



Memorandum

TO: Jack Louws – County Executive

FROM: Regina A. Delahunt, Director

DATE: 9/28/2019

RE: Whatcom County Health Department Syringe Services Program Update

Please find attached a Public Works and Health Committee update on work currently in progress to implement a mobile Syringe Services Program (SSP) and a request to support the additional service request to purchase a vehicle for the mobile exchange.

Background and Purpose

In October 2018, the WCHD expanded the hours of the on-site SSP at the State St location due to increased demand for services and an assessed need to increase the quality of the interaction with the program participants.

Additionally, in 2018, planning began to implement a mobile service model as the SSP exceeded the capacity to appropriately and safely serve clients at the State St Clinic location. Additionally, it is difficult for rural county residents to access services located in Bellingham.

As of June 2019, we are implementing a pilot mobile SSP using a rented vehicle. We have weekly parking locations in both East and West Whatcom County. Results of the pilot demonstrate the need to continue this service in rural Whatcom County. While the rental van has worked to get the pilot started, we need a specialized van to adequately provide an array of medical and prevention services in the field. This van could also be used for emergency response and other types of mobile medical services if needed.

