



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director

RE: North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization, LLC (NS BH-ASO) – Recovery Navigator Program Agreement Amendment #1

DATE: MARCH 7, 2024

Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and NS BH-ASO for your review and signature. This amendment adds one-time reserve funds of \$154,000 to enhance Recovery Navigator Program services in Whatcom County.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

This agreement provides funding for Whatcom County Health and Community Services Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion/Let Everyone Advance with Dignity (LEAD) Program to meet the legislative requirements of ESB5476§13.

This contract funds the expansion of the LEAD Program, per SB 5476. The legislature approved the Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) Uniform Standards, which states, “RNPs will, whenever possible, build on and enhance those existing LEAD-aligned approaches, complementing them where necessary to achieve greater alignment with LEAD core principles, before/rather than establishing stand alone RNP Programs. The existing LEAD-aligned investments might include LEAD programs, crisis response programs, resource hubs, homelessness response, and other locally coordinated efforts that intentionally attempt to achieve the goals of recovery navigator standards”.

The intent of the RNP is to provide social services to individuals who intersect with policy because of simple drug possession (ESB 5476§13) and/or people who have frequent criminal legal system contact because of unmet behavioral health care needs. The RNP established a new system of response and care for people who are not served by office-based, appointment-based, time-delimited care. Coordination and communication between law enforcement, prosecutors, program staff, medical providers, and community partners is essential to the success of these programs.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$666,455 for the period of 07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024, is provided by the Recovery Navigator Program Fund passed through the NS BH-ASO. These funds will be included in the 2024 budget. Council authorization is required as the additional funding provided by this amendment exceeds \$40,000 per WCC 3.06.010.

▪ **Differences from Previous Contracts**

Section	Differences
Exhibit B – Whatcom County RNP 2024 Budget	Increases funding by \$154,000 to enhance RNP services in Whatcom County

Please contact Vanessa Martin (VMartin@co.whatcom.wa.us) if you have any questions.