

**Spokane County Community Services, Housing, and
Community Development Department (CSHCD)**

2021 Annual Report for the State of the County (April 2021)

I. Overview of the Spokane County Community Services, Housing, and Community Development Department (CSHCD)

The Spokane County Community Services, Housing, and Community Development Department (CSHCD) is dedicated to strengthening our communities and helping our region's most disadvantaged residents achieve and maintain healthier and more independent lives in a safe environment. The CSHCD Department consists of four divisions:

- Counseling and Recovery Services (CAREs),
- Development Disabilities (DD),
- Housing and Community Development (HCD), and
- Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health (SCRBH), which is an Administrative Services Organization (ASO)

The CSHCD Department, as approved by the Spokane County Board of Commissioners, is responsible for regional funding and administrative oversight for targeted programs benefitting low-income and homeless individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder treatment services, employment services for those with developmental disabilities, and housing resources. The CSHCD Department strategically recommends programs and services that focus on the following areas:

- A. Integration of physical health, mental health, and substance use disorder services
- B. Behavioral health crisis system services
- C. Early intervention, prevention, and treatment services, within available resources
- D. Reducing homelessness and providing supportive living skills services
- E. Increasing affordable housing
- F. Promoting employment and education services for individuals with developmental disabilities
- G. Supporting criminal justice diversion services as alternatives to incarceration

II. Impact on our Region

As of January 1, 2021, the CSHCD Department annually administers approximately \$68.6 million in combined funding from state, federal, and local sources to support our region's most vulnerable citizens with providing a variety of community services, as well as housing, shelter and related services, infrastructure projects, and micro enterprise programs.

A. Employment and Economic Development

The CSHCD Department contracts primarily with local/regional service providers and businesses, translating to an economic multiplier effect that infuses dollars into our region and contributes greatly to regional employment and community programs.

Local and regional providers are able to fund their respective workforces to implement programs and projects benefitting our region's communities. Examples of projects and initiatives in 2020 resulting from CSHCD Department's support include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Infrastructure projects in the Cities of Spokane Valley and Cheney were completed as assisted each communities' high priority community development needs.
2. 73 county residents were provided business support and technical assistance.
3. 48,161 county residents benefitted from food assistance.
4. 2,312 county residents benefited from Housing and Community Development funded homelessness services, like outreach, counseling, prevention, and shelter services.
5. Hundreds of people in our community are employed by service and project providers who Spokane County contracts with to serve our region's low income, mental health, substance use disorder, experiencing homeless, and developmentally disabled populations.
6. In 2020, as the region's 6-county Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health – Administrative Services Organization, this network of providers and their employees served roughly 24,895 individuals providing over 107,000 services, aimed at meeting the CSHCD Department's mission to better the lives of our most vulnerable citizens. The six counties include: Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane and Stevens.
7. In 2020, the CSHCD Department issued 106 resolutions to the Spokane Board of County Commissioners for approval, along with a total of 219 contracts, amendments, interlocal agreements, and memorandums of understanding with funders, subrecipients/subcontractors and other government agencies.

B. Housing

There is an inextricable link between stable housing and the health and well-being of individuals and families. The CSHCD Department works hard to ensure that our programs and services identify and fund housing options to serve a large cross-section of our most vulnerable citizens to help them maintain physical and behavioral health while supporting and encouraging stable employment, family-unity, community-involvement, and education. Two examples of housing made available through the CSHCD Department include:

1. In 2020 the Counseling and Recovery Services (CAREs) Division served 446 individuals with mental health issues providing 8,374 total services, including

therapeutic services and other housing assistance services aimed at assisting individuals in obtaining and keeping stable housing. The CARES Supportive Living Program also offers housewares, furniture, and basic life-skills training to help aid in the recipients' likelihood for success in maintaining stable housing, employment, and social interaction. Additionally, the CARES Division distributed \$531,012 in Housing Assistance subsidies.

2. 347 Affordable Housing units are under construction in the Cities of Spokane Valley, Spokane, and Airway Heights.

