

Whatcom County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC)
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: April 2, 2018 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Whatcom County Courthouse Room 514, 311 Grand Ave, Bellingham

Members Present: Dac Jamison, Susan Wood, Regina Delahunt, Chris Phillips, Wendy Jones, Dave Reynolds, David Kincheloe, Bill Elfo (arrived at 3:45)

Members Absent: Darrin Hall, Barbara Brenner, Ann Beck

Health Depart Staff/Guests: Anne Deacon, Health Department Human Services Manager; Perry Mowery, Health Department Human Services Supervisor; Chris D’Onofrio, Health Department Clerk; Jackie Mitchell, Health Department Behavioral Health Program Specialist; Christine Furman, Whatcom County Drug Court

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Welcome and Introductions	Members state names and positions; guest Christine Furman of Whatcom County Drug Court introduces herself.	
2. Approve Minutes of January 2018	Mr. Kincheloe moves to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Jamison seconds motion. A vote is conducted with all present members voting in favor. The motion passes.	Vote to approve minutes: Ayes 7, Nays 0, Abstain 0
3. Committee’s Role and Responsibilities	The role and responsibilities of the committee are informed by the name – the committee should work as a team, should meet regularly, and should strive to use their wisdom in the fields of mental health and substance use disorder to advise elected officials and policy makers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee agrees that the experience and wisdom in the room should focus on big picture issues affecting behavioral health services more so than on details of the local service delivery system. 	Chris Phillips and Regina Delahunt

4. Privatization of Integrated Healthcare: Impacts for Whatcom County Discussion

Behavioral Health Integration with Physical Health will happen in Whatcom County in 2019 for individuals covered by Medicaid.

- Whatcom County, together with Snohomish, Island, Skagit, and San Juan Counties will continue to work together regionally as “Mid-Adopters” of the new integrated system.
- The current administrative agency (the North Sound Behavioral Health Organization (BHO)) will largely be replaced by the North Sound BH Administrative Service Organization (BH-ASO), which will play the leading role in coordinating/funding crisis services, but likely will not be responsible for triage/detox services, which are considered outpatient services under the Medicaid contract.
- Non-crisis behavioral health services will be the responsibility of Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), which are a mix of private corporations, a publicly traded corporation (Molina) and a non-profit health center owned organization (Community Health Plan of Washington).
- There is a commonly held belief that the Health Care Authority (HCA), the independent state agency that serves as the purchaser of Medicaid services, is underestimating the cost of these BH-ASO services. Furthermore, there is concern that the HCA doesn’t understand the extent of the burden that will be shifted to county governments if service quality drops or new gaps are created.

There are some key areas where HCA, via the county, would benefit from **BHAC’s input**

- The interface of behavioral health and criminal justice
- The importance of transition services for individuals moving from one type of service or residency to another
- The inadequacy of provider networks among some of the MCOs may present more challenges than HCA is anticipating
- The metrics and outcomes that are more important at a county-level

Approaches to Influencing the Integration Process

- Whatcom County has found success through strong relationships with the other counties in the North Sound region; continued collaboration across counties will strengthen our approach
- In SW Washington, where the regional entity integrated care in 2018, MCOs were influenced by a desire to protect their reputation in the public eye.
 - Educating the public, explaining how they’re likely to be impacted, and then representing and magnifying their voices is a suggested strategy to achieve influence
- Develop a dashboard to monitor the metrics that are important to our county- use this to provide ongoing evaluations and inform system adjustments

Jackie Mitchell provides background and diagrams, open discussion to the committee

5. Announcements	<p>Triage Center Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The triage center received \$9.5 million in state funding to cover the majority of the capital construction costs • The project will be a newly constructed building on same lot as existing facility; expected to open in mid-2019 • There will be two attached units: one for acute detox and one for mental health stabilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each of the two units will have 16 beds and they will share a commercial kitchen • Existing Crisis Triage facility space will be vacated once new building is finalized, with many worthy causes being considered for future use of that space <p>A new Medicaid-billing SUD treatment provider will be operating in town soon (Lifeline Connections) on the Guide Meridian</p>	
6. Public Comment	None	
Next Meeting:	<p>July 30, 2018, 3:30-5:00 311 Grand Avenue Whatcom County Courthouse Room 514 Bellingham, WA</p>	



Whatcom County
HEALTH
 Department



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