



Board of Directors

Hybrid Meeting Agenda

April 13th, 2023

**Board of Directors Members Present
in Person:**

Members Present via Zoom:

**North Sound Behavioral Health
Administrative Services Organization
(North Sound BH-ASO) Staff Present:**

Guests Present:

- 1. Call to Order and Introductions** – Chair
- 2. Revisions to the Agenda** – Chair
- 3. Approval of the March 9th, 2023, Minutes, Motion #23-15** – Chair..... Attachment
- 4. Comments & Announcements from the Chair**
- 5. Reports from Members**
- 6. Comments from the Public**
- 7. Diversity, Racial Equity, Inclusion (DREI) Strategic Plan
Presentation**.....(Available at Meeting) Attachment
 - o Michelle Osborne, Nora Karena, Toni Belcher
- 8. HOST Evergreen Update:**(Available at Meeting)Attachment
 - o John Mack
- 9. Report from the Advisory Board** (Available at Meeting) Attachment
- 10. Report from the Finance Officer** (Available at Meeting) Attachment
- 11. Report from the Governance Operations Committee**

All matters listed with the Consent Agenda have been distributed to each Member for reading and study, are considered to be routine, and will be enacted by one action of the Board of Directors with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired, the item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by request of a Member.

Consent Agenda (Available at Meeting)Attachment

Motion #23-16

- To review and approve the North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization claims paid from March 1st, 2023, through March 31st, 2023, in the amount of \$.
- Payroll for the month of March in the amount of \$ and associated employer benefits in the amount of \$.

12. Action Items

For Board Approval

North Sound Behavioral Health Needs Assessment(Attachment)

Motion #23-17

- Approve the letter from the Board of Directors and Advisory Board to Governor Jay Inslee and the North Sound legislative delegation forwarding our recommendations to strengthen behavioral health capacity in the region using a more targeted approach.

Herd Freed Hartz (HFH) Executive Search Partners

The Board of Directors Search Committee met with three (3) recruitment firms and have chosen to engage with HFH.

- The payment methodology is industry standard and invoiced in the following manner:
 - 30% of the estimated compensation, estimated range is \$128,000-\$143,000.
 - Split into three (3) equal payment-
 - Initial retainer to get started.
 - Second retainer on initial candidate traction (3+ candidates to 2nd stage)
 - Final payment on offer acceptance
 - No additional charges
 - One-year replacement guarantee

Motion #23-18

- HFH-North Sound BH-ASO-Letter of Engagement for the purpose of engaging HFH services for the North Sound BH-ASO Executive Director search.

Summary:

Island County has requested funding for the implementation of JULOTA care coordination software in the amount of \$22,900. This portion of funding is a one-time implementation fee. This software will support our Opioid Outreach, Recovery Navigator and Co-Responder teams along with other county services.

The motion includes \$10,000 in HARPS funds for housing assistance to individuals discharged from state hospital and psychiatric/residential inpatient stays. Island County has depleted their allocation and inquired whether there were funds available. This is one-time funding that must be expended by June 30, 2023.

Motion #23-19

- North Sound BH-ASO-ICN-23 Amendment 1 for the provision of adding \$32,900 in one-time funding to support the implementation of JULOTA and HARPS subsidies. The contract term is January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2025, with an automatic one-year renewal on January 1, 2024 based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

Summary:

Department of Commerce (DOC)-Community Behavioral Health Rental Assistance (CBRA)

DOC reached out and inquired whether our CBRA providers could use additional one-time funding for CBRA program expenses. Our CBRA providers indicated they could use additional funds. We are receiving more than was requested, the additional funds are a contingency if providers go over budget. The funds must be expended by June 30, 2023.

Motion #23-20

- Department of Commerce-North Sound BH-ASO-CBRA-23 46409-002 Amendments A for the provision of additional rental assistance funds for CBRA eligible individuals. The maximum amount on this amendment is \$210,000 with a term of November 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023
- Department of Commerce-North Sound BH-ASO-CBRA-23 46409-002 Amendments B for the provision of additional rental assistance funds for CBRA eligible individuals. The maximum amount on this amendment is \$300,000 with a term of February 1, 2023, through June 30, 2023.

Summary:

The next motion is the downstream contracts appropriating the requested funds from the providers. Lake Whatcom Center and Lifeline Connections are also receiving funds from HCA for the Governor’s Housing/Homeless Initiative-Rental Voucher Program, at \$25,000 each.

