

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Behavioral Health Administration 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Transforming lives



It's an exciting time to be part of the Behavioral Health Administration!

Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, our employees all across the administration continue to work hard to serve and support Washingtonians with behavioral health needs. We continue to transform behavioral health in our state by opening new facilities, implementing safe and effective treatment and hiring employees who are passionate and dedicated to their calling of helping people in the behavioral health system.

This annual report gives a brief snapshot of some of the people, programs, projects and successes in BHA during 2021.

Our staff are on the front lines when it comes to people entrusted in our care. A pair of dedicated Western State employees stepped up to volunteer to work on the COVID-19 ward at the hospital, putting in long hours with little rest. Eastern State Hospital staff united to collect stuffed animals to donate to the Spokane Police Department. And a staff member at the Special Commitment Center heroically intervened on her off-duty time to prevent a potential kidnapping. These stories highlight the kind of selfless individuals who work at facilities all across the administration.

We continue to practice safe and effective treatment for our patients. The occupational therapy staff at Eastern State Hospital expanded to provide more active treatment to forensic patients while the Vocational Rehabilitation Program at Western places patients in the campus greenhouse to grow and care for more than 1,000 plants.

Our facilities also play a critical role in how we transform behavioral health in our state, and 2021 was a benchmark year for progress in updating several facilities. We completed construction of the San Juan Cottage on the campus of the Child Study and Treatment Center, adding 18 available beds. In addition to celebrating the 150th anniversary of Western State Hospital, BHA officials hosted an open house to discuss plans for the 350-bed forensic hospital that will be built on the campus.

We also made considerable progress in our goal of increasing behavioral health capacity in local communities by adding small inpatient facilities along the I-5 corridor in Western Washington, moving forward with the permitting and construction processes of our residential treatment facilities in both Clark and Thurston counties.

These benchmarks and achievements are examples of the heartfelt commitment of everyone in our administration. We hope you continue to follow along as we transform lives throughout Washington.

Fondly,

*Jilma Meneses, Secretary
Department of Social and Health Services*

DSHS Goals

PUBLIC TRUST: Strong management practices ensure quality and efficiency.

HEALTH: Each person and each community will be healthy.

PROTECTION: Each person who is vulnerable will be protected.

QUALITY OF LIFE: Each person in need will be supported to attain the highest possible quality of life.

SAFETY: Each person and each community will be safe.



This past year has been one of great change in the Behavioral Health Administration. I was named assistant secretary in June, one of several leadership changes. The chief executive officers at Eastern and Western state hospitals and the Special Commitment Center departed. Several other key people are in new positions, and we are embarking on an innovative plan to split operations at Washington's largest state-run hospital. (Read more about that on page 22).

But change creates opportunities and can be exciting. Lots of ideas for improvements are being generated across the administration as we continue moving to transform behavioral health and undertake a truly modern approach to care for our patients and staff. This will be accomplished through adopting trauma-informed care — an initiative in the pilot stages where several workgroups are exploring how to best move forward with these principles. As a team we are also embracing equity, diversity and inclusion by standing as an anti-racist agency and opening new facilities across the state to serve patients closer to their home communities.

I am excited to work with such dedicated and passionate staff members as we blaze forward to a future that continues to pursue the state's vision of behavioral health transformation through 21st-century facilities that provide 21st-century care. I cannot overstate how proud I am to be part of the Behavioral Health Administration team.

COVID-19 continues to loom large, but through hard work, perseverance and the desire to serve we have found ways to excel despite the disruptions to how we once worked.

This report highlights just some of the important work done within the Behavioral Health Administration. I hope everyone who reads it gains an appreciation for the work that we do and gains an understanding of how devoted our staff is to fulfillment of our mission. I see it every day, and I continue to be awed by the efforts of the thousands of people who strive to make Washington a better place for everyone.

*Kevin Bovenkamp, Assistant Secretary
Behavioral Health Administration
Department of Social and Health Services*



BHA Goals

MISSION: To transform lives through dedication to the wellness of individuals, their families and the community through behavioral health intervention, treatment and education.

VISION: People are healthy because we provide safe treatment and recovery resources. Communities are safe because of the services we provide. People in our care and custody are safe and supported. Taxpayer resources are guarded.

VALUES: Compassion and Hope, Safety and Concern for Others, Teamwork and Stewardship, Transparency, Integrity and Respect, Quality and Innovation.

Types of treatment

Psychiatric care

Psychiatrists evaluate, diagnose and treat patients who experience mental health symptoms or conditions. Psychiatrists provide medication therapies to address illnesses such as psychosis, mood disorders and anxiety.

Medical care

Medical team members treat both chronic and acute complex medical illnesses.

Psychological care

Psychologists and psychology associates provide assessment, evaluation, treatment, and consultation.

Social work

Social workers act as liaisons between patients, legal representatives, families and community partners. Social workers also provide support and education to family and primary support people.

Rehabilitative counseling

Institutional counselors provide group and individual treatments to address behaviors and symptoms that are barriers to transitioning back into the community.

Recreational therapy

Recreation therapists provide leisure education, social interaction skills, creative and expressive activities, relaxation and stress management skills, cognitive and mental-focused activities, physical and exercise-based activities and community safety skills.

Occupational therapy

Occupational therapists assist with behavioral and physical health activities by teaching sensory modulation, work readiness, social skills, basic life skills, mindfulness, money management and coping skills.

Substance use disorder services

Substance use counselors provide disorder assessments, psychoeducation and motivational interviewing.

Physical therapy

Physical therapists provide treatment for orthopedic problems, balance and function.

Vocational programming

Treatment focused on developing the tools and skills to be successful in finding and keeping employment.

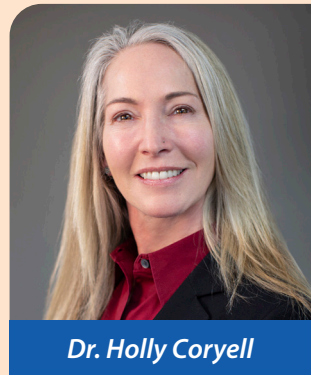
Longtime SCC psychologists named to key state treatment board

A pair of longtime psychologists at the Special Commitment Center were chosen to serve on a committee that advises lawmakers on how to maintain a strong workforce of certified sex offender treatment providers and provide recommendations for treatment of sex offenders in Washington.

The selection of Dr. Dan Yanisch and Dr. Holly Coryell to the 10-member Washington Sex Offender Treatment Provider Advisory Committee will enable two prominent doctors from the McNeil Island facility to help shape guidelines for treatment and community protection.

Two of Coryell's professional colleagues and friends served on the original advisory committee.

"For years I heard about the important work of this group and hoped to serve on the committee myself someday," she said.



Dr. Holly Coryell

Treatments provided

- **Medication therapies, education and management**
- **Treatment of chronic and acute medical conditions**
- **Psychological assessments**
- **Group therapies and group education**
- **Individual therapy**
- **Family therapy**
- **Occupational, physical and recreational therapies, substance use disorder services, rehabilitative counseling and vocational programming**

The committee was reinstated in 2020 by the state legislature. It was previously active in 2004 and disbanded due to budget cuts in 2009.

Coryell is the official Department of Social and Health Services representative. Yanisch is one of three certified sex offender treatment providers on the committee. Other members include a superior court judge, a mental health practitioner who specializes in treating sexual assault victims, defense and prosecuting attorneys, and representatives from the Department of Children Youth and Families and the Department of Corrections.

Yanisch is a forensic evaluator at SCC and has been the facility's forensic services manager, in addition to having run a private practice for years.

"I am familiar with different institutions in this state, I'm familiar with DSHS and the SCC, and I've had a lot of contact with the Department of Corrections over the years," he said. "I think it is that background that was



Dr. Dan Yanisch

appealing to those who were making the selections. It's going to be a challenge to pick up after 10 or 11 years have gone by, but I am excited to see what happens and I'm looking forward to working with all those people."

Yanisch and Coryell have a long history of working together and are two of the Special Commitment Center's longest-serving employees.

He joined SCC in 1998, and at one time supervised Coryell, who joined the facility in 2001 and worked as a forensic evaluator under Yanisch in 2004. Coryell is now chief of forensic services and supervises Yanisch.

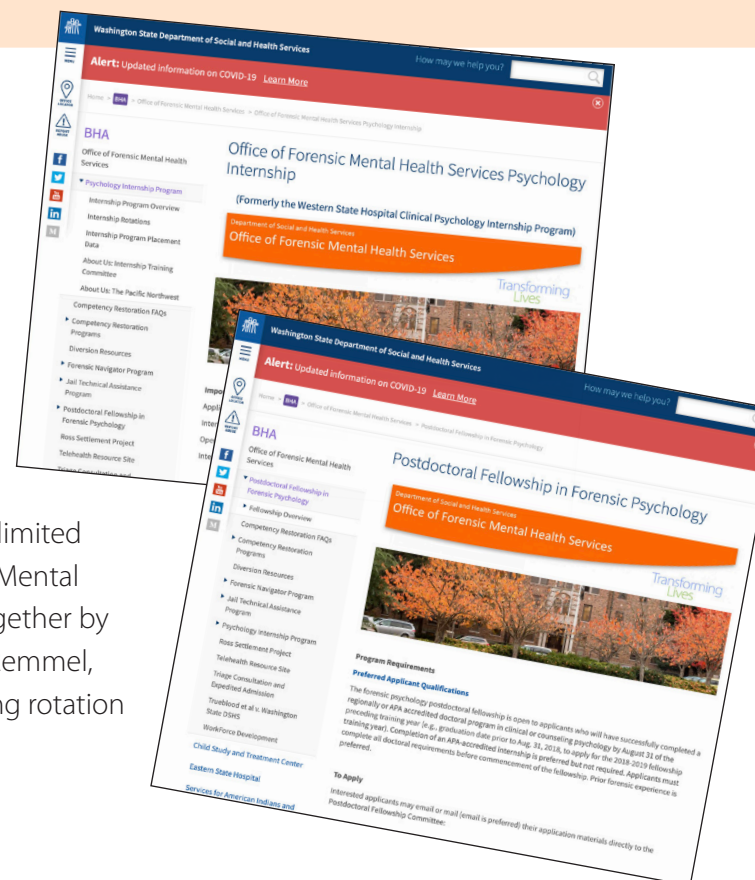
Coryell became chief of forensic services in 2016, but was in competition with her mentor to get the position.

