

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for August 6, 2018

1. Call To Order

Committee Chair Anne Deacon called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m. at the Health Department Creekside Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham.

Members Present: Anne Deacon, Dan Hammill, Byron Manering, Kelli Linville, Starleen Maharaj-Lewis, Ryan King, Mike Parker

Also Present: Jill Bernstein, Stephen Gockley

Members Absent: Betsy Kruse, Doug Chadwick

2. Develop standardized questions to do research in the jail

Deacon submitted handouts (on file) from the 50 State Report, *Strategy 2: Improve responses to people who have behavioral health needs in local criminal justice systems* and *Action Item 1: Improve the identification of people who have behavioral health needs in the criminal justice system* and gave a staff report, and the committee members discussed:

- The Policy Academy may provide technical assistance to help set up data collection and analysis
- Definitions of a serious mental illness
- Statutory definitions are different from diagnostic definitions
- Serious mental illness will impact one's daily activities
- They must define what information they want to know
- Evaluations (screenings) happen now at booking
- Study the population, regardless of whether they are in the County jail or at Yakima jail.
- Look at who is not benefitting from the existing interventions by examining a small target population "stress test"
- Problems with gathering data from the jail's Spillman system
- Probation and public defenders could also provide data
- Research questions should include economics and family dynamics
- Strengthening reentry services upon release
- Determine:
 - Which mental health and substance use disorder diagnoses are driving criminogenic behavior
 - How many people have charges in multiple jurisdictions
 - The number of people serving a sentence without pending charges in the jail now
 - Who is in the population they intend to serve
 - Strengthening reentry services upon release
 - Who they can impact the most
 - How to identify a 35-person random sample
- Strengthening reentry services upon release

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for August 6, 2018

- As they look at a pool from which to pull a random sample, focus on a population that includes parents and young children so they can make an impact on early intervention

Deacon stated she will request input from James Austen to refine the questions and figure out funding.

3. Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2263 regarding funding for housing and cultural activities

Hammill asked committee members to review the information in the packet and stated this item will be held to the September meeting. The committee members discussed competing funding requests.

4. Regular Updates on GRACE, CPIT, and Whatcom has Hope programs

This item was not discussed.

5. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information

This item was not discussed.

6. Other Business

The committee members discussed scheduling a future discussion on the critical elements for a successful mental health court, conformity with best practices, mental health court procedures in Skagit County versus Whatcom County, the cost-benefit of mental health court, and prioritizing program funding and earlier intervention strategies.

Committee members discussed the level of detail to which the Task Force should make recommendations to the County Council and County administration.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.