stands out for you about the processes for providing funding to LPHAs and Tribes for COVID-19 response activities?
 - a. Probes: mechanisms for determining funding formulas and program elements, timelines for making funds available, disbursements, budget/reporting requirements, and flexibility within funding streams.
 - b. Probe for what worked well and areas of improvement

Emergency management

Now, we would like to explore a little about emergency management coordination within the public health system, including distribution of PPE, where vaccines and testing were provided, and isolation and quarantine guidance.

7. In what ways did state and local emergency response coordinate with state and local public health authorities related to:
 - a. Personal protective equipment distribution?
 - b. Vaccine distribution and testing?
 - c. Public information dissemination?
8. How were different communities' needs taken into consideration for PPE distribution, vaccine distribution and testing, and public information dissemination?
 - a. Racial/ethnic, elderly and aging, sexual and gender minorities, people with disabilities, people experiencing mental health challenges or substance use disorders, people experiencing homelessness, rural, etc.
9. What worked well?
10. What statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the enforcement of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

11. How was OHA involved in enforcement of the public health requirements you described above?

a. Probe:

i. How were decisions about enforcement of public health requirements made by OHA?

1. Probe: Shutdown order March 2020 - May 2020, masking, vaccinations for school attendance

ii. What was OHA's involvement in enforcing public health requirements?

12. What would you say was the biggest success regarding enforcement of public health requirements?

a. Probe for another success if it seems like they have another.

13. What do you think were the greatest challenges your division/department faced regarding implementing or enforcing public health protections?

Public Health Modernization

Our next question is about public health modernization and the COVID-19 pandemic.

14. Can you describe ways that Oregon's Public Health Modernization initiatives affected the pandemic response, if at all?

Communications and messaging

Next I'd like to turn to public health communication use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

15. In what ways did OHA's external COVID-19 related communication and messaging work or not work?

a. Probe for

i. Communication about statewide mandates

ii. Vaccine-specific communication

b. Probe:

i. Community needs

ii. Response gaps

iii. Tailoring of messaging to specific communities and dissemination channels (e.g., culturally-specific media)

16. In what ways could state communications be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?

Collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

17. Please describe how your division/department/unit collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, successes, and challenges?

- a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. LPHAs
 - ii. Hospitals
 - iii. Long-term care facilities
 - iv. CBOs
 - v. Any additional public-private partnerships

Data

We'd like to talk a little about epidemiological data for COVID. I just want to remind you that if you are unable to speak to any of the questions from your personal involvement in Oregon's public health system response, please let us know and we will skip that question.

18. Can you describe the preparedness of OHA's disease reporting databases and the extent to which these existing databases supported or hindered the public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

19. What resources were available to help support and address state and local data and capacity issues?

- a. Probe for state, federal support

20. Can you describe how COVID-19 data were used to drive decision making about the public health response in Oregon?

- a. Probe for:
 - i. How did the use of epidemiological data for tracking and making decisions about COVID response work or not work?

21. What additional database specific resources are needed to ensure Oregon's successful response to any future public health emergencies?

Overall response

22. Can you describe one or two public health system response decisions you had to make that were particularly difficult?

23. Overall, what was your division/department/unit's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?

24. Overall, what was your division/department/unit's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?

25. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all of the prepared questions we have for you.

26. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role in Oregon OSHA.

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you (*or both of you*) how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
4. How is your agency typically involved in public health emergency response efforts?

We recognize that the public health system response likely shifted across the span of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purposes of this interview, we are going to be talking about the COVID-19 pandemic in stages.

< SCREEN SHARE [chronological stages graphic](#), walk through stages. Leave graphic up as screen share during full interview, share pdf in chat if requested by interviewee >

COVID-19 Chronological Stages:

Stage 1 - *March 2020 - November 2020*: outbreak, disease investigation, implementing public health protections (masking, distancing, shutdowns), preparing for vaccination

Stage 2 - *December 2020 - August 2021*: vaccination, disease investigation, enforcing public health protections, and partial reopening

Stage 3 - *September 2021 - February 2022*: vaccinations, reopening and dealing with variants

Stage 4 - *March 2022 - Present June 2022*: total reopening, no public health protections, and changes in investigative guidelines

We will be referencing these stages during our conversation today. When answering a question, you do not need to worry so much about the exact months but rather, use these stages as a general guideline to reference responses in different periods. In addition, when answering questions here today, please only discuss the stages when you were at the Oregon OSHA and working on the pandemic response.

5. For each stage, can you walk me through the main bodies of work you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage

Emergency management

6. Was Oregon OSHA involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. [IF yes] Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered in operationalizing PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?
7. Was Oregon OSHA involved in supporting vaccination efforts in stages 2-4?
 - a. [IF yes] What worked well?
8. From your perspective, what statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Implementations and Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the implementation of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

9. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about Oregon OSHA's role in **implementing** the public health requirements?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown order, masking, social gatherings, requirements for workplaces, physical distancing requirements, providing a safe workplace, employee testing, requirements for vaccinations in the workplace, and isolation and quarantine measures, etc.
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in implementing public health protection requirements?

