



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization, LLC –
Integrated Care Network Contract Amendment #4
DATE: August 5, 2024

Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization for your review and signature. This amendment adds funding for existing programs which include the Dedicated Cannabis Account, Jail Services Program, Trueblood Programming, Opiate Outreach, and Co-Responder Program. This amendment also adds funding for new programs which includes the Naloxone Box Pilot Project, and 13b Proviso Funds; the County intends to use the funding for these new programs, as follows:

Naloxone Box Pilot Project:

To combat the Opioid epidemic, Whatcom County Health and Community Services (WCHCS) has dedicated funding to helping the community access naloxone (Narcan) and other overdose prevention supplies. To increase the access and availability of naloxone and related supplies, WCHCS has decided to purchase **four** Naloxone boxes to be placed at various locations throughout Whatcom County.

The project aims to ensure inclusion and access to harm-reduction supplies, such as naloxone, for those facing the most significant barriers to accessing care. Limited hours, lack of transportation, and stigma create substantial barriers to the populations that benefit from harm reduction services. By strategically placing these boxes, we hope to reduce barriers and help those populations access beneficial resources that can improve health outcomes.

Each box can hold over 100 boxes of naloxone (per the manufacturer's site information). We will use this funding to purchase these boxes and the related supplies.

13b Proviso Funds:

Project Description: Whatcom County is aligned in our efforts to increase services for our community members who are suffering from the opioid epidemic we are facing. This project will increase the services available to eligible individuals by reaching them in new locations, provide a more expedited response after an overdose, and increase access to naloxone and other health related supplies in the community.

Target population: Individuals experiencing Substance Use Disorders and related symptoms.

- 1) This funding will be used to provide a Substance Use Disorder Professional (SUDP) located at the hospital who will provide the required ASAM assessment so that Medicaid funded patients can access SUD treatment directly after discharge from the hospital; this could include inpatient,

Intensive Outpatient Programs and outpatient treatment. Additionally, the SUDP will act as a liaison for providers and the treatment team to provide additional support for other resources, such as Peer Pathfinder navigators and connections to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). This SUDP role is intended to engage with the full care continuum including the Response Division at Whatcom County. The SUDP will have some hours set aside to engage in quality improvement efforts and community wide trend monitoring as it pertains to individuals with Substance Use Disorders that have had a hospital interaction.

- 2) The County will hire a Recovery Navigator/coordinator who will focus on reaching individuals in the community who have had an overdose to assist in service coordination. This will include partnering with local EMS, Law Enforcement, the SUDP at the hospital and current outreach teams/service providers.

- **Background and Purpose**

The purpose of this contract is to acknowledge & fund Whatcom's participation in the North Sound Integrated Care Network (ICN) in order to promote a continuity of care for individuals, avoid service disruption, ensure the provision of behavioral health services and strengthen the regional service network.

Whatcom County participates in the ICN along with Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties. The North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (NS BH-ASO) administers the ICN to cooperatively provide a community health program and regional system of care, with the collective goal of consolidating administration, reducing administrative layering and reducing administrative costs, consistent with the State of Washington's legislative policy as set forth in [RCW 71.24](#).

- **Funding Amount and Source**

This amendment adds \$206,191 in funding for the Dedicated Cannabis Account, Jail Services Program, and Trueblood Programming for the 07/01/2024 – 12/31/2024 contract period.

This amendment also adds \$1,115,986 in funding for the Opiate Outreach, Co-Responder, Naloxone Box Pilot Project, and 13b Proviso Funds for the 07/01/2024 – 06/30/2025 contract period.

Total funding added by this amendment is \$1,322,177. These funds will be included in the 2024 budget. The contract includes terms for automatic annual renewals. Council authorization is required as the additional grant funding provided by this amendment exceeds \$40,000, per WCC 3.06.010.

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Manager at 360-778-6131 (MChriste@co.whatcom.wa.us) if you have any questions or concerns regarding this request.