- o Bridgeways \$17,000 (Snohomish) \$10,000 Amendment A and \$7,000 Amendment B
- o Compass Health \$40,000 (Snohomish) Amendment A
- o Lifeline Connections \$110,000 (Skagit & Whatcom) \$60,000 Amendment A and \$50,000 Amendment B
- o Lake Whatcom Center \$151,000 (Whatcom) \$110,000 Amendment A and \$40,000 Amendment B
- o Pioneer Human Services \$35,000 (Island) \$14,000 Amendment A and \$21,000 Amendment B

Motion #23-21

- North Sound BH-ASO-Bridgeways-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 1 for the provision of adding \$17,000 for CBRA program expenses. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.
- North Sound BH-ASO-Compass Health-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 2 for the provision of adding \$40,000 for CBRA program expenses. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.
- North Sound BH-ASO-Lifeline Connections-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 2 for the provision of adding \$110,000 for CBRA program expenses. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.
- North Sound BH-ASO-Lake Whatcom Center-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 2 for the provision of adding \$151,000 for CBRA program expenses. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.
- North Sound BH-ASO-Pioneer Human Services-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 2 for the provision of adding \$35,000 for CBRA program expenses. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

Summary:

Federal Block Grant

Bridgeways has requested funding for a housing case manager to support individuals being placed in housing with CBRA and HARPS rental assistance subsidies. We have provided case management funds to all our rental/housing assistance programs.

Motion #23-22

- North Sound BH-ASO-Bridgeways-CBRA-21-23 Amendment 2 for the provision of allocating funds for housing case management in the amount of **\$133,558**. The contract term is November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on July 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

13. Introduction Items

Health Care Authority (HCA)-Department of Behavioral Health Recovery-Housing and Recovery (DBHR) through Peer Services (HARPS) Expansion Grant

This expansion funds are provided to support the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Peer on the HARPS team.

- Health Care Authority-North Sound BH-ASO-K6751 for the provision of adding **\$109,996** to the contract for the SUD Peer program expenses. The term of the contract is March 15, 2023 through March 14, 2024.

The next motion is the downstream HARPS contract with Lifeline Connections, the provider of the HARPS team services.

- North Sound BH-ASO-Lifeline Connections-FBG-HARPS-23 Amendment 1 for the provision of adding **\$109,996** to the contract for SUD Peer program expenses. The contract term is January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on January 1, 2024, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

Health Care Authority - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)

This contract adds supplemental funds in the amount of **\$10,769.23** to the PATH contract for outreach goods and services. The provider must submit a plan describing the method and intended outcome for allocating support service funding by February 29, 2024.

- Health Care Authority-North Sound BH-ASO-K6742 for the provision of adding funds to PATH services in the amount of **\$10,769.23** for outreach goods and services. The term of the contract is March 1, 2023, through February 29, 2024.

The next motion is the downstream contract with Bridgeways adding the \$10,769.23 to their PATH contract.

- North Sound BH-ASO-Bridgeways-PATH-21-23 Amendment 1 for the provision of adding the supplemental funds for outreach goods and services in the amount of \$10,769.23. The contract term is May 1, 2021, through September 30, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on October 1, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

Compass Health – Crisis System Expansion

This contract amendment is adding staff to the Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOT) in Island, Skagit, San Juan, and Whatcom counties. The six (6) month amount is \$1,235,569.50, annually the increase is \$1,471,139.00.

The increase in FTEs is as follows:

- Island County – 3.5 FTE
- San Juan County - .5 FTE
- Skagit County – 5.5 FTE
- Whatcom – 8.77 FTE
- North Sound BH-ASO-Compass Health-ICCN-23 Amendment 1 for the provision of adding funds for the MCOT in Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties. The contract term is January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, with an automatic one-year renewal on January 1, 2024, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

14. DRAFT Report from the Executive Director(Attachments available at Meeting)

15. Adjourn

Next Meeting: May 11th, 2023



Board of Directors

Hybrid Meeting Agenda

March 9th, 2023

Board of Directors Members Present in Person:

- **Peter Browning**, Commissioner; Skagit County, Board Chair
- **Cammy Hart-Anderson**, Human Services, designated alternate for Dave Somers County Executive, Snohomish County
- **Jill Johnson**, Commissioner, Island County

Members Present via Zoom:

