

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for October 14, 2019

1. Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Dan Hammill / Mike Parker called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. at the Health Department Creekside Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham.

Members Present: Jessica Rienstra (proxy for Megan Ballew), Dan Hammill, Ryan King, Kelli Linville, Byron Manering, Mike Parker

Members Absent: Doug Chadwick

2. Discussion of domestic violence and sexual assault trends, concerns, challenges with Karen Burke, Executive Director of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS)

Karen Burke, Executive Director, described her background, the agency and its programs. They have an agreement with law enforcement to respond on scene and connect with a survivor. They also work with victims of the commercial sex trade, regardless of what that means. She described a new program for folks with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorder (SUD) and who have experienced sexual assault and domestic violence histories or current issues. These people are unable to engage in traditional advocacy because they are ill:

- The program has operated since May 2018
- They've had 98 clients since the beginning of the program. They now have 108 clients.
- There are 3 behavioral health coordinators.
- They talk about safety planning and the effects of victimization, how to get protective orders, help schedule exams, and other services.
- The goal is to improve access to behavioral health services as well as provide domestic and sexual violence services.
- Partnering with the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) and the new Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT)
- The program costs approximately \$213,000 per year and is funded by the federal, State, and local funds

The committee discussed a grant for direct financial assistance to folks to avoid or get out of shelters: the prevalence and results of the program; the need for concurrent services for SUD, mental health, and trauma services, and; the potential for Medicaid reimbursement for services.

3. Discussion of Bellingham School District behavioral health interventions with Kristi Dominguez, Executive Director Teaching and Learning, Bellingham School District

Kristi Dominguez described her team at the school district. Their main purpose is to get children to graduation. The graduation rate has declined due to outside variables. They need funding for more counselors and behavioral health services. Often families contact schools when in crisis.

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Jessica Sankey, Director of Wellness, described the program partners with community resources to provide services, such as:

- 1-to-1 counseling and support groups
- Work with families
- Increasing community understanding of youth mental health
- Identify community-wide goals

Trina Hall, Director of Teaching and Learning, described the social and emotional learning initiative, the possibility of mental health screening, developing a community partner hub in each school, and the lack of enough therapists in the community.

The presenters and committee members discussed law enforcement interactions with children, the number of students diagnosed with anxiety, dollars available to crime victims and services, defining eligibility for services, dedicating room in the schools for services, causes, and housing stability and moving school districts. Potential investments include, 1. Free parent education and services and, 2. universal early learning experiences for all. They continued to discuss working in schools versus in provider offices, local grants for services in different locations, the special education population, and changing demographics.

4. Discussion of the Handle with Care Program with Molli Barker, Juvenile Assessment Center, Arapahoe County, Colorado (via teleconference)

Molli Barker, Juvenile Assessment Center, Arapahoe County, described her background and the Handle with Care Program to change the systemic response to trauma in the schools and community. Law enforcement issues a "handle with care" notice to school districts that includes only the student's name and birthdate. No details about the trauma are provided. School district officials' have three tiers of response:

1. awareness
2. provided needed school resources and referrals
3. bring in community-based partners

The committee members and presenter discussed legal privacy concerns about sharing information with the school districts. There should be program review from a victims rights perspective, from victim rights organizations, who consider research-based effectiveness and unintended consequences.

The committee concurred to not move forward with a program at this time, due to privacy concerns.

5. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information

This item was not discussed.

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6. Other Business

Manering referenced his email to the committee and described their application for a Molina Community Initiative grant to fund the Parent First pilot project.

The committee discussed how the program is an expansion of an existing program, number of participants, and data and evidence that supports the program.

Linville moved to endorse the project and serve as the project advisory team. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.