

Department of Health (DOH) Washington Tracking Network (WTN)

Washington Tracking Network (WTN) Query Management Upgrade

WTN is a public-facing portal which can present a wide variety of DOH data in a format easily-accessed and understood by the general public. It draws from two data repositories: an Environmental Health Washington Tracking Network (WTN) repository of public environmental data and the Community Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) data repository which holds restricted information in order to make those data available for the Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) and Department of Health (DOH) offices. Restricted data, however, are extracted and subjected to aggregation and stratification rules before they are passed to WTN (the function of CHAT as a Service).

WTN was built from a few individual modules and its current data management and system management routines are largely in the form of VB and C# code strings -- each of which operates separately. This effort was intended to vastly improve the speed and ease by which WTN data can be made available to the public by consolidating WTN management in these ways: completing table-driven structures for defining and managing WTN queries; building administrative interfaces to the WTN query and return system for their ongoing maintenance and adaptation; attaching WTN's query management to background pages built and administered in the DOH Content Management System (CMS) to remove a large and unnecessary programming burden; and completing and integrating to the Data Visualization service (for tables, graphs, and maps) which has been started by the University of Washington under a different program.

WTN provides an efficient and consolidated location to report statistical information garnered from a wide array of DOH activities -- information which has not been available for public analysis in the past because of the lack of a tool to apply DOH-approved rules regarding the privacy of data or a well-integrated and consistent process to query data, retrieve information, and display it in a variety of formats. By capitalizing on the WTN data presentation efforts initiated and supported by CDC, WTN has the potential to become an ever more valuable tool for expressing and explaining DOH's mission to the general public without duplicating efforts which are carried forward and sustained by professional public health requirements. Upgraded system was made available in April 2014. System upgrades were funded as part of the WA Dept. of Health Environmental Public Health Tracking Network grant from the CDC.

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/EnvironmentalHealth/WashingtonTrackingNetwork/WTN.aspx>