"I'm glad that she got the position instead of me because she's a strong advocate for the evaluators and knows how to work things at the administration level and she goes to bat for us if we need," Yanisch said. "We're all pretty independent and self-motivated, but if our unit needs any sort of assistance or coordination with other parts of the facility she knows who to go to and fights for us."

New websites launch to promote programs at WSH

The psychology internship and postdoctoral fellowship programs at Western State Hospital received a bit more exposure in 2021 with the creation of new websites to attract and inform potential applicants.

The previous site was created when the programs were under the umbrella of Western State Hospital and had limited information. Now that they are under the Office of Forensic Mental Health Services, an update was in order. That update, put together by Dr. Richard Yocum, Dr. Emily Mackelprang and Dr. Rheanna Remmel, includes a great deal of new and useful information, including rotation details, research requirements and training activities.



Greenhouse work provides therapy for Western patients

The act of tending to a plant is more than simply watering and weeding. For some Western State Hospital patients, the work is therapeutic.

This aspect of the hospital's Vocational Rehabilitation Program puts patients in the campus greenhouse to grow and care for more than 1,000 plants of all sizes, shapes and species.

"I love this because you get to see a lot of the fruit and the value of the patients' work," Recreation and Athletics Specialist Alvin Johnson said. "We try to incorporate life concepts into this process. As with anything in life, you've got to try to take care of it, you've got to manage it, you've got to do things to make it be fruitful. And so it lines up with a lot of their recovery concepts."



With a temperature that stays about 70 degrees, the greenhouse is home to myriad plants, including just-sprouted tulips, full-grown trees, cacti, poinsettias, orchids, bromeliads, agave and a wide variety of ferns.

One of the most unique plants is the walking iris, which has light fragrant flowers that bloom intermittently for only 24 hours.

And that's just the inventory inside. Patients and staff are prepping the outdoor urban garden for spring planting, when they will grow pumpkins, tomatoes, squash, strawberries and more.

Patients grow and care for all the plants, tasks that teach work ethic, the importance of punctuality, dressing and acting appropriately, maintaining boundaries and following rules and safety guidelines, said Institutional Counselor Troy Cager.

"Just from vocational training in general for me I see tangible results, positive results, fast results, sustaining results with the patients and their mental health," he said. "Working with the plants is a coping mechanism that helps distract from any type of negative psychosis that they may have."

The Western State Hospital greenhouse.



Passion is the main ingredient for ESH occupational therapists

Expect a 30-minute stream of excited commentary when the topic of occupational therapy is brought up to Joy Gilbert.

"I really love what I do," said Gilbert, a licensed and registered occupational therapist since 1988 who has worked at Eastern since 2019. "I've worked in many different parts of the profession and mental health is the place that I love the most. I really feel lucky to work at Eastern State Hospital because occupational therapy is really valued by the treatment teams."

Tracy Strong, a certified occupational therapy assistant who has worked at Eastern since 1996, shares Gilbert's enthusiasm for their, well, occupation.

"I love my job," she said. "I love working at Eastern State Hospital, but most of all my passion is working with people who have mental illness. If I can be here another 25 years, I will be."

Occupational therapy is about much more than helping people recover from injury to return to work or get a job. The primary goal of this treatment is to support and enable each person's health and participation in life through their engagement in occupation.

"We like to help people live life to the fullest," Gilbert said. "We take people where they're at and meet them in areas where they can be successful. Occupation really is the work of life."

Occupational therapy at Eastern State Hospital has expanded in recent years to provide more active treatment to forensic patients. Strong works with not guilty by reason of insanity patients and is working with her supervisor and the occupational therapy team to create a robust program for the hospital's forensic population.

"They have incredible stories and tragic stories, and to have them share those stories with me has been inspiring," Strong said. "I am learning about their pasts and what their recovery can bring to their future roles. I look forward to providing interventions to help them reach their optimal level of functioning when they discharge."

As an occupational therapist, Gilbert does both patient evaluation and treatment. Her aim is to understand a patient's goals and motivation and create a path to attainability — although success is not necessarily dependent upon the patient reaching their ultimate goal.

"If you're hospitalized with acute mental illness, all the roles they find meaningful to life they are deprived of," she said. "We work to establish gaining new roles or reaching new goals until they are ready to be discharged. We take a lofty goal and find the layers and steps to fit within that motivation.

"I like to say we're the MacGyvers of health care because we can jimmy rig something out of nothing."

Occupational therapy is about much more than helping people recover from injury to return to work or get a job. The primary goal of this treatment is to support and enable each person's health and participation in life through their engagement in occupation.



Duo spends ‘amazing’ year working COVID ward

Many people answered the call when Western State Hospital asked for volunteers to work on the COVID ward on March 31, 2020. Two of them worked on the ward the entire time it was open.

A year later, the COVID-19 pandemic began to wane and the special ward closed until new outbreaks prompted its reopening. RN2 Cindy Choate and Psychiatric Security Attendant Joshua McMullen had time to reflect on their experiences after returning to their home wards.

“At first it was a little bit scary,” Choate said. “Everyone was a little bit scared, a little bit apprehensive. I think the biggest reason I stuck it out for a full year is because the ward ran so smoothly.”

Despite constant exposure to the potentially lethal virus, neither Choate nor McMullen contracted it. Both were among the first staff at Western to get vaccinated when the vaccine became available in December 2020.

“It’s possible we were safer there than anywhere else because we knew what the diagnosis was and how to protect ourselves,” Choate said.

The ward had as many as 16 patients at one time. Three of those patients, each with severe complications from the virus and who were transferred to hospitals with intensive care units, died.

“It was different than normally experiencing a patient death because of the unknown,” Choate said. “We didn’t know if it was going to be three more the next day or if it would get better or worse. The other thing that made it hard was the patients couldn’t have family members (visit). Family members couldn’t say goodbye to their loved ones.”

McMullen, who works the night shift, volunteered to work on the ward out of loyalty to the hospital and its patients.

Staffing in the ward was limited to two shifts, day and night, and included two registered nurses, a licensed practical nurse and up to four floor staff. The ward closed when the patient count hit zero but reopened every time a patient tested positive for COVID. When the ward closed the staff returned to their home wards, but that respite typically lasted only a couple of days.

“There was one point about six months in that I felt like I had done enough on the ward, but we were not seeing enough volunteers,” McMullen said. “I had so much first-hand experience already I figured I might as well stretch this out as long as they’re willing to keep me working.”

“A lot of people told me I was brave for being over there, but if I’m being honest, I never felt brave. I was scared,” he said. “It was my contribution to the hospital and the patients. I owed it to them.”



Joshua McMullen and Cindy Choate with a dummy patient near the end of their time working on the COVID ward.

As one of the floor staff — and sometimes the ward’s only floor worker — McMullen put in long hours and got little rest when the COVID ward was open.

“I was working 12-plus hour shifts and nearly every day at times for first six months,” he said. “I had no contact with friends and family for the first three or four months. I had to keep myself busy because otherwise I would be at home doing nothing.”

Chief Nursing Officer Jennifer Brown had high praise for the team that worked on the COVID ward.

“The team truly did an amazing job — and continues to do so — in managing our COVID patient population,” she said. “It truly has been a team effort — a multidisciplinary effort.”

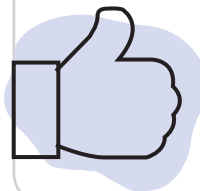
Choate said the people who worked on the ward developed a deep bond.

“We had a high quality of staff and great teamwork and camaraderie,” she said. “For me that was a really big part. I wouldn’t trade the experience. If I had to go back and do it all over again I would.”

Recognizing BHA HQ staff

Behavioral Health Administration leaders held a drive-through staff recognition event in June to personally thank headquarters staff for their service.

“We wanted to recognize the phenomenal work of our BHA headquarters staff during the pandemic, and how they remained flexible and dedicated as they supported the vital work of our BHA facilities,” said Sjan Talbot, BHA’s deputy assistant secretary. Talbot joined Assistant Secretary Kevin Bovenkamp in thanking staff and presenting them with BHA mementos.



SCC takes extra steps to offer safe training

The Special Commitment Center sought ways to provide life-saving training safely during the pandemic. Staff thanked their SCC Fire Department instructors for taking extra infection control measures during CPR/ First Aid training, to include sanitizing the CPR mannequins and changing the lung bags before each new class. Sanitizing the training tables, practicing social distancing and wearing masks also helps staff learn in a safer environment. "I feel that health and safety standards were met with a passing grade of A+," Residential Rehabilitation Counselor Vickie Hernandez said.

FSCRCP commemorates Juneteenth

Juneteenth will be an official Washington state holiday in 2022, but the Fort Steilacoom Competency Restoration Program celebrated the day in 2021 by raising a Juneteenth flag on June 19.

