



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am delighted and immensely proud to present the Spokane County Community Services Department (CSD) 2023 Annual Report. Last year was another milestone in our journey of dedication, expanded community collaboration, and numerous accomplishments. We not only achieved our mission of serving the community by delivering high-quality, critically necessary services to the residents of Spokane County, but also showcased the remarkable outcomes possible with an incredibly talented and dedicated team committed to fostering a healthier and more vibrant community.



In 2023, the CSD funded and delivered services to over thirty thousand Individuals within Spokane County and our six-county Regional Service Area (RSA), including Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties.

Through established services and new and innovative programming, the CSD has demonstrated its pivotal role in leading delivery of services to improve the health and well-being of the region, program development, collaborative partnerships, health equity, community access, and addressing the community service, developmental disability, and behavioral health needs of the region. Major 2023 highlights include:

COUNSELING AND RECOVERY SERVICES (CAReS)

Comprehensive housing and supportive living services, expanded housing voucher allocations in recognition of outstanding work, and enhanced treatment services.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD)

Steadfast work supporting, funding, and advocating for employment support and community inclusion, enhanced education and awareness to prevent abuse, and increased training and funding for services.

SPOKANE COUNTY REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ORGANIZATION (SCRBH-ASO)

Expanded child/adolescent mental health support and prevention in school settings, behavioral health interventions for those impacted by homelessness, innovative treatments for families and infants affected by Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), including fentanyl and opioids, expanded crisis response and stabilization services for Youth and families experiencing a behavioral health crisis, and various initiatives addressing the opioid crisis through opioid settlement funds.

As we look toward 2024, we are excited about the opportunities and work ahead. We remain dedicated to Spokane County and the CSD's mission to serve the region's residents, improve lives, enhance well-being and equitable access to services, and ultimately ensure a better community for all. We extend our deepest gratitude for the privilege of serving our community and reaffirm our commitment to serving the region through our contracted service providers, community stakeholders, regional partners, and the Spokane Board of County Commissioners (BoCC), all working together to address the community's needs, engage in statewide conversations and support, and lead efforts to drive systemic change. Our heartfelt thanks also go to the amazing CSD staff, whose dedication makes our work possible. With the ongoing support of the community, the BoCC, and our regional stakeholders, we are resolute in our mission to serve all those in need.

"Knowing what's right doesn't mean much unless you do what's right." – Theodore Roosevelt

Warmest Regards,

Justin Johnson

Spokane County Community Services Department Director

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SPOKANE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT (CSD)

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The CSD of Spokane County is responsible for regional funding and administrative oversight for dedicated programs benefiting Spokane County and the Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA) residents. Services are provided to those in need of mental health and substance use disorder treatment services; preventative engagement and brief behavioral health intervention services for Children, Youth, and families; employment services for those with developmental disabilities; and community development, housing, and homelessness resources.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The CSD strategically oversees programs and services that focus on the following areas:

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

OUR DIVISIONS

The CSD of Spokane County provides this comprehensive array of services through the following three divisions:

• COUNSELING AND RECOVERY SERVICES (CARES)

The CARES Division is a Behavioral Health Agency formed in January 2019 to meet the growing behavioral health and housing support needs in Spokane County. CARES strives to provide an array of behavioral health and supportive living services to adults who are 18 years of age or older.

• DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD)

The DD Division, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), administers a range of specific programs by subcontracting with local agencies to provide support and services, birth through life, to people with developmental disabilities and their families.

• SPOKANE COUNTY REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ORGANIZATION (SCRBH-ASO)

The SCRBH-ASO Division's mission is to assist Individuals experiencing mental illness and/or substance use challenges achieve success in their recovery journey, through the provision of a high quality, culturally responsive array of services dedicated to empowering Individuals and their families to achieve safer, healthier, and more independent lives.

COUNSELING AND RECOVERY SERVICES (CAREs) DIVISION

A FUTURE OF HOPE AND RECOVERY

Since its inception in 2019, CAREs has encountered numerous challenges and changes, including program adjustments, the impact of COVID-19, staffing issues, and relocation to a new facility. Despite these obstacles, 2023 marked a year of increased stability for CAREs, allowing for enhanced focus on delivering top-quality programming and services. With minimal turnover, the CAREs team added a crucial supervisory role to bolster support, affirming our commitment to delivering high-quality, compassionate services to Spokane County residents.

