



# Whatcom County Defined Outcomes

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Presentation to the Substance Abuse Advisory  
Board

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Looking Glass Analytics



# Purpose

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- Immediate Goal: To reach agreement with providers on outputs and outcomes for all services
- Longer Term Goal: to begin the preparation for implementing an outcome monitoring system.



# The Reason Why

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- To increase accountability
- To convey expectations to providers and the community
- To clarify roles and responsibilities
- To assist in the contracting process
- To provide data for grant applications



# Scope

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- An emphasis on near-term outcomes. A continuum of care: are the individual services, and the linkages between them, working as they should?
- The longer-term outcomes (i.e. effects on other public services) should be explored more fully later.



# Methods

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- Meetings

- 10 meetings: treatment, outreach & crisis triage providers met separately
- Continuity across meetings: the same participants attended each time.
- The Goal: choose the most appropriate outcomes first, then decide how to measure them.



# Results: Outreach Definitions

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Activity	Definition
Engagement	Building a relationship by meeting members of the target population
Screening	Determining the need for various services
Case Management-Referral	Achieving client agreement on a service plan. Assisting clients with entry to services
Closure	Ending a relationship



# Results: Outreach Outcomes

Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes
Engagement	CD Assessment
Screening for DSHS Eligibility	CD TX Admission
Screening for CD and MH needs	Acquire housing
Making service arrangements	MH Assessment



# Results: Treatment

Outcome	Definition
TX Completion	The percentage of clients successfully completing treatment in a given period of time.
90 Day Retention	The percentage of clients still in treatment 90 days from admission
Number of TX sessions	The average number of treatment sessions attended per discharge
Admission to Discharge Changes	Changes in various client measures over the course of treatment



# Results: Crisis Triage

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- Stabilize, resolve the crisis
- Get clients into the most appropriate service in the continuum of care.



# Recommendations

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- Outcomes have been defined.  
Now what?
- Suggestions for implementing a monitoring system



## Future Work: Phase 2

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Recommendation	Human Resources Needed	Approximate Cost
Create performance benchmarks	County staff & consultant	\$1000-\$3000
Create a single outreach data collection system.	Consultant w/Database experience & county staff	\$7000



# Future Work: Phase 3

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Recommendation	Human Resources Needed	Approximate Cost
Electronically link service records with outcome data	County staff & consultant	\$10-15,000
Analyze Outcomes	County staff & consultant	No estimate at this time



# Future Work: Phase 4

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Recommendation	Human Resources Needed	Approximate Costs
Consider Long-Term Outcomes	Consultant & County Staff	\$3-5000
Consider an Integrated Triage Information System	County Staff & providing agencies	Can't be estimated at this time



# Conclusions

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- Creative county staff, committed providers
- A high level of interest in improving the quality of care
- A commitment to monitoring outcomes of substance abuse services