- **Barry Buchanan**, County Council; Whatcom County
- **Perry Mowery**, Behavioral Health Supervisor, designated alternate for Satpal Sidhu, County Executive Whatcom County
- **Malora Christensen**, designated alternate for Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, Whatcom County
- **Pat O'Maley Lanphear**, Advisory Board Chair
- **Nicole Gorle**, Legislative Analyst, Snohomish County; designated alternate for Nate Nehring, County Council
- **Jane Fuller**, County Council; San Juan County
- **George Kosovich**, Public Health, designated alternate for Peter Browning, Commissioner, Skagit County
- **Darcy Cheeseman**, Legislative Aid to Council Member, Sam Low, Snohomish County
- **Barbara LaBrash**, Human Services Manager, San Juan County, designated alternate for Jane Fuller

North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (North Sound BH-ASO) Staff Present:

- **Joe Valentine**, Executive Director, North Sound BH-ASO
- **Michael McAuley**, Clinical Director, North Sound BH-ASO

- o **Margaret Rojas**, Assistant Executive Director, North Sound BH-ASO
- o **Charles DeElena**, Business Improvement Manager/Compliance Officer, North Sound BH-ASO
- o **Maria Arreola**, Administrative Assistant II, Advisory Board Coordinator, NS BH-ASO
- o **Joanie Wenzl**, Administrative Manager/Clerk of the Board, North Sound BH-ASO

Guests Present:

Pat Morris; Consultant

Call to Order and Introductions – Chair

The Chair called the meeting to order and initiated introductions of those present in person and via Zoom.

Revisions to the Agenda – Chair

The Chair asked if there were any revisions to the agenda. There were none.

Approval of the February 9th, 2023, Minutes, Motion #23-12 – Chair.... Attachment Jill Johnson moved the motion for approval, Nicole Gorle seconded, all in favor, none opposed, all in favor motion #23-12 carried.

Comments & Announcements from the Chair

The Chair stated that several legislative issues are underway, and he encouraged the Board members to stay involved in conversations to include the much-needed support of police involvement in Crisis Services.

Reports from Members – Chair

Skagit: Martha's Place, on track to open in mid-April.

Snohomish: The County has purchased two hotels, housing and behavioral health services will be provided. A church was purchased too. Conversations are taking place about purchasing a youth detox bed. The Health District is now a part of the county.

Whatcom: The Alternate Response Teams are now deployed. Bellingham is up and running (details were provided). The Co-Responder program is hoping to be launched next month.

Island County: no update

San Juan County: The Recovery Navigator Program is now operational. The Human Services Advisory Board (AB) is being worked on. Also working toward recruiting an AB member for the ASO.

Comments from the Public – Chair

None

Crisis Services Key Findings and Key Opportunities - Michael McAuley

Michael McAuley presented the Crisis Executive Summary highlights to include key findings and opportunities [North Sound BH-ASO Crisis Annual Assessment 2022.pdf \(nsbhaso.org\)](#) He added that this is the ASO's 3rd Annual Report. A question-and-answer session followed.

Crisis System User Experience - Pat Morris

Pat Morris gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Crisis System User Experience. She noted there will be community forums and input from the Advisory Board. A question-and-answer session followed.

Compliance Report - Charles DeElena

Charles DeElena gave the Annual Compliance Report and followed up with questions and answers.

Report from the Advisory Board – Pat O'Maley-Lanphear

Pat O'Maley Lanphear gave the Report from the Advisory Board. There were no questions.

Report from the Finance Officer- Joe Valentine/Darrell Heiner

Joe gave the Report from the Finance Officer.

The Board members requested the ASO to bring an analysis to the board meeting next month reflecting program funding dollars.

Report from the Governance Operations Committee- Chair

- o Executive search firms are being identified to recruit candidates for the ASO's Executive Director position (replacing Joe Valentine upon his retirement, June 30th, 2023). The Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion (DREI) consultants will be part of the screening process.

Jill Johnson, Cammy Hart-Anderson Barry Buchanan, and Peter Browning will assist in the screening and interview process of the search firms, as well as the candidates.

- o Kim Nakatani (the ASO’s new accountant) is in training.
- o Updates on the MOU re: the Opioid Abatement Council (OAC); signatures are still needed for most counties as well as the need to identify representatives for the council. The spreadsheet was reviewed and discussed regarding the status of each county and what is still needed.
 - The ASO’s IT Manager has developed a web portal for the OAC

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Consent Agenda - Chair

Motion #23-13

- To review and approve the North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization claims paid from February 1, 2023, through February 28th, 2023, in the amount of **\$1,903,729.50**.
- Payroll for the month of February in the amount of **\$188,623.35** and associated employer benefits in the amount of **\$87,605.18**.

