

# ***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force***

*Behavioral Health Programs and Services Ad Hoc Committee*

## **Statement of Work**

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force is to continually review Whatcom County's criminal justice and behavioral health programs and make specific recommendations to safely and effectively reduce incarceration of individuals struggling with mental illness and chemical dependency, and minimize jail utilization by pretrial defendants who can safely be released. (Ord. 2015-037; Ord. 2015-025; County Code 2.46.020).

The purpose of the Behavioral Health Programs and Services Ad Hoc Committee is to develop recommendations for new, or enhancement of existing, programs designed along a continuum that effectively reduces incarceration of individuals struggling with mental illness and chemical dependency (Ord. 2015-037).

Recommendations will be based on local needs, recognized best practices and the work of the other two Ad Hoc Committees.

### **Goals**

- Minimize jail utilization by pretrial defendants who can be safely released
- Identify new or enhancement of existing programs designed along a continuum that effectively reduces incarceration of individuals struggling with mental illness and chemical dependency.
- Improve the continuum of alternatives to incarceration and jail diversion programs.
- Identify and implement programs and services that are effective alternatives to incarceration
- Benchmark Whatcom County behavioral health programs and services against nationally recognized best practices
- Develop an understanding of the client profile of the population utilizing behavioral health services
- Provide comprehensive release planning to ensure citizens are connected to and engaged in available programs and services upon their return to the community (warm hand-offs)

### **Scope (Project Tasks)**

- Assemble information about existing program and services
  - Services offered
  - Financial resources
  - Budgets and expenses
  - Number of people served
  - Demographics of people served
  - Effectiveness in reducing or preventing incarceration
- Map existing programs and services in the Sequential Intercept Model
- Identify gaps in existing programs and services
  - Consider pre-intercept One programs and services that may reduce incarceration
- Identify nationally recognized best practices for programs and services that are known to reduce incarceration
- Identify and recommend immediate opportunities for system improvements and measure effectiveness
- Create comparison with Whatcom County based programs
- Identify appropriate resources and supports for client departures from facility (warm hand-offs)
- Recommend improvements to existing programs and services
- Recommend additional or modified programs and services

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### **Deliverables**

- Progress report for Phase One deliverable date
- Recommendations to the Task Force for improvements to existing programs and services
- Recommendations to the Task Force for additional or modified programs and services

### **Schedule of Work**

- Workgroup meeting schedule
  - December 10, 2015, 3 – 5pm, WAHA, 800 East Chestnut LL, Bellingham, WA
  - December 17, 2015, 3 – 5pm, WAHA, 800 East Chestnut LL, Bellingham, WA
  - January 07, 2016, 3 – 5pm, WAHA, 800 East Chestnut LL, Bellingham, WA
  - Additional meetings TBD
- Phase One Progress Report: February 09, 2016
- Sequential Intercept Model mapping completed by: TBD
- Benchmarking completed by: TBD
- Recommendations to the Task Force regarding available alternatives to incarceration: September, 2016

### **Measures of Success**

Consistent with established deadlines, establish benchmarks, and deliver to the Task Force an evaluation of existing behavioral health programs, as well as recommendations for enhancements to existing programs and new services that can be implemented in Whatcom County.

### **Identified Best Practices**

Incorporate as appropriate for our work and any appropriate additional best practices that meet nationally recognized standards.

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, GAINS Center
- The VERA Institute of Justice
- National Association of Counties, the Stepping Up Initiative
- Council of State Governments Justice Center
- Other national standards

### **Other Ad Hoc Committees**

The purpose of the Triage Facility and Facility Programming Ad Hoc Committee is to make recommendations to Task Force regarding the construction and operation of a new or expanded multi-purpose crisis triage facility to assist with jail and hospital diversion of individuals struggling with mental illness and/or chemical dependency.

The purpose of the Legal System Ad Hoc Committee is to make recommendations to the Task Force regarding programs and services that have the potential to prevent or reduce incarceration. Current, enhanced and new programs and services are under consideration. Behavioral health programs and services are the purview of a different Ad Hoc Committee.

The work between Ad Hoc Committees is interrelated and interdependent.