- c. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or activities you did that were effective to implement public health protection requirements?
10. What was Oregon OSHA's role in **enforcing** the public health protection requirements?
- a. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in enforcing public health protection requirements?
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or effective activities you experienced in enforcing public health protection requirements?
11. How did you work/partner with employers to implement and/or enforce public health workforce guidance and/or requirements?
12. In what ways could the system be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?
- a. Probe: In what ways were communications related to statewide mandates and requirements sufficient or deficient?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

13. Please describe how Oregon OSHA coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
- a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. OHA
 - ii. County governments
 - iii. Tribal governments
 - iv. OEM
 - v. CBOs

Overall response

14. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
15. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
16. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

17. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Professional Associations

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role or job title(s) in [organization name].

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you (*or both of you*) how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
4. How is [organization name] typically involved in public health emergency response efforts?
5. For each stage, can you walk me through the main bodies of work you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage.

Funding

Now, we are going to discuss the utilization of pandemic-specific funding such as CARES 2020/2021 and ARPA in Oregon

6. Did your organization or your members receive funding for pandemic response from any source(s)?
 - a. IF YES, can you elaborate on how you or your members used funding for public health response? Feel free to refer to the stages graphic.
7. What, if anything, stands out for you about the processes for receiving funding from OHA for your agency?

- a. Probes: mechanisms for determining funding formulas and program elements, timelines for making funds available, disbursements, budget/reporting requirements, and flexibility within funding streams.
- b. Probe for what worked well and areas of improvement
- c. What resources might be needed to better implement investments during a significant emergency response

Emergency management

8. In what ways, if any, was [agency name] or your members involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered in operationalizing PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?
9. In what ways, if any, was [agency name] or your members involved in supporting vaccination efforts in stages 2-4?
 - a. What worked well?
 - b. What did not work well?
10. From your perspective, what statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Implementation and enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the implementation of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

11. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about your agency's role in **implementing** the public health requirements?
 - a. Probe: Such as with the shutdown order in March 2020, masking requirements, etc.
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in implementing public health protection requirements?
 - c. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or activities you did that were effective to implement public health protection requirements?

12. What was your agency's role in **enforcing** the public health protection requirements?
 - a. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in enforcing public health protection requirements?
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or effective activities you experienced in enforcing public health protection requirements?
13. In what ways could the system be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?
 - a. Probe: In what ways were communications related to statewide mandates and requirements sufficient or deficient?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

14. Please describe how [agency name] coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
 - a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. OHA
 - ii. County governments
 - iii. City governments
 - iv. Tribal governments
 - v. OEM
 - vi. CBOs

Communication

15. How was your agency involved in communicating about COVID-19 with key audiences?
 - a. PROBE for communications about various topics
 - i. What about communicating with audiences about pandemic-related restrictions?
 - ii. What about communicating with audiences about vaccines?
 - iii. What about communicating with the public about general precautions related to containing disease transmission?

16. What changes should Oregon consider related to messaging or delivering communications about masking and distancing restrictions?

Overall response

17. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?

18. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?

19. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

20. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Public Health Advisory Board

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

1. Can you please state your current role on the Public Health Advisory Board and how long you have been a part of the PHAB.
2. Looking at the COVID-19 stages, can you please describe the roles and responsibilities of the PHAB for each stage.
 - a. Potential probes: Advising OHA on: funding models, vaccination planning and delivery, equity response
3. How well do you think PHAB did at performing its functions during the pandemic?
4. Can you remember any specific COVID-19 related policies that PHAB considered during the pandemic?
5. How effective were policy-level discussions? Did you feel like you had the information, the time, the structures, and support you needed to be able to provide advice and make recommendations?

Governmental public health response

Now we'd like to talk with you a little about the public health response by government agencies. As you may know, the main actors in the governmental public health system in Oregon include the Oregon Health Authority, County Health Departments, and Tribal Health Organizations.

6. From your experience, were there aspects of the pandemic response that were handled well by governmental public health?
 - a. Can you elaborate on any experiences where the governmental public health system demonstrated specific strengths?
7. Now, looking at areas for improvement, from your experience, were there aspects of the pandemic response that were handled poorly by governmental public health?
 - a. Can you elaborate on any experiences where the governmental public health system demonstrated specific weaknesses?

Public Health Modernization

Turning to the topic of public health modernization and the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. How does, if at all, the pandemic experience inform the future of Oregon's Public Health Modernization framework?