Juneteenth recognizes the end of slavery in America. Although the Civil War ended in April 1865, many Black people in Texas continued to remain in bondage, and on June 19, 1865, federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce that the war was over and to ensure that all enslaved people were freed.

"The Fourth of July is our Independence Day. Juneteenth is our Freedom Day. To acknowledge and celebrate this momentous event on June 19, 1865, is to bear witness to our shared humanity," FSCRCP Program Director Brian Shirley said.

"Equal rights may not have been gained on this day, but it was a tremendous step toward 'a more perfect union.'"

– FSCRCP Program Director Brian Shirley

BHA celebrates LGBTQ+ Pride

Throughout the Behavioral Health Administration, teams celebrated LGBTQ+ Pride in early June with Pride flag ceremonies and events.

Eastern State Hospital, the Child Study and Treatment Center, Western State Hospital and the Fort Steilacoom Competency Restoration Program each raised the Pride flag to recognize the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer-plus community.

"This year's event was the most powerful Pride event so far at WSH and featured the 2021 EDI Committee recognizing the LGBTQ+ community through music, poems, stories and respectful, heart-felt recognitions," said WSH EDI Administrator Carol Scott, adding that the more than 60 staff who participated gained new insights and historical advances made by the LGBTQ+ community.

Marie Natrall-Ackles, BHA's tribal affairs administrator, spoke at the WSH event about the Native American meaning of being "Two-Spirited" and how it aligns with the LGBTQ+ community. Charles Southerland, Civil Center of Excellence interim CEO, spoke about the historical advances made by the LGBTQ+ community, and Linda Silva, interim Deputy CEO of Gage Center of Forensic Excellence, recited and praised portions of the LGBTQ+ Pride Proclamation signed by Gov. Jay Inslee.



Eastern State Hospital raises the Pride Flag during a ceremony.

Truth to Action Tour welcomes staff to share ideas

Office of Equity Diversity and Inclusion made a pointed effort to get staff feedback about efforts to make DSHS more inclusive in 2021 through the Truth to Action Tour.

The office hosted 67 listening sessions between Feb. 28 and May 31 and offered a survey that was open to all DSHS staff, whether or not they participated in one of the listening sessions. BHA accounted for 46.4 percent of all survey responses.

BHA staff responses were consistent with DSHS-wide answers to the question of what DSHS can do to become an anti-racist organization. Culture change, communication and training were the top three answers for both groups. For BHA, the next most popular responses were leadership and hiring.

The survey also asked staff to respond to the question of “When I think about fully belonging at DSHS, it looks and feels like:”

High-level BHA answers included:

- Seeing Black, Indigenous and People of Color in leadership roles
- No nepotism and fairer hiring practices
- People being able to come to work as their authentic self and feel respected, heard, included, valued, appreciated, and safe


To support the Governor’s Office of Equity, BHA held three listening sessions just for BHA staff. Leadership was present for an hour and a half for day shift, swing shift, and graveyard staff. Nearly 200 staff members participated.

“We’re going to use the results to inform the work we’re going to do in 2022,” said Yasmin Michaels, the BHA equity, diversity, and inclusion and organizational development manager.

Another key EDI initiative in 2021 was the BHA anti-racism declaration that was announced in May. The importance of the document, which was signed by former Assistant Secretary Sean Murphy and all facility leaders, is to show what EDI measures are important to leadership, why it is important to them and what they will do to bring about change in the workplace.

“We came out of that with 16 commitments,” Michaels said. “This gives staff something to look at and see what their leadership has committed to. If something is happening or they see something inappropriate they know their leadership will have their back.”

Although leadership at many of the facilities and at the top level of BHA has changed since the anti-racism declaration came out, the initiative is not a thing of the past. Michaels said that EDI leaders will revisit the declaration with new leadership in early 2022 and make any necessary updates.



“We’re going to use the results to inform the work we’re going to do in 2022.”

BHA leaders become diversity executives

The Behavioral Health Administration’s equity, diversity and inclusion efforts got a boost in 2021 with three staff members earning diversity certifications.

Yasmin Michaels, BHA’s equity, diversity and inclusion and organizational development manager and staff services manager, and Shannon Wallace, BHA’s chief administrative officer, earned the titles of certified diversity professional and certified diversity executive, respectively, from the Institute for Diversity Certification. Charles Southerland, the interim chief executive officer of Western State Hospital’s Civil Center of Excellence, also earned the diversity executive certification.

“I knew I was going to hire a diversity administrator, and I wanted to be able to speak that language,” he said.

Michaels wanted the certification to add to her credibility as subject matter expert and as the leader of the EDI community

of practice for BHA. For Wallace, the experience increased her EDI expertise as a part of the BHA leadership team, particularly as a leader in human resources, communications and contracting.

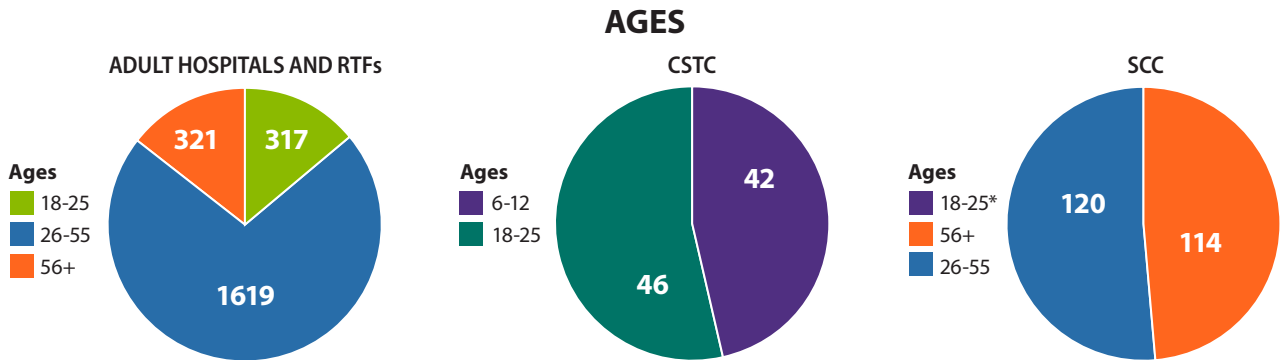
“It’s a lens that a lot of people don’t think of when it comes to this, but we have an opportunity to increase the diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work — including in our contracts and suppliers and purchasing vendors,” Wallace said.

Michaels stressed that being able to see oneself reflected in leadership helps to find leaders to be more approachable and to realize that it’s possible to advance in the organization.

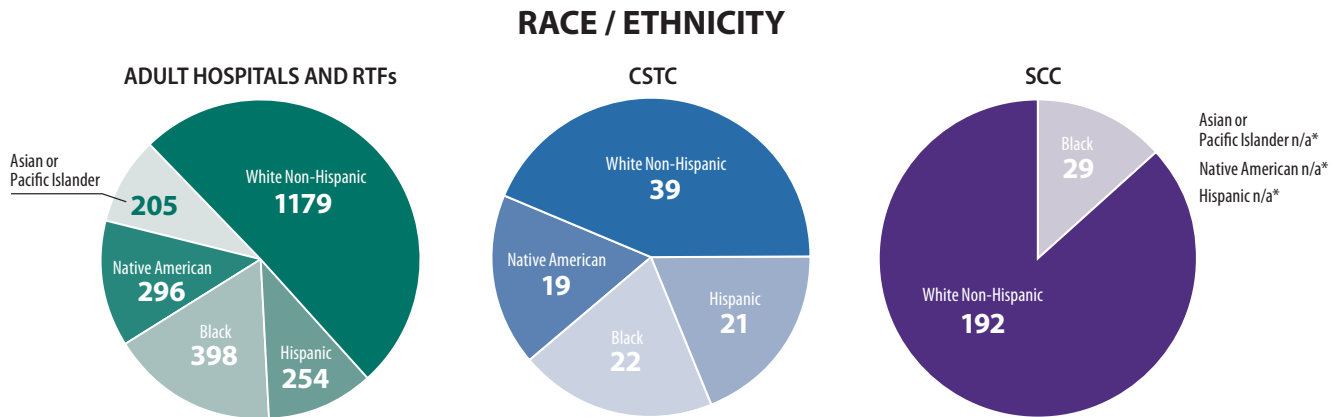
“Just being able to look up and see people in those positions (who reflect you), it makes you feel like you’re being heard if you come to them and talk,” she said. “It gives you hope to one day work your way up the ladder.”

Who we serve

BHA strives to provide culturally aware and competent care to a diverse patient population that spans different ages, genders and races/ethnicities.