Cammy Hart-Anderson moved the motion for approval, Jill Johnson seconded, all favor, none opposed, motion #22-13 carried.

Action Items-Chair and Joe Valentine

For Board Approval

Bridgeways

Summary:

Bridgeways is a Snohomish County provider, currently providing PATH services and managing Department Of Commerce housing vouchers. This motion adds the HARPS vouchers to the contract in the amount of \$206,000 annually for individuals discharging from a state hospital, inpatient psychiatric hospital and/or behavioral health residential services.

Motion # 23-14

- North Sound BH-ASO-Bridgeways-PATH-23 to include HARPS short term housing subsidies in the amount of \$206,000 annually with a term of September 29, 2022, through September 30, 2023, based on continued compliance with the terms of the contract.

Barry Buchanan moved the motion for approval, Jill Johnson seconded, all in favor, motion #23-14 carried.

Introduction Item- Joe Valentine

Island County

Island County has requested funding for the implementation of JULOTA care coordination software in the amount of \$22,900. This portion of funding is a one-time implementation fee. Our portion of the funding will support ASO contracted Opioid Outreach, Recovery Navigator and Co-Responder teams.

Joe Valentine spoke about the Introduction Item regarding Island County and the implementation of Julota software. There will be a vote on this during the April meeting.

Report from the Executive Director (ED)- Joe Valentine

Joe gave the Report from the Executive Director.

He mentioned the HCA Quarterly Check-in Meeting that is upcoming.

The Governance and Operations Committee asked that the two agenda items be included on the agenda:

- Competency Restoration (5440)
- Update on the Procurement Process and County Involvement

Regarding the Behavioral Health Needs Assessment, Joe will bring back a draft letter of recommendations for submittal to the Governor's Office.

Adjourn 2:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 13th, 2023

North Sound BH ASO Executive Director's Report

April 13, 2023

1. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – as of April 10, 2023

Bills Of High interest to ASOs

Note: many of the bills we've been tracking have now made their way through both chambers and will become the subject of discussion in the Legislative Conference Committee

Bill	Title	Status
HB 1134	Implementation of the 988 behavioral health crisis response system	Passed the House and Senate Rules committee on April 5 with amendments
SB 5120	23-hour crisis relief centers	Passed the Senate and House Rules Committee on April 7 with amendments.
SB 5130	Assisted Outpatient Treatment	Passed the Senate and House Appropriations– Referred to House Rules on April 4
HB 1515	Contracting and procurement requirements for behavioral health services in medical assistance programs [including network adequacy]	Passed the House and Senate rules committee on April 7 with amendments
SB 5536	Modifies provisions of the Blake Bill.	Passed by House Committee on Appropriations on April 4 with significant amendments. A striking amendment was introduced on April 7 that would modify the role of ASOs in the Recovery Navigator Program as a “Pass through” to the LEAD program. The ASOs, WSAC, and HCA have expressed strong concerns about the proposed amendment.

		The ASOs have proposed compromise language [see below]
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Other Bills of Interest

Bill	Title	Status
5440	Providing timely competency evaluation and restoration services [Trueblood]	Passed the Senate and House Rules on April 7
1724	Workforce Bills Behavioral Health Associates	Passed the House and Senate rules committee on April 4
5189	B.H. Support Specialists	Passed the Senate and House Rules Committee on April 4
5555	Establishes certified peer specialists as a new profession for DOH certification.	Passed the Senate and House Rules on April 7

ASO Proposed compromise language to amend SB 5536:

1. Regional RNP programs shall achieve full fidelity to the LEAD model by December 2024
2. Regional RNP programs shall achieve at least 50% law enforcement based referral rates by December 2024
3. Regions that provide financial support beyond proviso funding to their regional RNP program shall retain their eligibility to fully administer their RNP program, as long as they continue to meet fidelity and referral rate requirement.
4. The Regional RNP administrator shall be community based at least 50% of their time.
5. The Regional PCGs shall be operationalized in accordance with the LEAD Core Principles and Uniform Program Standards.

