

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for July 20, 2017

1. Call To Order

Committee Chair Anne Deacon called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. at the Health Department Creekside Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham.

Members Present: Anne Deacon, Susan Gribbin, Dan Hammill

Also Present: Jill Bernstein, Mike Parker (Proxy for Greg Winter)

Members Absent: Nick Lewis, Byron Manering, Greg Winter

Review June 15, 2017 Meeting Summary

This item was not discussed.

6. Other Business

The Committee members discussed adjusting the regular meeting schedule so more committee members can attend, the last meeting's discussion with Dr. Safford, scheduling Dr. Adam Kartman to present at a meeting after September 1, and the recent site visit from the VERA Institute contractors:

- Comment on the people, not bookings and population.
- The final report must be credible and have more than recommendations, including:
 - Have an entity to facilitate movement forward.
 - Need data in context. Look at and count people in addition to events. Frame the data within the story.
- The data as presented seemed misleading to the general public.
- It may be simplistic to say that many people are in jail because they can't afford bail.
- The Task Force's Legal and Justice Systems Committee is working on reducing the pretrial population.

The Committee also discussed:

- The inequality of bail
- Jail populations versus bookings
- Creating a focus group to engage system users in the process
- Reporting on people, not events
- Qualitative versus quantitative analysis
- Using the snowball technique to communicate with the community of system users, case managers, and a Workforce program that already has an established group
- A general lack of understanding of data and the criminal justice system
- Whether collecting data from system users is within the scope of the Task Force

Committee members Hammill, Gribbin, and Parker will begin working to engage consumers using best practices.

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2. Update on Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) grant opportunity

Deacon updated the Committee:

- Grant opportunity to expand MAT to this region of the state
- Dr. Adam Kartman submitted a proposal for the five-county region
- Hub-and-spoke model, with the hub in Whatcom county and spokes in all five counties in the region.
- Includes a care navigator in each spoke to support the services and providers.
- Purpose is to get programs up and running.
- The grant amount is \$750,000 per year for two years
- Managing people in services so they do well is difficult due to medical issues, chaotic lives, and case management requirements.

The Committee members discussed:

- Street outreach efforts to affected individuals
- A position is that open for a certified chemical dependency professional
- Methamphetamine use is rising
- How does the Task Force address emergent problems
- The Opportunity Council is not limited to helping people with opioid addiction
- The Health Department is also making efforts to help with emergent problems

Deacon stated Dr. Safford indicated they need to step back on these plans in lieu of getting Dr. Kartman's program up and running by September. After that, they can take up the issue again to build upon it.

3. Review list of behavioral health diversion programs in our community and ensure completeness

Deacon submitted a handout (*on file*) of current behavioral health programs. The committee discussed:

- When the GRACE program will begin
- Funding for youth and adult homeless outreach
- Information on program costs only, not staffing or donated/in-kind costs
- Whether Fast track and Drug Court programs compete
- Add information on the return on investment of the programs
- Integrating all courts
- Measuring outcomes in addition to measuring financial return on investment

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4. Discuss communication strategy for distributing education and information on diversion programs

This item was not discussed.

5. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information

Bernstein stated she will work with the VERA Institute consultants on creating a focus group and on qualitative data questions by the August meeting.

Hammill, Gribbin, Bernstein, and Parker stated they will work on a structure for creating a focus group. The Opportunity Council can access the Homeless Outreach Team if individuals are unhoused.

6. Other Business

Status of State capital budget

7. Public Comment

Mark Gardner, City of Bellingham, stated organize programs in the community based on identified areas to begin a narrative and to describe the interaction, known gaps, and outcomes. It can eventually become an analytical tool that this group could use for information.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.