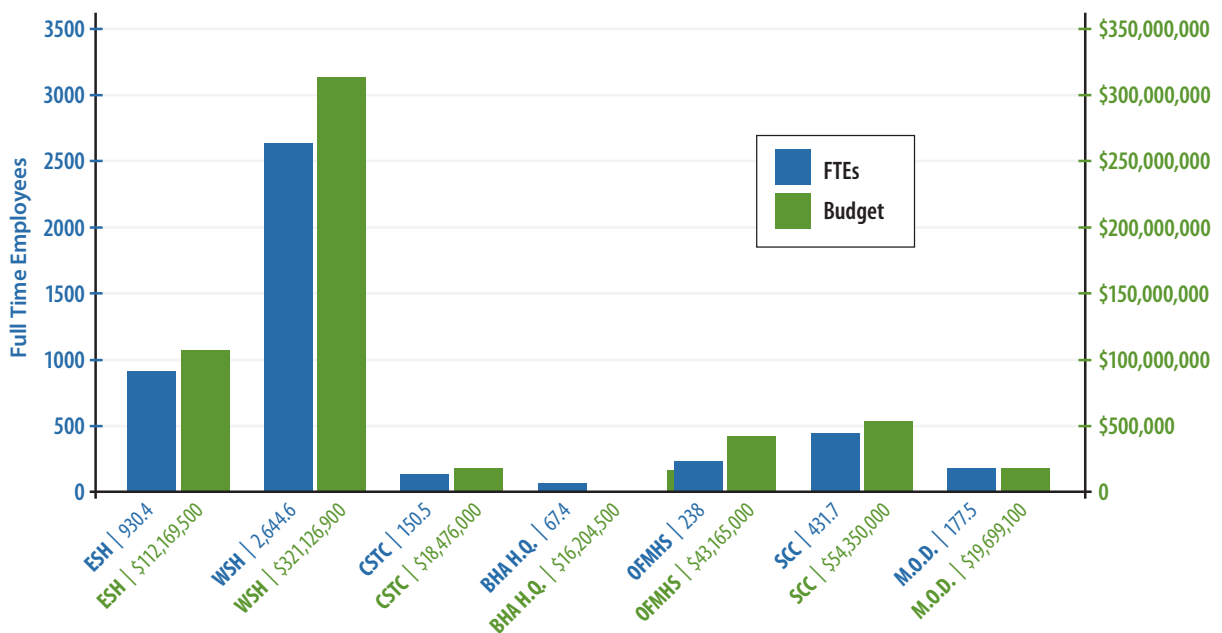


*DSHS does not report demographic information in numbers below 10.



*DSHS does not report demographic information in numbers below 10.

OPERATING BUDGETS | FY2021*





Carl Trent

Western security officer saves nurse after medical episode

A medical episode at a Western State Hospital screening station became a matter of life and death in a matter of seconds.

The actions of Security Officer Carl Trent made all the difference.

On Jan. 31, 2021, a nurse at the screening station began gasping for air and gesturing that she was choking. Trent sprang into action, performing life-saving measures until medical help arrived.

"I came from around that counter and started giving her the Heimlich maneuver trying to get her back," Trent said. "She went limp on me. I was losing her, but I kept doing what I was doing and she started breathing again."

The moment was personal for Trent, who has known the nurse for years because she is good friends with his wife Quenasta, who worked at Western for 33 years.

"She and my wife worked together for a long time," Trent said. "This is a friend to me. I used to watch out for her when I got called to her ward."

Trent said he would have reacted in the same way no matter who was facing an emergency.

"I just like to help people," he said. "I would do it for anybody."

The nurse suffered from a coronary blockage and went to the hospital after receiving immediate medical attention from Medical Nurse Consultants Jeff Hathey, Jean Hagel and Bea Tannagan.

"The MNCs showed up with patrol, which was good because if I didn't get response from her I was going to get her down and to get to work with the defibrillator," Trent said.

Trent said he saw the woman a week after the incident and that she is doing well.

"She was crying, hugging me and thanking me for saving her life," he said.



Director of Security Mike Douglas called Trent "a credit to the security department at WSH."

"His actions are celebrated along with the positive outcome for the staff member involved," Douglas said.

Trent has worked at Western State Hospital for 15 years and became a security officer in 2016. He said the incident was among the more "scary and exhilarating" moments of his career.

"I'm just glad that she's OK," he said. "I would not hesitate to do that for anyone."

Former patient praises Maple Lane staff

A recent patient who went through the Maple Lane Competency Restoration Program was so delighted with the care he received that he wrote a letter to the facility to express his thanks.

Maple Lane Residential Services Manager Tracy Grunenfelder said the letter shows how dedicated his staff is to serving competency restoration patients.

"This is the kind of stuff that is a direct reflection on all the hard work we perform each and every day. To think, the person who sent this had nothing to gain. He took the time to write the letter and spent the money on postage to send it. Pretty darn cool!"

Dear Maple Lane,
 Your staff is full of wonderfully talented individuals. It is very inspirational to be around such highly motivated, dedicated staff who obviously love their jobs and their patients.
 Day in and Day out; Night after Night, your staff provides a service and to none.
 I cannot imagine a more well put together program, that serves so many, in so many different ways, thank you for having me.
 God Bless JJ

2021 was a transformative year in many ways for the Behavioral Health Administration

With an objective to transform lives by building 21st-century facilities that provide 21st century care, the administration moved toward that goal with initiatives to build two residential treatment facilities, a new hospital building on the Western State Hospital campus, and much more.

Those initiatives continued while several people took on key positions throughout BHA.

The biggest change was the June departure of Assistant Secretary *Sean Murphy*, who followed former Secretary *Cheryl Strange* to the Department of Corrections.

Kevin Bovenkamp, who joined BHA as a special assistant in January, was named assistant secretary over the summer. That was one of several high-level changes throughout BHA in 2021.

Chief executive officers at both WSH and ESH departed in 2021. *Dave Holt* retired from WSH as the hospital's operations split began to unfold. That put *Charles Southerland* and *Mark Thompson* in the roles of interim CEOs for the Civil Center of Excellence and Forensic Center of Excellence, respectively.

Mark Kettner resigned as CEO of ESH. Child Study and Treatment Center CEO *Tony Bowie* is the interim CEO at Eastern State, and *Byron Eagle* shifted from the Special Commitment Center to become interim CEO at CSTC.

In October, *Dave Flynn* left the Special Commitment Center for a role with the Department of Corrections. *Keith Devos* was elevated from residential treatment facility administrator to replace Flynn at the helm of SCC.

Other key retirements, promotions or moves in 2021 include:

- *Dr. Elizabeth Bolinger* became FSCRCP clinical services manager
- *Lisa Copeland* moved from DSHS communications manager for DDA to WSH chief public affairs officer
- *Jeneva Cotton* joined BHA as residential treatment facilities director
- *Dr. Francesca DeWalt* was promoted to clinical director at CSTC
- *Tracy Grunenfelder* moved from Maple Lane residential services manager to join the Jail Technical Assistance team
- *Tim Hunter* was named Workforce Development administrator
- *Jason Karpen* became the OFMHS liaison and diversion specialist
- *Dr. Elena Lopez* became director of sex offense treatment programs for BHA
- *Mandi Maycumber* became Maple Lane residential services manager
- *Kellet Sayre* became chief financial officer at WSH
- *Autumn Sharpe* joined BHA as IT director
- *Kathy Spears* retired after more than 30 years in state government, including the last six as WSH chief public affairs officer
- *Juli Steh* became interim chief nursing officer at ESH
- *Joyce Stockwell* retired after more than 30 years with DSHS, most recently as deputy CEO of the WSH Civil Center of Excellence
- *Danielle VerHey* joined DSHS as a Trueblood project manager
- *Solomon Wyatt* became the Forensic Navigator Program administrator
- *Dr. Junk Yasuda-Free* became medical director of FSCRCP
- *Candice Yi* became chief of transition and program accountability at SCC

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

STAFF*
4,208

CLIENTS
2,585

Number of Full-Time Employees

Eastern State Hospital	930
Western State Hospital	2,644
Child Study Treatment Center	150
BHA Headquarters	67
OFMHS	238
Maintenance Operations	177
Special Commitment Center	431
Total	3,862

*Not all staff are full-time.



BHA hears community concerns about potential Clark County RTF

Several new facilities will open in the coming years as the state works toward the goal of transforming mental health and treating civil patients closer to their home communities.

The Behavioral Health Administration will create three civil residential treatment facilities along the Interstate-5 corridor from Clark County to Snohomish County. Design of a 350-bed forensic hospital on the campus of Western State Hospital is underway as well.

“Those projects are funded, on track and going well, and we’re doing some good work around community engagement,” Assistant Secretary Kevin Bovenkamp said.

One part of the work to open a new facility has been community outreach. BHA leadership has taken part in community meetings — both through in-person and virtual formats — regarding plans for some of the facilities, with the most recent in November for the RTF in northeast Clark County.

That site is planned to house a 48-bed campus on a 20-acre swath of farmland near the WSU Vancouver campus and two other schools. Two 16-bed facilities will be contracted by the Health Care Authority. DSHS will operate the third facility.

“We took information from our patient population at our state hospitals and what it showed us is there’s a big population up and down the I-5 corridor,” Facilities, Finance and Analytics Administration Capital Programs Chief Larry Covey told a crowd of about 20 community members during an in-person event at the WSU Vancouver campus in November. “What we found was that Clark County had no or very limited resources for this civil patient population.”

FACILITY	BED COUNT
Maple Lane Civil RTF	16
Clark County Civil RTF	48
Forensic Hospital	350

Maple Lane celebrates fifth birthday with staff event

Almost five years to the day, staff at the Maple Lane Competency Restoration Program celebrated the facility's fifth anniversary on April 20, 2021.

To capture this milestone, Maple Lane leadership sponsored an event to showcase the accomplishments and people that made the program what it is today.

