

Chance to Advance Kittitas County

Expanding Access to Chemical Dependency and Mental Health Services

OVERVIEW

The 1/10 of 1% sales and use tax is dedicated to new or expanded chemical dependency and mental health services. This tax will give Kittitas County residents needing these services the chance to advance towards a healthier life and will improve the quality of life for all residents of Kittitas County.

GOALS

- 1) Expand delivery of onsite mental health screening, assessment, and treatment services to inmates at the Kittitas County Corrections Center.
- 2) Establish transitional care coordination services for patients discharged from the emergency room or crisis intervention and inmates that successfully connect persons to continued services and prevents readmission or re-incarceration.
- 3) Expand availability and accessibility of emergency chemical dependency and mental health crisis services.
- 4) Increase access to mental health providers and types of treatment for mental health disorders and substance use by children and youth.

RATIONALE

Kittitas County residents ranked mental illness as the #1 health issue. (2018 online community survey)

The lack of mental health providers impacts the number of hospitalizations and suicide rates.

RATIO OF MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS TO RESIDENTS	MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS	RESIDENTS
Kittitas County	1	710
Washington State	1	360

In Kittitas county, mental illness is the 10th leading cause of hospitalization and suicide is the 7th leading cause of death. Local mental health providers report increasing requests for services and long waiting lists.

Kittitas County Corrections Center

- During 2017-2019, medical care costs **increased 65%**.
- Correction staff belief that **70% to 100%** of inmates are alcohol or drug dependent that contributes to both incarceration and repeat incarceration.

Kittitas Valley Healthcare (includes the hospital and clinics including Upper County)

2/12/18 – 12/31/19			
UNIQUE PATIENTS	# Patients with 1 Mental Illness visit	UNIQUE ENCOUNTERS (VISITS)	# Encounters With 1 Primary Mental Health Diagnosis
32,700	4,031 - 12.3%	151,785	10,149 = 6.7%

Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue

- **74% increase** in mental health related calls between 2017-2019

Ellensburg Police Department

- **62% increase** in mental health related calls between 2016-2018

Cle Elum-Roslyn Police Department

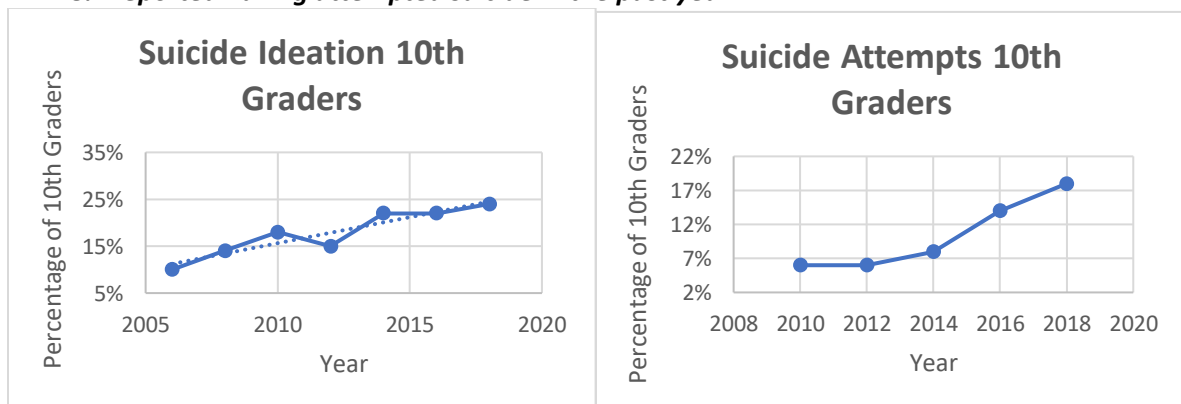
- Nearly 50% of mental health related calls from 2017-2019 were for a **suicide** concern

Without an increase in funding to address mental health needs, these percentages will continue to increase. Emergency rooms and correctional facilities are two points of entry where targeted interventions can change outcomes. Research shows that programs geared to these points of entry reduce recidivism rates and provide incarcerated individuals with the chance to advance when released from jail.

Kittitas County 10th Graders 2018 Washington State’s Healthy Youth Survey

The results from this survey indicate the need for early intervention and mitigation to protect Kittitas County youth and children.

- 36% reported feeling sad or hopeless for at least two weeks in the past year
- 51% reported they do not have an adult to turn to when they feel sad or hopeless
- 56% reported not being able to stop or control worrying for the past 2 weeks
- 63% reported feeling anxious, nervous, or on edge for the past 2 weeks
- **24% reported having considered attempting suicide in the past year**
- **20% reported having made a suicide plan in the past year**
- **18% reported having attempted suicide in the past year.**



Chance to Advance funding will screen youth for anxiety, depression and suicide ideation and increase access to therapies and treatments known to improve outcomes by building social and healthy decision-making skills and resiliency.

The rates of suicide ideation and suicide attempts are increasing. With schools closed due to COVID 19 and social distancing, health care providers and educators report that youth are experiencing increased isolation and increased depression.

Research shows that we can break the “cradle to prison pipeline” by providing early intervention programs addressing behavioral health needs. For every dollar invested in prevention, taxpayers save \$7 to \$10. (youth.gov)

Funding screening and early intervention will improve health and decrease emergency and crisis interventions.