SUPPORTIVE LIVING PROGRAM

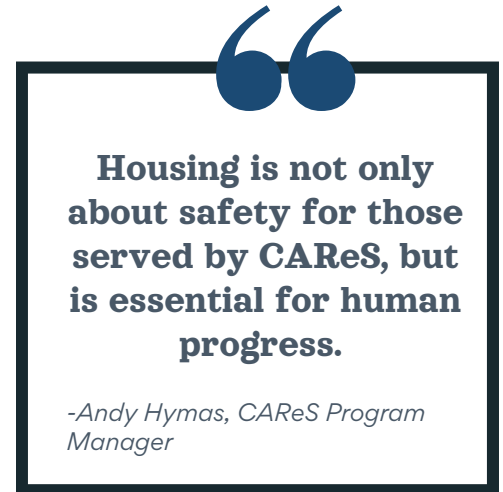
The Supportive Living Program (SLP) received accolades from the Spokane Housing Authority in January 2023 for its efficient management of housing choice vouchers. Initially awarded four vouchers monthly, the program's exemplary performance resulted in an additional four vouchers, doubling support for program participants.

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

The Therapeutic Services (TS) team employs various therapeutic interventions to assist Individuals in overcoming trauma, addiction, and life instability. Through personalized therapy sessions, Individuals develop coping mechanisms and skills for emotional regulation, leading to improved mental health outcomes. One Individual, previously struggling with severe mental health challenges, achieved remission of symptoms and regained hope for the future through TS intervention.

HOUSING AND RECOVERY THROUGH PEER SERVICES

The Housing and Recovery through Peer Services (HARPS) program addresses housing barriers for high-risk Individuals, regardless of Medicaid status. By employing a peer support approach, HARPS facilitates housing stability for Individuals transitioning from acute care settings. Notably, one Individual supported by HARPS not only secured housing, but also embarked on community service endeavors and pursued higher education, demonstrating the program's transformative impact.



COMMUNITY INTEGRATION PROGRAM

Recognizing the detrimental effects of isolation and loneliness, the Community Integration Program (CIP) expanded its reach over the past year. By fostering relationships and life skills development, CIP reduces behavioral health symptoms and recidivism rates among participants. Despite facing heightened anxiety and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, one long-time CIP client regained community engagement and resumed college attendance through the Supported Education and Employment Enhancing Rehabilitation (SEER) program with the team's persistent support.

TRANSFORMING LIVES

The CAREs SLP team works with a wide variety of Individuals, but often serves those who have significant barriers to housing. One Individual served by the SLP team had been homeless since 2015. Drug addiction, complicated by mental health challenges had led to serious legal barriers. As a result, this Individual was living on the streets, in his car, and couch surfing. After several attempts at sobriety, they were finally able to develop a treatment program and support system that allowed them to remain off drugs. Sobriety led to them taking care of their mental health needs in a positive way, and for the first time in their adult life they were clean, sober, and stable.

One element that ensures the success of the SLP Program is partnerships with landlords and community social support programs. Through these partnerships, SLP was able to find a landlord willing to give this Individual a chance at housing. Utilizing a housing voucher through a partnership with Spokane Housing Authority and subsidy funds through a partnership with Department of Commerce, the SLP team was able to assist this Individual in getting housing in a safe, clean area.

This Individual has now been sober since 2021, and securely housed since August of 2023. They continue to thrive in their new environment, repairing relationships with family, and developing a lifestyle that supports sobriety and connectedness. Housing is not only about safety for those served by CAREs but is essential for human progress. This Individual, along with many others, is able to succeed in life thanks to the SLP program.”

-Andy Hymas, CAREs Program Manager

COUNSELING AND RECOVERY SERVICES (CAREs) DIVISION

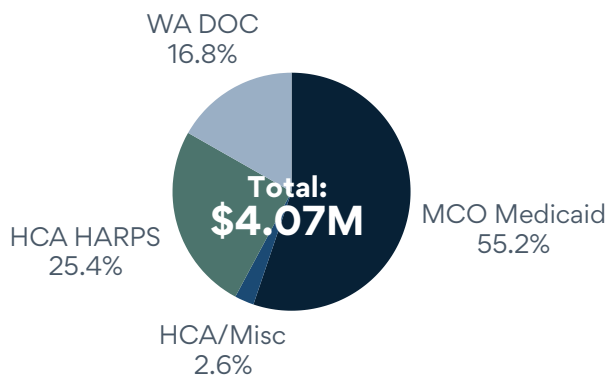
FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE CARE

Through strategic community partnerships with various organizations and agencies, including CHAS Health Clinics, Frontier Behavioral Health, and Spokane Housing Authority, CAREs extends its reach and enhances service delivery. Collaboration with landlords further strengthens the CAREs Program's ability to secure housing for program participants, fostering community connections and support networks.

Financial barriers pose significant challenges for Individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability in obtaining safe and stable housing. CAREs leverages grants from the Washington State Health Care Authority and the Washington State Department of Commerce to provide over \$1.2 million in housing support to Spokane County residents. These funds aid in preventing evictions, facilitating move-ins, and addressing housing crises, ultimately assisting over 350 Individuals in obtaining and maintaining housing in 2023.