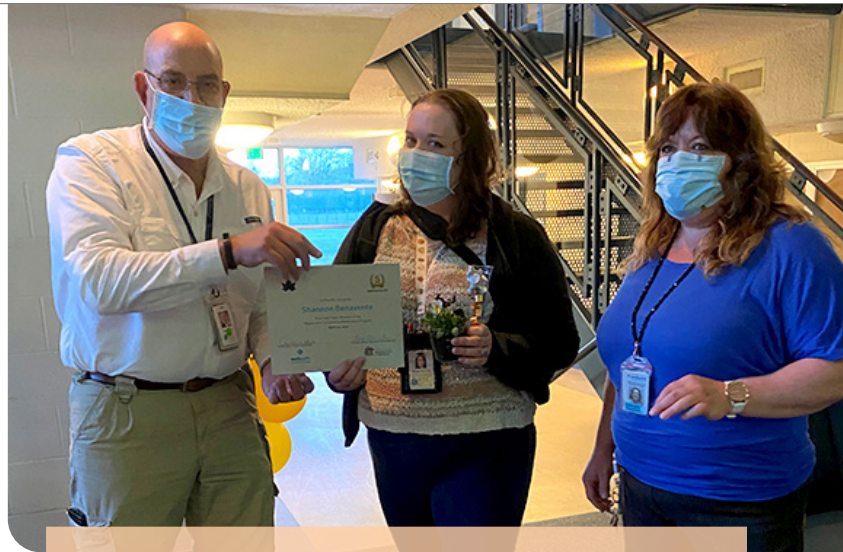
The event included breakfast for the outgoing night shift, lunch for the day and swing shifts and two large cakes.

A slideshow with photos of employees and events over the last five years played continuously on a projector. Small plants representing the program were given to staff as an example of our program continuing to grow. "Thank you" pens were also given out in appreciation.

Guest speakers joined by video and offered words of encouragement to our staff, highlighting the accomplishments and teamwork over the years.

Staff had an opportunity to sign a poster, share a memory and create a custom maple leaf cutout that will be used in a display piece that captures the day and the people around it.

Maple Lane has had a big five years, but it won't be around for a 10th anniversary. The residential treatment facility



Certificates of appreciation were given to the program founders and the 20-plus staff members who have been with the program since the beginning.

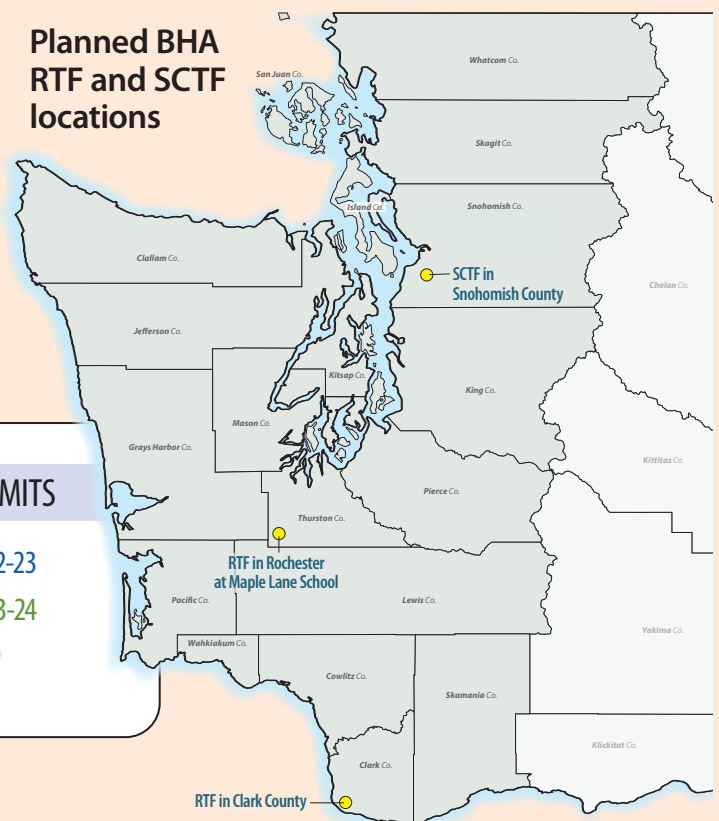
is scheduled to close by 2024 as part of the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement.

In December, all DSHS positions at the facility were converted from project to permanent status. The move spearheaded, by Deputy Assistant Secretary Sjan Talbot, will provide better options for DSHS staff when the site closes.

"Research shows that our patients do much better in their recovery when they're in their home communities and closer to the families," BHA Deputy Assistant Secretary Sjan Talbot said.

The Clark County RTF follows plans for a facility in Thurston County. The Maple Lane campus will have 16 beds and serve civil patients. It is in the design phase and will open by 2023.

Planned BHA RTF and SCTF locations



OPERATED BY	CONSTRUCTION START	PATIENT ADMITS
DSHS/BHA	October 2021	Winter 2022-23
DSHS/BHA/HCA	Summer 2022	Winter 2023-24
DSHS/WSH	Q1 2024	2027-29

CSTC celebrates end of school year with poetry performance, new book

Pain. Yearning. Desire. Aspiration.

Patients at the Child Study and Treatment Center gave life to all of those emotions — and in an event in the spring of 2021 they did it in front of their peers as part of the Pongo Publishing Poetry Project finale at CSTC.

The event featured poetry readings from 24 CSTC Pongo students about topics like physical and sexual assault, addiction, abandonment and anxiety. In most cases, few people aside from the poet and their mentor had seen or heard the poems before that day.

Pongo Program Manager Shaun McMichael lauded the courage of the poets — elementary, middle school and high school students who read titles such as “Nightmare Poem,” “Squirrels,” “Reasons to Love Me,” and “Demons” — to bare their souls before a group of their peers, staff, poetry mentors and observers on Zoom.

“It was really, really great,” he said. “Really joyous.”

Pongo has worked with CSTC patients since the summer of 2000, but this finale was special. Not only did it include performances by Seattle poet and playwright Daemond Arrindell, but each mentor and student was given a copy of “The Story of My Heart,” a book filled with 102 poems and eight works of artwork by current and former CSTC patients going all the way back to 2010.

“It felt great giving them the book,” McMichael said. “Their eyes lit up. Some of them knew the kids who had poems in there and their art was there. It was a magical thing. I felt like a hero.”

“The Story of My Heart” is the second book of poems from CSTC patients that Pongo has published. The first, “No More Me,” was published in 2001. McMichael was thrilled to produce a sequel, even if it meant working on the book on nights and weekends and forsaking his own writing.

“We help turn their thoughts and fears and dreams into poems,” he said. “The book is going to help inspire and generate more writing from these kids.”

Arrindell, who worked in social services before becoming a full-time writer, performer and teaching artist, has volunteered with Pongo a handful of times and said he immediately said yes when McMichael asked him to participate in the event.

“I know what events like this mean to kids because they don’t have opportunities to be celebrated, to have their work and their creativity celebrated very often and to see themselves in the role of creators and creatives,” he said.

Arrindell performed his poems “Young Jacques,” “Small Talk” and “On the Subject of Transformation.” Even though he participated through Zoom, the students paid rapt attention when Arrindell spoke.

By taking part virtually, Arrindell did not have the opportunity to engage one on one with the CSTC poets, but he made a point to mention in the chat when a stanza especially touched his heart.

“Specifically, for me as a Black man, it’s important for me to show them that I’m listening, to show them that what they’re saying and experiencing matters to me, that I value and respect what they’re experiencing, what they’re going through,” he said. “I hope empowerment is part of this as well.”

McMichael pointed out one student who was inspired by Arrindell. “Z” hadn’t written a poem with his Pongo mentor all school year, but worked on one during the event. The only time he stopped was when Arrindell performed. Z read his poem toward the end of the program.

“You can see healing happen right in front of you,” McMichael said.

CSTC patients wrote 235 poems during the school year, the most of any facility Pongo works with.





CSTC expands with opening of San Juan Cottage

The Sept. 30 opening of the fourth Child Study and Treatment Center cottage was more than a means to treat more children with severe behavioral needs and disorders.

It was a milestone for Erik Logan, a registered nurse and the hospital's director of nursing.

Logan studied architecture at the University of Idaho before switching paths and embarking on a 30-year career in behavioral health with the state of Washington. His knowledge of architecture, experience working construction and years working at Western State Hospital and CSTC created a base of knowledge that helped him create the initial design for San Juan Cottage.

Taking part in ribbon-cutting ceremony for the \$9.2 million, 16,900-square-foot cottage open was a landmark moment for him.

"This has been a labor of love for me," Logan said during a tour of the cottage two weeks before the ceremony. "It has been very satisfying to see this project come to fruition. I never thought it would happen for a project of this size."

San Juan Cottage has 18 beds for youth ages 15-17. The cottage also has a dedicated forensic wing for patients admitted under RCW 10.77. The patients admitted under RCW 10.77 are court-ordered to undergo competency evaluation or competency restoration.

The cottage features wide open milieu areas with open sightlines from the nursing and medication station to both the civil and forensic sides. The milieu features skylights, a low-stimulation suite, and areas for youth to interact with each other in a secure setting. All of the features were designed to maximize durability while enhancing the therapeutic atmosphere.

"We tried really hard to make a homey environment but also a durable environment," Logan said during his remarks to a small crowd at the opening.

Logan began his career in 1991 as a mental health technician at Western State Hospital and went to nursing school before moving over to CSTC 12 years later. His mix of education and professional background, which includes auditing residential treatment facilities under the umbrella of the Health Care Authority's Children's Long-Term Inpatient Program and consulting for facilities throughout the nation, informed every aspect of the San Juan Cottage design.

"It really gave me a broad context of what's out there," he said. "Between the CLIP facility inspections and working every ward at Western State Hospital, I was able to take some of the great design cues from those areas and omit designs that weren't as effective."

CSTC is the only state-run children's hospital in Washington and has a long waitlist of patients. A fifth cottage is planned to open in the next 10 years, which will increase hospital capacity to about 80 patients.