III. Division-Specific Updates

A. Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health (SCRBH) Administrative Services Organization (ASO); *Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Treatment*

With the successful transition of the Spokane Regional Service Area, which includes Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties, into Integrated Managed Care in 2019; the SCRBH (ASO) Division was diligently at work maintaining the regional behavioral health crisis response system, implementing a full service array of behavioral health treatment options for non-Medicaid low-income individuals at or below 220% Federal Poverty Level (FPL), collaborating in diversionary efforts throughout the county, and working to improve the regional behavioral health system.

The SCRBH (ASO) is a public behavioral health administrator for crisis services, including involuntary treatment act evaluations, for all regional residents and an administrator for all behavioral health services for Non-Medicaid individuals on Less Restrictive Alternative Court Orders or Conditional Release, and non-crisis behavioral health services for individuals who are not Medicaid eligible and at or below the 220% FPL in the Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA) within available resources.

Behavioral health crisis services are provided to individuals experiencing mental health or substance use related symptoms, which are impacting an individual's safety, well-being and functioning. Specifically, the SCRBH (ASO) provides a large spectrum of crisis services throughout the RSA by delivering a wide range of interventions specific to location and setting. Crisis intervention services in the Spokane RSA include:

- Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline services staffed by skilled professionals to assess, resolve crisis by phone, make appropriate referrals, and/or dispatch mobile teams or the Designated Crisis Responder (DCR). The Spokane RSA Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline Number is 1-877- 266-1818;
- Mobile crisis response services with the ability to respond to a behavioral health crisis in the community (e.g., homes, schools, or hospital emergency rooms);
- Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) services includes all clinical services and administrative functions for the evaluation for involuntary detention or involuntary treatment of individuals in accordance with RCW 71.05 and RCW 71.34. Crisis services become ITA services when a DCR determines an individual

must be evaluated for involuntary behavioral health treatment. ITA services continue until the end of an involuntary commitment

- A range of short-term crisis stabilization services (e.g. lesser restrictive alternative in the community with natural supports to assist in implementing a safety plan, Crisis Stabilization facilities, Sobering, Withdrawal Management);
- Urgent and Emergent care services with the capacity for immediate clinical intervention, triage, and stabilization (e.g. Crisis Stabilization facilities, Evaluation and Treatment centers, Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization Services facilities, inpatient psychiatric admissions, single bed certification placement); and
- Walk-In crisis services are always available during business hours to contracted behavioral health crisis providers within the Spokane RSA, which include:
 - Adams County: Adams County Integrated Health Care
 - Ferry, Lincoln, and Stevens Counties: North East Washington Alliance Counseling Services
 - Pend Oreille County: Pend Oreille County Counseling Services
 - Spokane County: Frontier Behavioral Health

The SCRBH (ASO) has worked diligently throughout 2020 to ensure a collaborative partnership with Managed Care Organizations (MCO), Community Behavioral Health Providers, First Responders, Criminal Justice System, and Tribal entities to ensure efficient and responsive behavioral health and crisis system services that are attentive to the needs of the entire region. Building on the relationships and coordination efforts established over the years, the SCRBH (ASO) has continued the goal of providing effective and beneficial services. We accomplish this through the enhancing partnership, improving corporate engagements, working to resolve crisis issues equitably, providing an avenue for receiving/incorporating necessary feedback, implementing new legislative and procedural changes, and maintaining an open dialogue with all crisis system partners

The SCRBH (ASO) coordinates closely with the Spokane RSA Managed Care Organizations through a variety of mechanisms including: regular care coordination meetings, bi-monthly MCO/BH-ASO Clinical meetings, monthly regional crisis and DCR meetings, regional COVID-19 Behavioral Health Taskforce meetings, quarterly Spokane Regional Crisis Collaborative meetings, quarterly Spokane County Interlocal Leadership Structure meetings, MCO/BH-ASO workgroups, annual MCO Credentialing and Crisis Delegation audits, , Daily Crisis Log report submissions to each MCO, “Hotspotters/Homeless Huddle” meeting, Regional Hospital Collaborative meetings, monthly High Utilizer lists to each MCO, and the monthly Regional Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline performance outcome reports.