Expected long term outcomes include:

- Reduced unmet mental health needs;
- Increased academic and employment success;
- Reduced recidivism; and
- Increased quality of life for all Kittitas County residents.

CHANCE TO ADVANCE PROGRAMS

GOAL 1 - Expand delivery of onsite mental health screening, assessment, and treatment services to inmates at the Kittitas County Corrections Center

Justification: Many incarcerated people have underlying mental health and chemical dependency needs. Incarceration provides an opportunity to address those needs in a controlled environment without access to substances. When treatment is initiated without access to substances and in a controlled setting, people are more responsive. By providing treatment and transition services, the rate of re-incarceration will decrease. Receiving services at the jail reduces cost of transporting inmates to outside services.

Implementation: At intake, all inmates are screened for behavioral health needs. Inmates with positive screens are offered timely evaluation and treatment plan. During incarceration, mental health and substance use disorder treatment and medication management is available.

Measurable Outcomes:

Decrease

- Rate of recidivism

Increase

- Screening and assessments for mental health and chemical dependency services
- Services for inmate engagement on site
- Medication management services
- Continuation of treatment after release

Partner Organizations: Kittitas County Corrections Center, Comprehensive Healthcare, Merit Resource Services, Community Health of Central Washington, Ideal Options or any other application vendor.

Timeline for Implementation: Within 1 year of receiving funding

Estimated Cost: \$300,000

GOAL 2 - Establish transitional care coordination services for patients discharged from the emergency room or crisis intervention and inmates that successfully connect persons to continued services and prevents readmission or re-incarceration.

Justification: “Warm hand-offs” effectively link individuals released from correction facilities, emergency rooms, and crisis services to on-going support that prevents re-admission and promotes long-term success.

Implementation: Care coordinators and/or mental health assistants will work with LMHPs, substance use disorder professionals, and health and social service providers to provide discharge planning and continue to work with individuals in accessing appropriate services to support their mental health and/or substance abuse treatment and transition back into the community.

Measurable Outcomes:

Decrease

- The rate of readmission or recidivism

Increase

- Successful referrals for treatment and support services
- People receiving treatment services 6 months after release from incarceration

Partnering Organizations: Kittitas County Corrections Center, Comprehensive Healthcare, Merit Resource Services, Community Health of Central Washington – Connect Program, Kittitas County Health Network service providers, Ideal Options or any other application vendor

Timeline for Implementation: Within 1 year of receiving funding

Estimated Cost: \$150,000

GOAL 3 - Expand availability and accessibility of emergency chemical dependency and mental health crisis services.

Justification: There is a lack of available Licensed Mental Health Professionals (LMHPs) for Emergency Room and law enforcement staff. When LMHPs respond to emergency needs, there is a shortage of available LMHPs for current non-crisis appointments and persons seeking appointments. By utilizing Mental Health Assistants for tasks not requiring advanced education and specialized licensure, the availability of care increases.

Implementation: Implement a county wide Mental Health Assistant Program to assist LMHPs by performing tasks not requiring advanced education and advanced licensure.

Measurable Outcomes:

Decrease

- Wait times for behavioral health crisis response
- Wait times in the emergency room for patients seeking non-mental health services
- Time spent by LMHPs delivering crisis services
- Number of LMHP direct service appointments canceled due to crisis response
- Law enforcement and EMS response to mental health needs in the community and emergency room

Partner Organizations: Kittitas Valley Healthcare, Comprehensive Healthcare, local law enforcement agencies

Timeline for Implementation: Within 6 months of receiving funding.

Estimated Cost: \$205,000

GOAL 4 – Expand screening of children and youth for unmet mental and behavioral health needs. Increase access to mental health providers and types of treatment while coordinating support services.

Justification: Identification, access, a broad range of therapies and coordination of services improves outcomes at reduced costs. Early identification of adverse childhood experiences enables timely intervention and builds resiliency. Lack of access to providers and canceled appointments when providers respond to crisis calls, increases the need for crisis services. Therapies, such as Applied Behavioral Therapy, are not available to residents of Kittitas County. A successful pilot project of evidence-based programs, Global Appraisal of Individual Needs Short (GAINS) and Positive Action is led by non-licensed persons at Ellensburg High School. Providing care coordination services improves outcomes.

Implementation: The implementation of Mental Health Medical assistants (Goal 2) will increase the availability of LMHPs’ scheduled appointments and increase the availability of appointments for children and youth seeking appointments. Staffing county wide school districts with mental health professionals will facilitate assessment, increase youth access to services, and increase support to staff. The model used by the Ellensburg School District for high school students will be expanded to other districts and grades.

Measurable Outcomes:

Increased

- Children and youth identified as having an unmet need for behavioral or mental health support
- Referrals for behavioral and mental health services
- Children and youth receiving mental health and substance use services
- Individual and group therapy programs available for students and families
- Attendance and academic success
- Time for school staff to focus on academics

Decreased

- Discipline referrals as reported by school staff
- Emergency calls to first responders for youth and families in crisis

Partnering Organizations: All county school districts, health care providers, Comprehensive Healthcare, Merit Resource Services, Youth Services of Kittitas County, and Kittitas County Health Network partners serving youth and children.

Timeline for Implementation: Within 1 year of receiving funding.

Estimated Cost: \$495,000