"Nationally, and in Washington state, there has been a substantial increase in demand for pediatric mental health crisis services, emergency room evaluations and inpatient admissions, which greatly tax current system resources," Behavioral Health Administration Assistant Secretary Kevin Bovenkamp said in his remarks at the opening. "It is now common in Washington for children to be boarded in emergency rooms for several days waiting for inpatient beds.

"We're happy to say that the opening of this facility will help lessen that situation."

Dr. Morgan Costanza is the cottage program director and leads treatment planning, although each youth has a treatment plan that is individualized and includes input from both the patient and their family. The first patients were admitted in November.

"Our staff ensure that our patients are at the center of their care and they emphasize care that is youth guided and family driven," Bovenkamp said. "They provide wraparound treatment and services using evidence-based treatments while also providing life and relationship skills development, family, relationship, recreational and other specialized therapies."

Logan has seen just about everything in his three decades working with patients who have acute behavioral health needs. Sometimes the job is difficult, but it has also been vastly rewarding.

"If you can see one kid that you've worked with and made a difference for, it makes it all worth it," he said.

ESH donates stuffed animals to Spokane Police Department

Eastern State Hospital donated 306 stuffed animals to the Spokane Police Department in remembrance of ESH mental health technician Kassie Dewey and in support of her daughter, Lilly, who was seriously injured in a domestic violence incident.

The presentation was a private event held June 9 at ESH for Lilly and her family, employees and the Spokane Police Department.

ESH and DSHS employees across the state donated new stuffed animals to support local law enforcement or community organizations that provide assistance and services for children involved in domestic violence or other traumatic events.

“While in the course of their duties, SPD patrol officers and chaplains will have the ability to provide stuffed animals to children going through a difficult time as a result of domestic violence, a loss of a family member or otherwise experiencing a form of emotional trauma,” Spokane Police Department Capt. Tracie Meidl said.

Eastern State Hospital would like to acknowledge DSHS employees across the state for their support to the stuffed animal drive, in addition to the emotional support they provided to Lilly and her family.



Spokane Police Department
Capt. Tracie Meidl and Lilly.

Hospital again earns national accreditation

Eastern State Hospital once again earned the Gold Seal of Approval for hospital accreditation from The Joint Commission in the spring.

The Joint Commission performance standards ensure that hospitals provide appropriate services to patients and demonstrate continuous compliance with meeting safety and quality standards. The national accreditation is valid for up to three years and signifies that ESH complies with the highest national standards for safety and quality of care and is committed to continually improving patient care.

The four-person survey team visited ESH for an unannounced onsite review in March. During the visit, reviewers evaluated compliance spanning several areas including leadership, human resources, emergency management, environment of care, patient rights, infection control and medical practices.



The team also conducted daily tracers to follow the path of a patient or a process to ensure all standards were met.

“They were very complementary during our entire survey process with what we’re doing here at ESH,” said Dyana Blood, Quality Management director.

The innovativeness of an ESH staff member Lincoln Jordan, LPN4, was lauded as a best practice by the survey team.

“We have a staff member who implemented a process on a ward to track expiring products visually using colored dots,” Blood said. “One surveyor said that was a great practice since it is hard to identify when some products expire. Central Supply is now looking to adopt that practice hospital-wide for all products with hard-to-find expiration dates.”

She noted that ESH’s preparedness for the survey was due to the staff’s “ongoing vigilance. We have a continuous improvement mindset and a patient safety focus. Staying survey-ready is just an ingrained, daily part of our work.”

Eastern State Hospital team makes great strides with competency restoration program

Dr. Bryan Zolnikov led the creation of the Behavioral Health Administration's Breaking Barriers Program in 2015 and 2016, a process that required the Washington's state psychiatric hospitals to alter treatment for competency restoration patients. Implementation of the program at Eastern State Hospital was an arduous process complicated by staffing issues.

Many of those issues were resolved in mid-2020, and under the guidance of Dr. Jennifer Henderson and her team, Eastern's Breaking Barriers Competency Restoration Program made considerable improvements in the implementation. "Compliance with the program exploded within six months" of staffing improvements, Zolnikov said.

Intake psychological assessments, treatment group progress notes and forensic evaluation referrals are areas in which Eastern has shined, Zolnikov said.

"Transitioning from treatment as usual to a competency restoration focus was difficult," he said. "Now they are doing it with excellence."

Henderson joined the hospital as director of psychology in May 2020, right around the time Dr. Maureen Nickerson and Dr. Lisa Mathews joined the ESH psychology department. The trio immediately zeroed in on getting the Breaking Barriers program into compliance.

The first step was analyzing the issues — beyond staffing — that had prevented the program from being implemented. The key needs were to create a more holistic approach to treatment planning and encourage collaboration among the medical staff, social workers, recreation and occupational therapists, and psychology staff.

"One of the things we're so used to in our roles as psychologists is not necessarily being the primary care provider but being a consultant able to get all of the people at the table in an interdisciplinary manner," Henderson said. "Between myself, Lisa, and Maureen we've really prioritized stakeholder engagement, breaking down silos and collaborating to provide solutions."

The Breaking Barriers program requires that competency restoration treatment plans be individualized for each patient based on that person's barriers to competency. Nickerson and Mathews have led the way by shepherding collaboration among disciplines.

"Lisa and I play off one another's strengths," Nickerson said. "We started by talking to the staff and the social workers in particular who have been here a while."

With the key players from all treatment disciplines collaborating, the interdisciplinary team began the challenging work of identifying obstacles toward implementation, finding creative solutions, and turning improvement strategies into reality.

"Really, all the credit goes to the entire competency restoration team. I am particularly proud of every member of my psychology staff, including our psych associates Kenzie Bush, Amanda Saunders and Rachel Giddings," Henderson said. "I tell my team 'You are empowered to be awesome. Tell me what you need, and I'll make it happen.'"

"Transitioning from treatment as usual to a competency restoration focus was difficult," Dr. Zolnikov said. "Now they are doing it with excellence."



SCC counselor's quick response prevents abduction

The instinct to react in an instant is embedded deep within Kiaya Van Scoyoc.

That's a benefit to society because the then-Special Commitment Center residential rehab counselor has found herself in such situations several times.

The most recent difference-making incident came Sept. 5 when she prevented three teenage girls from being abducted on a busy highway in Spanaway.

"When I look back, it happened so fast I don't even recall having a fight or flight response," Van Scoyoc said. "I didn't hesitate to get involved. I don't know the situation, but in no way should a grown man be chasing girls on a four-lane highway."

Van Scoyoc and her fiancé, Keano Riggs, prevented potential tragedy by getting the frightened girls into their vehicle, fending off their pursuer and calling the police.

It happened quickly and could have been dangerous. Van Scoyoc said she swerved her car to block traffic on the four-lane highway so one girl could get in her car. While that was happening, the pursuer also tried to get in the vehicle. He also attempted to get in the car when Van Scoyoc stopped again to pick up the other girls and was only thwarted when Riggs physically stopped him.

"The guy said 'Give me one of them. I just want one,'" Van Scoyoc recalled.

Police arrived soon thereafter and the man was arrested.

"There is so much going on and so much to think about (in these moments), but I reason that everything ends up OK because of my faith," she said.

The constant awareness and ability to react to a crisis are traits that Van Scoyoc have relied on before. Last fall she saved the life of a choking SCC resident.

"It's not about me being rewarded or seen as a hero, it's about creating awareness," Van Scoyoc said. "I want people driving down the road or in a restaurant to keep their eyes open because everything is just a matter of seconds."



SCC stands up discharge team

Just three months after the Special Commitment Center began developing its discharge team, an inspection team praised them for their potential to be leaders in the field.

"You have the potential to be the model of what discharge planning for sexually violent predators in the country looks like," the team of Inspection of Care experts told SCC leaders, according to SCC's Director of Discharge Planning Jonathan Sherry.

"That made us say, 'OK, let's be that model,'" he said. "We will not just create a good program and do what's asked of us in the Senate bill, but let's create something that actually other states want to emulate because it's a successful model."

Senate Bill 5163 directed the facility to lead discharge

planning for its residents — work previously done by defense attorneys. SCC was funded for its discharge planning team on July 1, and in three months more than 70% of those positions were filled, Sherry said. When fully staffed, the team will include 31 members and nine additional support team staff.

"Our discharge services not only teaches the residents life skills, they also coordinate the transition of care so the handover of residents from our (McNeil) Island clinicians to the clinician who's taking of care of this resident in the community is a warm handoff so that that clinician in the community knows about the resident and how far they are in their treatment. That transition being smooth helps the resident because there's not an interruption in their treatment, and so they're more stable when they go into the community," said Dr. Zainab Ghazal,

Legislature approves \$51M to design new hospital

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee stood outside Western State Hospital in May 2018 and announced a bold vision that would transform behavioral health care in the state.

In the spring, Inslee signed a state budget that includes historic investments in behavioral health for the 2021-23 biennium.

An important part of the budget for BHA was getting \$51 million to design a 350-bed forensic hospital building at Western State Hospital, a key first step in upgrading the 150-year-old hospital.

“Getting a \$51 million investment in designing a new hospital to me means it’s going to happen because they wouldn’t be making that kind of investment if there wasn’t a lot of support to build a new hospital,” said BHA Finance Director Ginger Stewart.

In an effort to hear community concerns and be a good community partner with the city of Lakewood, BHA leaders held two public events to discuss the hospital and 10-year master plan for the Western State Hospital campus.

The first was a socially distanced, outdoor open house at Custer Elementary School. The second was a virtual event. Both events provided opportunity for BHA staff to explain the work done at Western State Hospital.

