

March 25, 2019

MaryAnne Lindeblad
Medicaid Director
Health Care Authority
626 8th Avenue SE
P.O. BOX 45502
Olympia, WA 98504-5502

Subject: Funding to re-establish a Quality Review Team for the Spokane County Regional Service Area

Dear Ms. Lindeblad:

As the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) for the Spokane County Regional Service Area (RSA), which includes Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties, we would like to advocate for the re-establishment of funds to create a Quality Review Team (QRT) in our region. In previous years, the Spokane Regional Support Network and the Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health Organization was provided with sufficient funding to allocate funds to recruit a QRT and complete two (2) surveys per year. These surveys provided us with valuable feedback about the quality of behavioral health services in our region, from the individuals who received these services.

Background

The QRT was a requirement of Behavioral Health Organizations (BHO's) from WAC 388-865-0266. The goal of this team was to independently evaluate systemic issues surrounding quality of care, age and cultural appropriateness of services, availability to alternatives to hospitalization, and coordination of care coordination across the system. The Spokane County RSA found great value in this survey as it provided the BHAB, BHO, and contacted providers with information regarding the quality of the services provided to individuals in our area.

In previous years, this survey focused on many areas including: Substance Use Disorder Treatment, Residential Treatment, Housing Services, Mental Health Outpatient Treatment, and Evaluation and Treatment Centers, including both adult and youth providers. Within these surveys, information was collected on how individuals perceived their services, what was helpful for them, what was not helpful, what went poorly and what could be improved. This has been a useful tool in guiding the system of care on how to better serve the community. This valuable tool provided crucial insight on how the individuals we are working so hard to serve feel about their services.

Request

The BHAB for the Spokane County RSA requests that funding for this invaluable evaluation tool be re-established for our region by the Health Care Authority (HCA). With the requested funding, we will recruit a peer team to establish a QRT intended to gather feedback from individuals in services and use the information to make informed recommendations to providers, the system of care, the Managed Care Organizations, and the HCA. Even though we are requesting funding for this purpose, we believe that a greater amount of system money and resources will be saved as we accurately identify gaps in services and quality and make targeted adjustments that can reduce the use of emergency services,


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psychiatric hospitalization, and even the number of individuals meeting the level of care for inpatient substance use disorder treatment.

The professionals leading our system of care can evaluate service delivery, but if we do not get the voice of the individuals we are serving, we are missing a key piece in improving our overall system of care. The QRT is a successfully proven method to reach unheard voices and gain insight on the unique needs of our population, both urban and rural, that may otherwise be missed.

We appreciate your time and attention to this funding need for the Spokane region.

Respectfully,


Michael Mainer, M.D., Chair
Spokane County Regional BHAB


Ronald Bacon, Vice-Chair
Spokane County Regional BHAB

TS:nl

cc: Kathleen Torella, Director, CSHCD
Tonya Stern, Assistant Director, CSHCD SCR BH (ASO)
Gail Kogle, Behavioral Health Ombuds, SCR BH (ASO)
Jessica Watson, Behavioral Health Ombuds, SCR BH (ASO)