With the impact of COVID 19 significantly altering the method and engagement of how behavioral health services and crisis services were provided, the SCRBH (ASO) remains even more committed to the collaborative partnerships and regional efforts accomplished in 2020, working diligently to overcome telecommunication challenges, access to care services, the behavioral health impact of COVID 19, and increased need for crisis services. As we

move into 2021, the SCRBH (ASO) is focused on improving on the gains made, while implementing new and innovative methods to more adequately address the needs of the region.

B. Developmental Disabilities Division (DD) Support and Services

In 2020 the DD Division continued to provide Developmental Disability Employment and Community Inclusion services for both Spokane and Pend Oreille Counties, and continues to provide Early Childhood services for Spokane County only. Over 900 adults and 100 children (aged birth to three) were served in our communities with employment and community integration assistance and/or early childhood services during 2020. The School to Work project supports individuals with developmental disabilities transition to employment during their last year of high school. Twenty-five to thirty students participate annually in the School to Work program. The Bridge Project provides support for adults not on a Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Medicaid Waiver to access employment services until they qualify for long-term funding. The DD Division advocates for those with developmental disabilities year-round by hosting various trainings, conferences, and community consortiums, locally and nationally.

C. Housing and Community Development Division (HCD)

Over the course of 2020, the HCD Division administered a vast amount and array of housing and improvement projects, trainings, and innovative programs for our community, serving thousands of individuals, including:

1. 156 Owner-occupied households benefited from the Emergency Housing Repair Grant program, which allowed households to continue sustained affordable housing.
2. 5 Community outreach centers were funded that provide emergency services for their local communities in Medical Lake, Cheney, Colbert, Deer Park, and Spokane Valley.
3. 46,161 Households received food assistance.
4. 1,673 Households received Eviction rental assistance through the Spokane County.
5. Examples of Homeless Services include: Rapid-Rehousing; Prevention/Diversion; Shelters serving families, women, men and victims of Domestic Violence.
6. 334 Domestic Violence victims were assisted with shelter and support.
7. 4 Homeless Shelter facilities were assisted with grants for needed repairs and rehabilitation.

D. Counseling and Recovery Services (CAREs)

Calendar year 2020 was a challenging year for the Spokane Region. The COVID 19 pandemic and its associated problems continue to have a significant impact on the mental health and

behavioral health of our community. The CARES Division had to make serious adaptations to how services were provided to the vulnerable people of Spokane County. Despite unprecedented challenges and the necessity of addressing serious safety issues, the CARES division was able to provide 8,374 behavioral health services to over 400 Individuals in our community. Despite serious barriers to housing, the Supportive Living and Housing and Recovery Services Programs were able to house more than 200 Individuals, including coordinating with Spokane Housing Authority to utilize 63 housing vouchers.

CARES staff demonstrated a high degree of adaptability, resilience, and courage as they worked to find solutions to meeting the needs of the individuals served while protecting their own health and safety. Staff learned new programs and ways to engage clients; they coordinated proactively with entities such as Spokane Housing Authority, Catholic Charities, Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP), Frontier Behavioral Health, Pioneer Human Services, Community Health Association of Spokane (CHAS), and many private landlords in the area. Staff jumped into telephonic and digital mediums to engage Individuals, teaching the individuals served how to work with the technologies along the way. CARES staff even pioneered group treatment via digital means. Staff adopted and followed safety protocols that allowed them to continue to engage, on a limited and as needed basis, with the Individuals served, ensuring their needs were met and barriers to mental stability, housing, and basic needs were addressed.

CARES staff received praise and appreciation from multiple community partners for their efforts to meet individual needs, and to maintain a presence in the community. Because of the efforts of the CARES team, vulnerable Individuals in the Spokane community were able to address getting their serious mental and emotional needs met, as well as their housing and basic needs met, and achieve a safer, higher quality of life despite the instability and uncertainty caused by the COVID 19 pandemic.

For more information about the Spokane County CSHCD Department, please visit our website at:

- [Community Services, Housing & Community Development | Spokane County, WA](#)