



Whatcom County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC)
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: July 7, 2020 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Virtual GoToMeeting

Members Present: Bill Elfo, Mullane Harrington, Nick Evans, Mike Massanari, Dave Reynolds, Anne Deacon, Wendy Jones

Members Absent: Erika Lautenbach, Dascomb Jamison, Susan Wood, Chris Phillips, Kathy Kershner

Health Depart Staff/Guests: Anne Deacon, Health Department Human Services Manager; Jackie Mitchell, Health Department BH Program Specialist; Samantha Murdoch, Health Department Coordinator; Joe Fuller, Health Department Program Specialist; Rebecca Snearly, Health Department Program Specialist; Perry Mowery, Health Department Supervisor; Mauri Ingram, Sophia Beach

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements	The meeting was called to order. A quorum was present. Nick Evans was introduced and welcomed to the Committee as a new member.	Anne
2. Approve Minutes of October 2019 and April 2020	Michael Massanari moved to approve the October 2019 minutes as presented. Wendy Jones seconded the motion. A vote was conducted with all members present voting in favor. The motion passed. Dave Reynolds moved to approve the April 2020 minutes as presented. Michael Massanari seconded the motion. A vote was conducted with all members present voting in favor. The motion passed.	Vote to approve minutes: Ayes 6, Nays 0, Abstain 0 Vote to approve minutes: Ayes 6, Nays 0, Abstain 0
3. 2019 BHAC Annual Report and School Services Report	Every year after the financial books close, an annual report is submitted to the County Council. That Annual Report has not been completed yet this year, due to the lack of available personnel at the Health Department. However, we have spent about as much funding as we brought in to the Behavioral Health Fund, and monies were fairly evenly distributed across the prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare continuum of care. As we finalize the annual report, we will distribute it to members of this Committee, and let you know when we present it to County Council. Highlights in the report include school programs, and Ground-Level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) which has fully	Anne



	<p>launched, and serves up to 80 people who are the most frequent utilizers of law enforcement and emergency management services.</p> <p>Joe presented the School Services Report (September 2019-June 2020). The programs detailed in the report are all funded through the Behavioral Health Fund, but other funds are leveraged as much as possible to provide evidence based programs in schools. We determined the particular needs of all seven school districts, and then created programs and services in response to those needs, resulting in contracts with all seven districts. Many programs provide individual support through licensed mental health therapists, substance use disorder professionals, or family support specialists. Usually, there are larger community events and trainings throughout the year, but many of those have been cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Different virtual methods have been used in order to work with students from home while school is out of session.</p> <p>Many students showed positive improvements in grades, attendance, and discipline. Not all students who have mental health issues are struggling academically, so part of our goal is to make sure those students' behaviors do not deteriorate. A second group of data shows that 97% of students are either maintaining or improving grades. About 40% of the total number of students served receive prevention based services. About 44% received interventions. Some students still need treatment as well as aftercare support. Sometimes, parents also need referrals.</p> <p>The front line staff in the schools are the gateway to referrals for more intensive services including treatment for mental health, substance use, or both mental health and substance use disorder services. While therapists provide mental health counseling in schools, they will refer if necessary. Drug and alcohol assessments are referred out as well. In addition, 787 individuals were connected to other essential social supports.</p> <p>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) put out a Behavioral Health Forecast to help understand the future of the pandemic. Department of Health adapted that report to what that might look in Washington State. The report was included so we can better understand at which points we might see spikes in depression and suicidal ideation, etc.</p> <p>The report includes information about prevention science since it will be made available for a broader population. For example, if we delay the onset of alcohol use by two years, the percentage of adults that</p>	<p>Joe</p>
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	<p>need substance use disorder treatment decreases by about 50%. Prevention science also shows that 50% of all mental health issues manifest before age 14.</p>	
<p>4. 2021 Budget Review and Strategy Affirmation</p>	<p>We are using Behavioral Health Sales Tax to fund the majority of our behavioral health programs. Last year, we brought in about \$5 million and put out more than \$5 million in programs and services. We are currently experiencing about a 24% decrease in revenue. We were told to plan for a 15-20% cut in the budgeting process for 2021. In addition, we knew we had to make additional cuts this year because we are pulling down our fund balance at a fairly rapid rate. We may need to make cuts between \$1-1.5 million for next year.</p> <p>Anne reviewed a document entitled “2021 Behavioral Health Fund Budget Cut Considerations”, outlining Behavioral Health Fund 2020 allocations, 2021 proposed allocations, and proposed reductions from 2020 in the following categories: Whatcom County Health Department Staff, Housing Support (case management and supportive housing programs), Outreach and Engagement, Community Treatment and Support, and Crisis Stabilization Center Support.</p> <p>All reductions total almost \$1 million. To the extent possible, some of these budget cuts will be offset by the Mental Health Millage from property taxes, grants received from the Administrative Services Organization, and the Department of Commerce, other housing budget funding, and liquor profit taxes.</p> <p>Wendy indicated support for the way the cuts were made in the proposed reductions from 2020, and added that the county is looking into alternative funding sources. Wendy also supports the cut to the perpetrator program since it hasn’t been initiated in two years. Mullane introduced a perpetrator program that costs nothing, and that will actually bring revenue back into the county; however it requires the prosecuting attorney’s office to refer people into the program. Anne recommended Mullane get in touch with Perry about this program. Michael is also in support of the proposal and expressed appreciation of the county for looking at alternative funding sources for programs that have proposed cuts.</p> <p>There are three main goals in terms of programs: child and family health, criminal justice, and housing. We will continue to support the 24/7 staff in our residential housing programs knowing that those programs have been instrumental in getting people on their feet.</p>	<p>Anne</p>

WHATCOM COUNTY
Health Department



Erika Lautenbach, Director
Greg Stern, M.D., Health Officer

	The proposal will be brought to the County Executive, we will receive feedback, and then once the County Executive has approved the budget for all county departments, it will go to County Council for final approval.	
Next Meeting:	October 26, 2020, 3:30-5:00 Virtual GoToMeeting	