“We are happy to have an active community that is interested in the future of the hospital,” BHA Assistant Secretary Kevin Bovenkamp told the crowd at the first event. “We believe that focusing our state hospitals primarily on forensic patients will allow us to provide a better level of care. A key part to providing that level of care is a new 350-bed hospital building that is being planned.”

Bob Hubenthal, BHA’s director of capital programs, explained the detail that has gone into planning the new hospital and what the master plan entails for the Western State Hospital campus. In addition to the new hospital building, plans are in the works to build a fifth cottage for the Child Study and Treatment Center, a 48-bed residential treatment facility and a visitor center proposed by the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association.



Artist rendering of the new Western State Hospital.

SCC’s then-chief of transitions and program accountability. (She since transitioned to the Department of Corrections; Candice Yi is the current chief.)

“Just to highlight how we’re doing that differently, we don’t just have discharge people (which we do), we don’t just have social workers (which I’m sure other states have), we literally hired a workforce development manager to purely be a part of this team to look at how we get our residents to work. ... This is an actual rehabilitative model to helping people who have long stints of incarceration and institutionalization to actually become reintegrated members of the community,” Sherry said.

Ghazal said discharge planning helps link all SCC programs together.

“Discharge planning was the one department I feel that connects all the departments within SCC, and I described this as like the thread that connects us all because it starts from the beginning of when a resident lands at SCC and follows that resident through to the end of unconditional release, after they’ve been released into the community,” she said. “So it’s truly the continuity of care for our residents, and it was the one thing that was missing.”

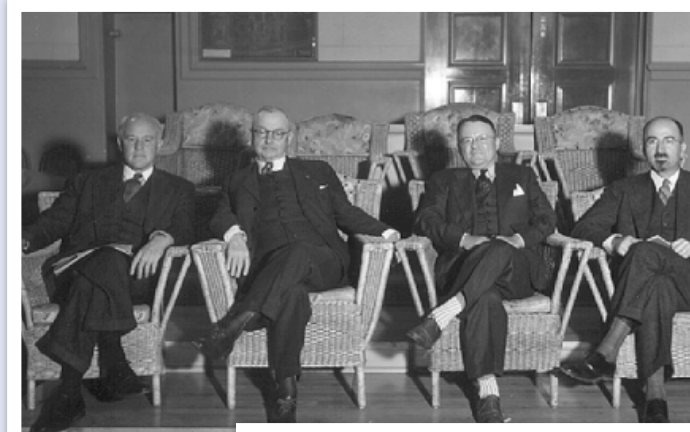
Ghazal praised the discharge team members for their expertise and enthusiasm for their work.

“Not only are they good at what they do, they’re good with each other,” she said. “The team just came together ... it’s like this symphony of people working together. It’s amazing work. I’m proud of them.”

Western State Hospital celebrates 150 years of serving patients

Where woolly sheep once grazed across Puget Sound prairies, Western State Hospital now stands. Washington state’s first public behavioral health treatment facility celebrated its 150-year anniversary on Aug. 19.

“I am proud to be a part of the Behavioral Health Administration as we celebrate this historic milestone,” BHA Assistant Secretary Kevin Bovenkamp said. “This anniversary comes at a time when Western State Hospital is in the midst of making important changes that will help us best serve the people of Washington for the next 150 years.”



Now operated by the Department of Social and Health Services, Western State opened in 1871 and is one of the largest inpatient psychiatric hospitals west of the Mississippi. It has more than 800 beds and 2,500 employees and stands amid native firs and flowering ornamentals like a storied college campus.

The hospital’s unique history includes the fact it once had its own baseball stadium and fielded its own team. The stadium and grandstand have been replaced with roads and a small set of bleachers, but the baseball field remains on the southwest corner of the campus.



It was also once the site of robust farming operation, which produced everything from beets and radishes to rhubarb, kale and squash. The hospital’s agricultural pursuits also included building new barns and adding a dairy herd to supply milk as well as patient activity. Meat

Operations split will create better care for WSH patients

Western State Hospital’s two new interim chief executive officers are leading the way as they transition the hospital into an unprecedented era.

The 150-year-old institution is in the midst of an operational split that will create two separate centers— forensic and civil — and lay the foundation for a new 350-bed hospital building that will serve forensic patients.

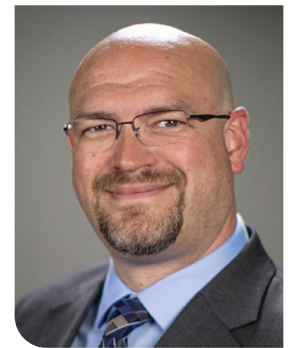


Charles Southerland and Mark Thompson were appointed in the spring as interim CEOs for the Civil Center of Excellence and the Gage Center of Forensic Excellence, respectively.

Charles Southerland

Separating the hospital into two different centers of operation allows Western to better provide state-of-the-art care to forensic patients in a modern, therapeutic facility and prepare civil patients for a successful discharge into their local communities where they may have families and friends to support their recovery.

These goals are part of Washington’s vision for transforming the behavioral health care system to safely meet modern-day treatment needs.



Mark Thompson

came from hogs and chickens, the latter also providing eggs. At the turn of the century, farm produce provided one-third the cost of subsistence at the hospital. Patients also assisted in the carpenter, tin, and blacksmith shops, and in the laundry and the kitchen. Work became therapeutic occupation for patients. The farm progressed as a set of interconnected activities until farming operations ended in 1965.

Although the farming operations ended decades ago, current patients in the vocational rehabilitation program have opportunities to do agricultural work. They plant and care for all of the thousands of plants, trees and vegetables in the greenhouse. The greenhouse staff hosts plant sales three times a year.

With eyes on the future, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee stood outside Western State Hospital in May 2018 and announced a bold vision that would transform behavioral health care in the state. In the spring of 2021, Inslee signed a state budget that includes historic investments in behavioral health for the 2021–23 biennium.

BHA received \$146.4 million for capital projects to operate small community facilities, design the new hospital building on the Western State Hospital campus and complete other projects throughout the state.

Over the next several years, the hospital will transform into separate centers of operation to best accommodate forensic and civil patients. This will include the construction of a new 350-bed hospital building as treatment and facilities are modernized to meet 21st-century patient needs.



WSH Leadership then and now.



"This is a great move forward for the treatment of patients in the state of Washington," Thompson said.

"We know patients have better outcomes when they are in a calm, relaxed atmosphere, with plenty of natural light," Southerland said. "Studies show being in a therapeutic environment is beneficial to patients and we can achieve that in a safer modern-day facility."

"People can and do recover from mental illness, and the changes coming to Western State Hospital will provide the best opportunity for that to happen."

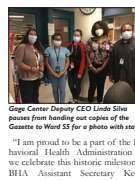
– Mark Thompson



WSH celebrates milestone

On Aug. 19, 1871, 15 male and six female patients were sent to the Insane Asylum of Washington Territory, marking the beginning of public behavioral health treatment in Washington.

A century and a half later, Western State Hospital has treated tens of thousands of Washingtonians on the Lakewood site that was once inland hunting grounds, a farm and a military outpost. The hospital has seen myriad changes in the decades since the first patients arrived and is excited to have staff and guests join us in celebrating this historic sesquicentennial.



Bovenkamp said, "This anniversary comes at a time when Western State Hospital is in the midst of making important changes that will help us best serve the people of Washington for the next 150 years."

Over the next several years, the hospital will transform into separate centers of operation to best accommodate forensic and civil patients. This will include the construction of a new 350-bed hospital building as treatment and facilities are modernized to meet 21st-century patient needs.

[Click here to see more photos and watch a video from the celebration.](#)

Then and now

Western State Hospital leadership in the 1960s. Second from left is Superintendent Dr. William Keller, who led the hospital from 1914-1922 and from 1923-1949.



Today's Western State Hospital leadership. From left, Gage Forensic Center of Excellence Deputy CEO Linda Silva and CEO Mark Thompson, and Civil Center of Excellence CEO Charles Southerland and Deputy CEO Joyce Stockwell.

Extra, extra ...



A special commemorative newspaper was created to celebrate the 150th anniversary.

A page from the WSH newspaper.

The team behind the scenes of historic budget

In spring 2018, Judy Fitzgerald and Bob Hubenthal sat in an office discussing the state of the buildings at Western State Hospital — a campus that turned 150 years old in August 2021 — when the idea of asking for an unprecedented investment began to form.

“We were sort of pondering the ancientness of our facilities, and we both just said, ‘Well, is it time to ask for something,’” said Fitzgerald, the assistant secretary for the Facilities, Finance and Analytics Administration.

While Western had undergone several upgrades and renovations over the years, the layouts and underlying infrastructure didn’t support modern therapeutic models.

“We realized that to fix up the existing facility would be so expensive and so disruptive and so feasibly difficult in a fully occupied hospital, and then would give us kind of re-freshened spaces that don’t work programmatically. We looked at each other and said, ‘Maybe it’s time to ask for a new hospital,’” said Hubenthal, FFAA’s chief of the Office of Capital Programs.



That conversation was the start of 18 months of research to submit a request for funds, and included site visits to psychiatric hospitals in Massachusetts and Oregon.

“It helped reinforce the value of a therapeutic environment and what could be achieved in new construction that would not be possible in a remodel of existing facilities,” Hubenthal said, highlighting designs that allow for closer proximity between wards and active treatment areas; for the design of spaces such as gyms, art and music rooms; and for outdoor courtyards that provide perimeter security without big fences.