Legislative Calendar:

- February 17 - Policy committee cutoff - house of origin
- February 24 - Fiscal committee cutoff - house of origin
- March 8 - Floor cutoff - house of origin
- March 29 - Policy committee cutoff - opposite house
- April 4 - Fiscal committee cutoff - opposite house
- April 12 - Floor cutoff - opposite house
- April 23 - Sine Die

Legislative Operating Budgets:

- Both the House and the Senate have released their proposed 2023-2025 Biennial Operating Budgets as well as their 2023 Supplemental Budgets.
- The Senate biennial budget provides \$4,918,807,000 for 74 new and continuing programs.
- The House budget provides \$5,355,557,000 for 115 new and continuing programs.
- Since some programs are only in one of the chamber's budgets, the two budgets will need to be reconciled in conference committee.

2. QUARTERLY CHECK IN MEETING WITH HCA LEADERSHIP

- The Quarterly check-in meeting with North Sound BH-ASO leadership and HCA was held on March 14.
- Topics discussed included: transportation problems arranging for transport to and from facilities, update on the procurement of the next round of Integrated Managed Care providers and how the counties will be involved; a briefing on the North Sound Behavioral Health Needs Assessment and our recommendations for follow up; an overview of how we are funding co-responder programs; an update on our proposal to begin planning now for the Youth Inpatient Navigator program but delay formal implementation until July 2024, and an update on BH-ASO leadership transition.

3. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM COORDINATION COMMITTEE-NETWORK ADEQUACY WORKGROUP

- The Subcommittee of the Behavioral Health System Coordination Committee met on March 29 to continue to work on proposed measures for "Network adequacy" and timeliness of access to care.
- The next step is to review the currently available data measuring how long it takes to get an appointment [when this data is available], then hold focus groups with different types of providers to elicit their perspective on how to measure and improve access to care.

4. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM COORDINATION COMMITTEE [BHSCC]

- The full BHSCC met on March 30. Jason McGill shared that CMS has agreed to approve a waiver for Medication Assisted Treatment and some care management services in jails, as well as to allow jails to provide a 30-day supply of drugs in hand upon release.
- Additional waiver provisions are now being negotiated in California that Washington may also seek if California is successful. This includes a full pharmacy benefit in jail.
- Any waiver given will have to meet Medicaid budget neutrality provisions as well as non-supplant language which would require that the savings to the county would have to be reinvested in other behavioral health services.

5. INTEGRATED MANAGED CARE PERFORMANCE METRICS

- Attached is a report prepared by the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division.
- It summarizes performance related to key behavioral health metrics for Medicaid funded services for the last 6 years.

- Performance on most measures has flattened or declined in the last few years, but it's difficult to determine how much of this is due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.
- Dennis Regan, the BH-ASO data analyst, has customized the graphs to highlight performance in the North Sound region. [Attachment 1]

6. CRISIS SERVICES UPDATE

- The Weekly Crisis Capacity Indicator snapshot through April 4 attached [Attachment 2].
- In the last three weeks that has been an increase in crisis service outreaches and ITA investigations.
- According to VOA, the volume of calls to the new 988 line remain steady with few needing to be transferred to the Regional Crisis Line for follow up.

7. CLOSURE OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY TRIAGE CENTER

- Compass Health has notified us they will be closing the Snohomish County Triage Center [SCTC] at the Bailey Building in Everett in late April. [Attachment 3]
- They will resume providing Triage services as part of their Broadway Campus Redevelopment.
- They sought to temporarily move the Triage beds to the Greenhouse residential treatment facility but were not able to get approval from Snohomish County to do so.

8. EXPANSION OF FUNDING FOR CO-RESPONDER PROGRAMS

- We received a request from one of the counties for additional funding for their co-responder program so we have sent an invitation to all the counties and co-responder programs to send us requests for additional funds so we can compare them with the availability of block grant funds to support them.

9. APPLE HEALTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

- During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), the Health Care Authority (HCA) extended coverage for all Apple Health (Medicaid) clients. This extension is now ending due to the Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA) of 2023 and clients' extended coverage will be affected.
- HCA is resuming normal operations April 1, 2023 and is **seeking community organizations and influencers to act as volunteer Apple Health ambassadors**. Ambassadors will work to ensure that Apple Health clients have the information and resources needed to maintain coverage at the end of the continuous coverage requirement period.
- For more information go to: [Apple Health ambassador program | Washington State Health Care Authority](#).