Communications and messaging

Next, I'd like to turn to the topic of public health communication use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. In what ways did COVID-19 related communication and messaging work or not work?
 - a. Probe for community needs, response gaps, tailoring of messaging to specific communities, disseminated in culturally-specific media
 - b. Probe for
 - i. communication about statewide mandates
 - ii. vaccine-specific communication
 - iii. Local requirements
 - iv. In what ways could state and local communications be improved to increase compliance with statewide requirements?

Overall response

10. Overall, what was PHAB's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
11. Overall, what was PHAB's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
12. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

13. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

State/Government Agencies

Introductions

1. Let's start with your name(s) and current role in [organization name].

Overall public health response

2. Next I'd like to ask you (*or both of you*) how you define the term "public health system response" as it relates to public health emergencies such as COVID-19??
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

3. Can you briefly describe how you were/are involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
4. How is your agency typically involved in public health emergency response efforts?

We recognize that the public health system response likely shifted across the span of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purposes of this interview, we are going to be talking about the COVID-19 pandemic in stages.

< SCREEN SHARE [chronological stages graphic](#), walk through stages. Leave graphic up as screen share during full interview, share pdf in chat if requested by interviewee >

COVID-19 Chronological Stages:

Stage 1 - *March 2020 - November 2020*: outbreak, disease investigation, implementing public health protections (masking, distancing, shutdowns), preparing for vaccination

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Stage 3 - *September 2021 - February 2022*: vaccinations, reopening and dealing with variants

Stage 4 - *March 2022 - Present June 2022*: total reopening, no public health protections, and changes in investigative guidelines

We will be referencing these stages during our conversation today. When answering a question, you do not need to worry so much about the exact months but rather, use these stages as a general guideline to reference responses in different periods. In

addition, when answering questions here today, please only discuss the stages when you were at the [agency name] and working on the pandemic response.

5. For each stage, can you walk me through the main bodies of work you were involved in personally?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage to elicit explanation of their key activities in that stage

Emergency management

6. Was [agency name] involved in the distribution of personal protective equipment?
 - a. [IF yes] Can you describe any barriers or challenges you encountered in operationalizing PPE distribution?
 - b. Can you describe things that went well with PPE distribution?
7. Was [agency name] involved in supporting vaccination efforts in stages 2-4?
 - a. [IF yes] What worked well?
8. From your perspective, what statewide improvements in emergency management could be made?

Implementations and Enforcement of public health measures

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the implementation of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

9. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about [agency name's] role in **implementing** the public health requirements?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown order, masking, social gatherings, etc.
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in implementing public health protection requirements?
 - c. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or activities you did that were effective to implement public health protection requirements?
10. What was [agency name's] role in **enforcing** the public health protection requirements?

- a. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any challenges or barriers you encountered in enforcing public health protection requirements?
 - b. [IF they had a role] Can you describe any facilitators or effective activities you experienced in enforcing public health protection requirements?
11. In what ways could the system be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements?
- a. Probe: In what ways were communications related to statewide mandates and requirements sufficient or deficient?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

12. Please describe how [agency name] coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?
- a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. OHA
 - ii. County governments
 - iii. Tribal governments
 - iv. OEM
 - v. CBOs

Overall response

13. Overall, what was your agency's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
14. Overall, what was your agency's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
15. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies?

Wrap up

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

16. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Tribal Nations

Roles, responsibilities, decision making

1. Can you please state your current role and describe how you were involved in the COVID-19 public health system response.
2. Looking at the COVID-19 stages, how has your role changed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a. PROBE for
 - Key responsibilities in addition to job titles
 - Date (or phase) for which they started at their role

Overall public health response

Next, I would like you to think about your Tribe's public health response across the different stages.

3. As we stated earlier, the goal of this study is to assess Oregon's public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How would you define "public health system response"?
 - a. Probe: What are key elements of Oregon's public health system response?
4. For each stage, can you walk us through one aspect of the response that your Tribe performed well and another aspect of the response that did not work as well?
 - a. PROMPT for walking interviewee through each stage and extracting one efficiency and one deficiency.
5. In what ways did being a sovereign nation impact public health requirements and the pandemic response in your Tribal community, if any?

Funding:

Now, we are going to discuss pandemic-specific funding to Oregon Tribes and use of funds.

6. How was COVID-19 funding for Tribes linked to the public health response in your community?
 - a. Probe for how this funding helped to fill pandemic response gaps in the community
7. What, if anything, stands out for you about the processes for receiving COVID-19 specific funding for your Tribe?
 - a. Probes: mechanisms for determining funding formulas and program elements, timelines for making funds available, disbursements, budget/reporting requirements, and flexibility within funding streams
 - b. Probe for what worked well and areas of improvement

Emergency management:

The next few questions are about emergency management coordination within the public health system, including distribution of PPE, where vaccines and testing were provided, and isolation and quarantine guidance.