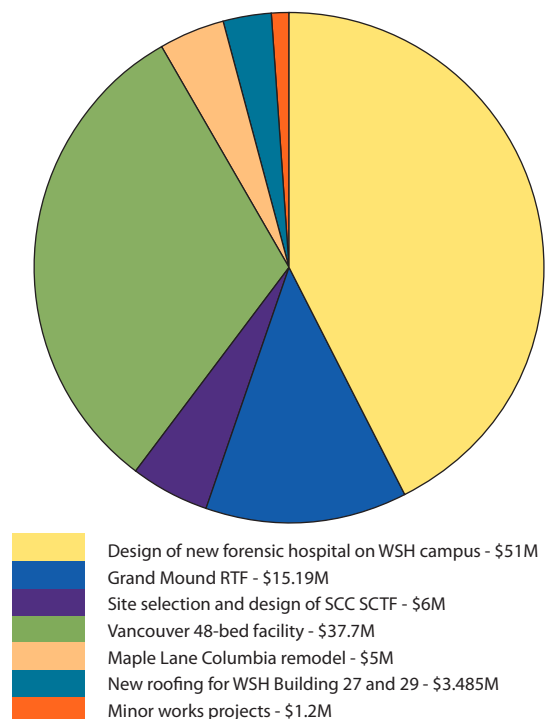
The team putting together and presenting the request spanned FFA (including the capital projects team and the maintenance and operations division), the Behavioral Health Administration and former Department of Social and Health Services Secretary Cheryl Strange.

“We just had all hands on deck for a long time to get the request solidified ... everybody was pretty energized by the hope that we would get something,” Fitzgerald said.

While the \$51 million for the new forensic hospital design — which brings with it the promise of funds for construction — is a cornerstone of the historic 2021-2023 biennium budget of \$400 billion for behavioral health transformation across Washington, the impact of the behavioral health investments included a much broader scope such as funds for new civil community facilities, purchasing behavioral health care, providing affordable community housing and offering other services to behavioral health clients. Outside of DSHS, the budget also provided funds for the Health Care Authority and the Department of Commerce to support housing and other projects. Gov. Jay Inslee’s prioritizing of behavioral health transformation laid the groundwork for the budget to even be possible.

“The goal of bringing 21st-century care to our statewide behavioral health system is paramount to behavioral health transformation, and it doesn’t happen in silos in one administration or overnight. It takes years of hard work by dedicated teams of compassionate people who all come together in the interest of patients across the state,” said Devon Nichols, former continuum of care policy administrator for the FFA.

2021-23 BHA Capital Budget Highlights Total BHA Capital Budget \$151,600,000



State agencies begin work to implement Trueblood programs in King County

In just one year, nearly 1,200 Washingtonians received behavioral health services through a new program designed to divert people who have behavioral health issues away from the criminal court system.

The Department of Social and Health Services, the Washington State Health Care Authority and the Criminal Justice Training Commission have collaborated to implement programs required by the Trueblood vs. DSHS Contempt Settlement Agreement to create an array of services to better deliver care at the right time, in the right place.

It's a massive undertaking that includes partnerships between state agencies, courts, attorneys, law enforcement, tribes and community service providers.

"The challenge is that King County has a very diverse population and there are a lot of class members in the county," said Aura MacArthur, the DSHS senior project manager for Trueblood. "It's a very important region, and that is why we are so excited to bring these services to them."

King County is the focus of Phase 2 of the multi-year agreement meant to clear DSHS of its contempt status in federal court as part of the lawsuit that requires the state to conduct timely competency evaluations.

Work began July 1, but most Trueblood programs will launch in King County in the spring of 2022. The services will build on the work done in Phase 1, which brought the forensic navigator, outpatient competency restoration, Forensic Housing and Recovery through Peer Services and Forensic Projects in Transition from Homelessness programs along with many others to the Southwest, Spokane and Pierce regions.

Forensic navigators began serving people in 10 counties across three regions in July 2020. Forensic navigators will begin outreach and other work in King County in January, and they will start working with clients after the OCRP, FPATH and FHARPS programs come online.



In some cases, those in the program simply get outpatient treatment and help to obtain services, including counseling, medical appointments and psychotropic medication. Those with unstable housing can receive housing assistance.

Forensic Navigator Program Administrator Solomon Wyatt hired nine navigators for King County in 2021. Forensic navigator servicers, which were launched by former program administrator Jason Karpen in July 2021, had 1,182 cases through the program's first 12 months. Of those nearly 1,200 cases, 531 people were assigned a forensic navigator.

Wyatt hopes to build on that success as the program moves to King County and courts and attorneys gain greater awareness about what navigators do and how the program intersects with FHARPS, FPATH and the outpatient competency restoration program.

"We're trying to build on previous experience to better integrate ourselves into systems that are already functional in King County," he said.

Spokane facility opening marks completion of nearly all Trueblood Phase 1 projects

Keith Lewis took a big sigh of relief when a long-awaited 16-bed crisis facility finally opened in Spokane in October.

The project, required as part of the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement, was delayed largely because of COVID-19. The federal court overseeing the case expected the facility to open in June, but the Department of Social and Health Services and the Health Care Authority — Lewis' employer and the agency that oversees the facility — were given more time to finish the project.

"It was a moving target to an extent," said Lewis, the program administrator for the Trueblood crisis enhancements, residential supports and mobile crisis response programs. "It took on a life of its own after it was created and became a stimulating job."

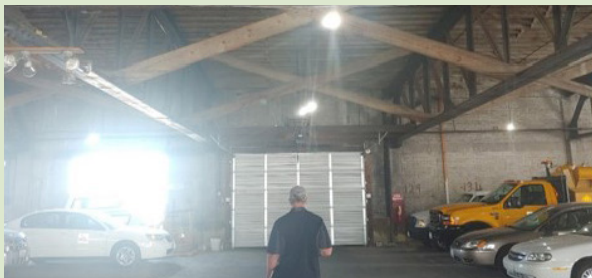
The facility is part of a 46-bed entire campus of care contracted out to Pioneer Human Services. The first patients were admitted to the Trueblood crisis wing on Oct. 13. But

the work isn't done. Although patients have been admitted, HCA and DSHS representatives continue to meet with the contractor to ensure everything is going smoothly.

"We're now starting to look at operational procedures, including point of entry from a law enforcement officer," said Lewis, who worked closely with Trueblood Project Manager Charlie Gilman on the project. "It's not as simple as a police officer dropping someone off and leaving, but we want to limit the time they are there for intake."

The Spokane facility was one of the last remaining projects (the other is an in-person statewide initiative by the Criminal Justice Training Commission to train law enforcement on crisis intervention that has also been stymied by COVID) from the first phase of Trueblood, which covers 10 Washington counties and began in July 2019. Phase 2, which covers King County, is underway and services will begin being offered there in early 2022.

Beginning



Renderings



"We are really thrilled that the Spokane site has come online," Senior Trueblood Project Manager Aura MacArthur said. "This facility will provide much needed services for the Spokane regional community and it was only through broad and consistent collaboration between regional and state agencies that we were able to overcome COVID impacts so quickly."

Lewis said the experience in Spokane will be helpful in Phase 2, as two crisis facilities are planned in King County.

"We're going to start the process (in King County) the same way we ended it (in Spokane)," he said. "What we found by working jointly with other state agencies is that we were able to address any concerns and allow the construction projects to move forward at a much faster timespan."

Lewis said he expects to have the process fine-tuned by the time Phase 3 begins in 2023.

"When we get to Phase 3, we're hoping we get the opportunity to look back on what we're doing and make sure it meets everyone's needs," he said. "If we do have new facilities coming we won't have to reinvent the wheel because we'll have a model to work from."

Reality



BHA staff work together for smooth patient transfers ahead of Yakima RTF closure

Collaboration was paramount as 13 patients were transferred from the Yakima Residential Treatment Facility ahead of the program's scheduled closure.

The 24-bed competency restoration program was slated to close by Dec. 31 as part of the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement. Recruitment and retention of staff created the need for the Behavioral Health Administration to shut the doors by Aug. 14, and the last patient was moved to another facility on July 26.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Sjan Talbot and Residential Treatment Facilities Director Susan Copeland led the process to get the patients into new facilities. Tom Kinlen, director of the Office of Forensic Mental Health Services, encouraged his staff to do all they could to find beds for the outgoing Yakima patients.

"Kevin (Bovenkamp, BHA assistant secretary) and I said all hands on deck, and that's what happened," Talbot said. "Tom rallied his teams, and the other RTF directors and hospitals helped. It couldn't have gone any smoother for transferring patients."

Yakima had 16 patients when the closure date was announced at the end of June. Of those, three did not require transfers because they were deemed competent and returned to jail. The other 13 were spread between Eastern State Hospital, Western State Hospital and the Maple Lane and Fort Steilacoom competency restoration programs.

"I want to give a huge thank you to Yakima staff because they were a great partner to work with and they did great work with our patients," Copeland said.

Transferring more than a dozen patients in so short a time required the assistance of staff throughout BHA. OFMHS Forensic Admissions Coordinator Darla Dawson had to work with each site to find beds for the patients and forensic evaluators needed to conduct patient evaluations. At Kinlen's suggestion, Copeland coordinated with the contracts department to add onto a contract with the ambulance company American Medical Response to transport half of the patients because Yakima County could not handle the full load in the short time available.

"I was expecting hiccups, but everybody was on board," Copeland said. "I had the evaluators asking if I needed more help and everybody went where they needed to go. It was pretty phenomenal how it all came together."



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