

# Behavioral Health Advisory Board



The Advisory Board for the North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (North Sound BH-ASO) seeks a diversity of volunteers willing to advocate for mental health and substance use programs and crisis services that meet the needs of persons in our communities.

## Purpose

North Sound BH-ASO Advisory Board advocates for a system of care that is shaped by the voices of our communities and people using behavioral health services. The Advisory Board provides independent and objective advice and feed back to the North Sound BH-ASO Board of Directors and local jurisdictions, and county advocacy boards and service providers.

Chartered by the state, for the region of Snohomish, Island, Skagit, San Juan and Whatcom counties the North Sound BH-ASO has the following responsibilities:

- Advocate for the delivery of behavioral health care is competent, compassionate, empowering, and supportive of personal health and wellness. Care needs of region are understood, defined, and championed.
- Actively seek and administer grants and contracts with service, outreach, and housing providers to improve regional delivery of care with annual budget of \$28 Million.
- Manage the regional Crisis Line and follow up services for over 3,500 persons in crisis a month.
- Advocate for care needs at the state level.

Membership of the Advisory Board is open to persons with lived experience, parents and guardians of persons with lived experience, law enforcement, engaged community members, and members of North Sound Tribal Nations.

## Scope

The North Sound BH-ASO Advisory Board is empowered by North Sound BH-ASO Board of Directors and the Washington State Health Authority to:

- Champion BH-ASO coordinated, regional approach to behavioral health service delivery to ensure services meet regional care needs through community and legislative advocacy.
- Provide advice to the North Sound BH-ASO Board of Directors, five Apple Health Managed Care Organizations, and to the North Sound BH-ASO staff to improve access to behavioral health services for persons in need of treatment and recovery.
- Maintain close ties with their local communities so they can act as informed

voices for persons who need behavioral health services.

- Constantly educate themselves about changes in the behavioral health services, needs, and emerging practices. Each individual member has their own personal advocacy story which helps make the Advisory Board a unique resource for improving and maintaining a vital behavioral health system.
- Engage the community through a variety of activities not limited to programs or contests engaging person served; activities to assess emerging or changing needs to provide informed recommendations to North Sound BH-ASO or advocacy to address and reduce stigma.

The North Sound BH-ASO supports Advisory Board members in continued efforts to learn, supporting attendance at local and state conferences and educational events in their communities.

## Meetings

Advisory Board meetings are open to the public and are held the first Tuesday of every month from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. Remote meeting attendance is supported by North Sound BH-ASO staff. When in-person meetings are permitted, travel mileage reimbursement or taxi transportation are provided to the Mt. Vernon office in compliance with yearly budget and in compliance with North Sound BH-ASO policies. Pre-Meeting Trainings are provided to educate members about the behavioral health programs and services available in the North Sound region. The Pre -Meeting Trainings are held directly before the Full Board meetings.

We welcome your interest in serving on the Board, please contact your County Connectors (contact info below) or the North Sound BH-ASO at (360) 416-7013. Appointment terms are three years.

## North Sound County Connectors

**Island County:** Lynda Austin (360) 678-7996

**San Juan County:** Barbara LaBrash (360) 370-0595

**Skagit County:** Sarah Hinman (360) 416-1500

**Snohomish County:** Michael O'Brien (425) 388-6291

**Whatcom County:** Jackie Mitchell ([JMitchel@co.whatcom](mailto:JMitchel@co.whatcom))

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to improve their health and well-being.*



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Washington State  
Health Care Authority