

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force***  
***Behavioral Health Subcommittee***  
**Meeting Summary for February 5, 2018**

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**1. Call to Order**

Committee Chair Anne Deacon called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. at the Health Department Creekside Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham.

Members Present: Anne Deacon, Dan Hammill, Byron Manering,

Also Present: Stephen Gockley, Starleen Lewis (Unity Care Northwest)

Members Absent: Greg Winter

**2. Review draft priorities, work plan, and Task Force retreat**

The Committee members discussed the strategies in the VERA report that were assigned to the Behavioral Health Committee, including:

- Equip law enforcement officers with tools to de-escalate and divert people with experiencing behavioral health crises
- Pursue opportunities to coordinate care between county agencies
- Improve data collection system

Deacon reported on the Health Department budget of \$20,000 for training and consultation. In the past, they've spent those funds on:

- Sending sheriff deputies to crisis hostage negotiation training
- Bellingham Police 40 hours crisis intervention team (CIT) training curriculum
- It's time to host another emergency medical services (EMS) training
- One new task would be creating an annual calendar to track training for agencies
- Deacon will find out the specific training information that agencies track
- The committee could create an informal survey of needed additional training

The committee discussed:

- Expanding crisis prevention and intervention (CPIT)
- How this committee works with the Homeless Strategies Workgroup and Lummi Nation
- How to work with the Legal and Justice Systems Subcommittee on housing for drug court participants
- Behavioral health services to homeless shelter users
- The coordinated outreach and recovery support (CORS) program
- A part-time mental health professional working at City Gate and the Lighthouse Mission to connect people with acute psychiatric systems to services and treatment
- A full-time position on the homeless outreach team (HOT) who has a specialty in substance use disorders
- The decrease in referrals to mental health court from the Public Defender's Office

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- The competing values between getting someone out of jail as soon as possible and referrals to treatment programs
- Drug court best practices and inviting drug court and mental health court to discuss services
- Housing as incentive for specialty courts
- The need for another Oxford House
- Whether drug court can have a program that is less than two years
- Including Lummi Nation representative on the committee
- Meth versus opiate use
- Ground level response and coordinated engagement (GRACE) program update, logic model, and funding
- Diverting non-violent defendants to services
- Focus on substance use disorder (SUD) treatment needed in a co-occurring disorders treatment program
- Framing the discussion of addressing all these issues from the victim's voice and public safety

**3. Potential funding sources and legislative options**

Held to March meeting.

**4. Update on GRACE project**

Deacon submitted a handout on the February 2 GRACE program team meeting that includes the logic model for the program. *(See above discussion.)*

**5. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information**

Held to March meeting:

- Data needs for Information and Data Exchange (INDEX) Committee
- Potential funding sources and legislative options
- GRACE leadership meetings update from Dean Wight
- City of Bellingham implementation of a GRACE-like program

Schedule future discussions on:

- Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2263 regarding funding for mental health and cultural activities and competing funding requests
- Drug Court *(Schedule special meeting time during the lunch hour)*
- Hammill to report on GRACE Program efforts with City of Bellingham Police Chief
- Deacon to report on Dr. Kartman's suboxone program
- Mike Parker update on homeless outreach team (HOT) and new behavioral health specialist

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**6. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**7. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.