10. NORTH SOUND BH-ASO 2023 STRATEGIC GOALS

- We have updated our Strategic Goals for 2023. The Goals are the same as 2022 but some of the strategies have been updated. [Attachment 4]
- Strategy #4.02 calls for advocating for network adequacy.
- All of the strategies under Goal #5 – “Develop and implement a plan to address social equity and systemic racism” are described in more detail and will be supplemented by the DREI Strategic Plan when it is finalized.

11. NORTH SOUND BH-ASO BANKING PROFILE

- In light of some of the recent concerns about bank solvency, we reviewed the current status of North Sound BH-ASO bank deposits.
- Our deposits are currently held by Key Bank. Washington State requires that Key Bank has enough collateral to secure the deposits we have at the Bank. Deposits with Key Bank are covered by a pledge pool held by the Federal Reserve Bank. We also currently have all of our money that is in Key Bank swept to an interest-bearing account every night which is then broken up into \$250,000 increments to be FDIC Insured.

DRAFT



North Sound BH-ASO

2021 E. College Way, Suite 101, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

Phone: (360) 416-7013 Fax: (360) 899-4754

www.nsghaso.org

April 13th, 2023

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia Washington, 98504-0002

Re: North Sound Counties Behavioral Health Needs Assessment

Dear Governor Inslee,

This letter is a request from the North Sound counties to consider our recommendations for strengthening state efforts to increase behavioral health treatment capacity in the North Sound region by using a more targeted approach.

We appreciate the commitment by your office and the Washington State Legislature to significantly increase investments in behavioral health services. These efforts have begun to make a difference, but, as you know, serious gaps remain and even with these investments we struggle to keep up with the need.

In 2017, the North Sound counties commissioned a detailed study of how many behavioral health inpatient treatment beds would be needed over the next five years. The results of this study assisted the counties and our Washington State legislature in targeting funds to the types of facilities that were identified as most needed. Most of the facility types that were identified as needed were eventually funded by both the state and the North Sound counties together, and all of them are now in operation.

In 2022, the North Sound Counties commissioned an updated study of the projected need for the next five years and asked that the need for outpatient as well as inpatient services be identified. The study included a detailed demographic analysis, an inventory of current facilities, and a list of future projects that have been funded by the Department of Commerce. A copy of the Executive Summary is attached.

Key findings were:

- The largest growing segment of the population that will need behavioral health services are those over 65.
- The second largest growing segment will be the pediatric population for which there almost no inpatient treatment/crisis stabilization beds in the North Sound region.
- The need for inpatient treatment beds, especially for Substance Use Treatment Beds, will continue to outstrip the need [note: for mental health, this analysis only looked at Evaluation and Treatment and Crisis Stabilization beds, not inpatient psychiatric hospital beds].
- The need for outpatient services will outstrip available capacity by even more than inpatient capacity.
- The various types of outpatient services are distributed unevenly across the five counties with significant gaps in the availability of some types of services.

After careful discussion with our Counties and Advisory Board, we would like to make the following recommendations:

- 1) Allow bidders to apply for a greater percentage of the capital funds needed to complete a project and to apply for additional funds in subsequent rounds of funding if needed and if the bidder can demonstrate that the additional funding will allow them to complete the project. The model that assumes that bidders can raise significant amounts of funding from other sources is no longer viable.
- 2) Conduct more rigorous scrutiny of bidder abilities to actually complete the project they are requesting funding for. Assessment of bidder ability should include: do they have actual experience in building and operating the kind of facility they are apply for funding for, AND, do they have prior experience providing behavioral health services in the region where the project would be located.
- 3) Develop a more strategic approach to identifying the need for supportive housing as part of the behavioral health services continuum. Currently, state and federal dollars fund a hodge podge of supportive housing programs – all of which are needed – but most of which are not well coordinated with each other or with the needs of persons participating in or exiting from treatment programs.
- 4) Develop a more regional based assessment of the most critical areas of need for future funding rounds – target funding to regional needs. Include counties, ASOs and providers in identifying what these needs are.
- 5) Develop strategies to increase support for outpatient facilities including sufficient operational funding to serve more rural areas.

Thank you for our consideration of our recommendations and your continued work with the Washington State Legislature to address the critical need for behavioral health services in our state.

Sincerely,

Peter Browning

Skagit County Commissioner
North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization Board of Directors Chair

Pat O'Maley Lanphear

North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization Advisory Board Chair

Cc: Washington State North Sound Legislative Delegation
North Sound BH-ASO Board of Directors
North Sound BH-ASO Behavioral Health Advisory Board