8. In what ways did Tribal, state, and local emergency response coordinate with your Tribe related to:
 - a. Personal protective equipment distribution?
 - b. Vaccine distribution and testing?
 - c. Getting COVID information to the community?
9. How were the needs of your community taken into consideration for PPE distribution, vaccine distribution and testing, and getting COVID information to the community?
10. What worked well?
11. What statewide improvements in emergency management could be made to better prepare Oregon's public health response?

Enforcement of public health measures:

Now we are going to move into a series of questions about the enforcement of public health requirements in response to COVID-19.

12. Oregon's public health system response to the pandemic included many public health requirements. Can you tell us about public health requirements, if any, that were implemented by your Tribe across the stages of the pandemic?
 - a. Probe: Shutdown order March 2020 - May 2020, masking, vaccinations for school attendance
13. How was your Tribe involved in enforcement of the public health requirements you described above?
14. In regards to implementing and enforcing public health protections, what would you say was the biggest success of your Tribe?
 - a. Probe for another success if it seems like they have another.
15. What were the greatest challenges your Tribe faced related to implementing or enforcing public health protections?

Communications and messaging:

Next I'd like to turn to the topic of public health communication during the COVID-19 pandemic.

16. In what ways did COVID-19 related communication and messaging work or not work?
 - a. Probe for community needs, response gaps, tailoring of messaging to specific communities, disseminated in culturally-specific media
 - b. Probe for
 - i. communication about statewide mandates
 - ii. vaccine-specific communication
 - iii. Local requirements
17. In what ways could communications be improved to increase adherence to statewide mandates and requirements in your community?

Epidemiological data:

The next question is focused on data.

18. How did your Tribe use epidemiological data or databases to support COVID response?

- a. Probe: What support(s) from outside entities did your Tribe receive for finding, accessing, or using epidemiological data for COVID response in your community?

Public health response system collaboration and coordination

Now, we are going to discuss collaboration within the public health system response.

19. Please describe how your Tribe coordinated and collaborated with partners throughout the pandemic, including who your partners were, and what worked well and didn't work well?

- a. PROBE for partnerships with:
 - i. LPHAs
 - ii. OHA
 - iii. Hospitals
 - iv. Long-term care facilities
 - v. Schools
 - vi. CBOs

Overall response:

20. Can you describe one or two public health system response decisions you had to make that were particularly difficult?
21. Overall, what was your Tribe's greatest challenge during responding to the pandemic?
22. Overall, what was your Tribe's greatest contribution to the pandemic response?
23. How do you think lessons learned from Oregon's public health system response to COVID-19 can inform future response to public health emergencies at a local level?

Wrap up:

Those are all the prepared questions we have for you.

24. Do you have any additional thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share about the public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Tribal Organizations

Organizational Roles

1. Can you please share a little about your organization and what your role is?
2. Can you please describe how you and your organization have been involved in COVID-19 response?
3. How has your organization's role changed during the pandemic, if at all?
 - a. What did it take for your organization to shift focus and roles to meet the urgent needs during the pandemic?
 - b. In what ways did this role and/or service address gaps in the services needed for your community?
 - c. Why was taking this role and offering these services important?

Supports

4. What types of resources did your organization receive during the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a. Prompts: Funding, Data, Staffing, Other (mental/spiritual health)
 - b. How were these resources helpful or unhelpful?
 - c. How did these resources impact your ability to meet community needs?
5. What types of organizations or agencies did you receive support from?
 - a. Prompts: state, county public health, other community based organizations
 - b. What about this support was helpful?
 - c. What about this support was unhelpful?

Challenges

6. What were the organizational challenges of offering these services?
 - a. How did your organization overcome or go around these challenges?
 - b. In what ways did these challenges hinder, stop, or burden your organization's ability to respond to COVID?

- i. What is the impact these challenges had on safeguarding your community and staff-team?
- ii. Do these challenges still exist and how do they have implications for responding to future crises?
- iii. How can these challenges be addressed for future planning for crisis response?

Partnerships

7. Can you please describe any new partnerships that you have built due to your role during the pandemic.
 - a. What types of activities or services did you collaborate on with these partners?

Communications and messaging

I would like to shift to talk a little about communications provided by the Oregon Health Authority about COVID-19 throughout the pandemic.

8. In what ways did COVID-19 related communication and messaging from the state work or not work for your community?
 - a. Probe for community needs, response gaps, tailoring of messaging to specific communities, disseminated in culturally-specific media

Wrap up

9. What do you think was your organization's greatest contribution to the public health response to COVID-19?
10. What would you tell the Oregon state legislators about any changes, policies, practices, and/or funding needed to be in place now to prepare us for safeguarding the people in ongoing COVID-19, and other public health crises?
11. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share with us today?