Despite the challenges, CAREs continues to deliver thousands of behavioral health services annually, improving the quality of life for hundreds of clients. With a dedicated team committed to meeting diverse community needs, CAREs remains steadfast in its mission to enhance Individual lives, thereby enriching the broader community.

FUNDING SOURCES



SERVICE SUMMARY

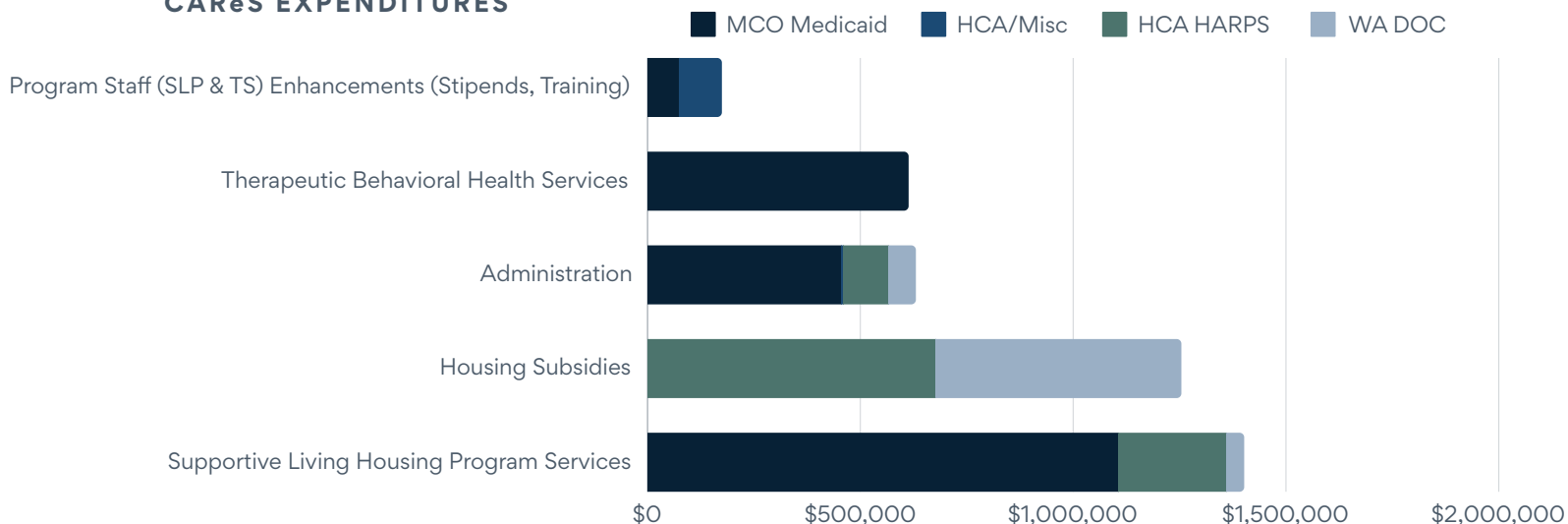
350 Number of People who Received Housing Support Services Who Would Otherwise Have Been Homeless

96 Number of Vouchers Provided to Permanently House Individuals

627 Individuals who Received CAREs Behavioral Health Services

10.4K Behavioral Health Services Provided

CAREs EXPENDITURES



*Data as of March 2024

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD) DIVISION

BREAKING BARRIERS, SHAPING FUTURES

In the year 2023, the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Division undertook the significant task of providing a comprehensive suite of Employment and Community Inclusion services that benefited the communities within both Spokane and Pend Oreille Counties. In addition to these vital services, the DD Division continued to provide Child Development services specifically within Spokane County, ensuring a broad spectrum of support across various age groups and needs. Throughout the year, the division successfully served over 900 Adults and more than 350 Children, ranging in age from birth to three years old. These Individuals received a variety of services aimed at fostering employment opportunities and community inclusion or were provided with essential Child Development services.

KEY PROGRAMS

The DD Division is responsible for the implementation and management of several key programs, each designed to address different facets of the community's needs.

- **INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

This service assists Individuals with intellectual /developmental disabilities in obtaining and maintaining typical jobs within their communities earning minimum wage or better, allowing people to have respected roles as taxpayers, consumers, and contributors to their communities. This program serves the greatest number of Individuals within the DD Division service array.

- **GROUP SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

This service supports participants working in teams with hands-on supervision by contracted agency staff, typically as members of mobile crews or enclaves within community businesses.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**

Community Inclusion provides adult services to people who are of retirement age or have tried employment services and wish to move out of employment or add this as an additional service. The intent is to help people connect and form authentic relationships with others in their communities who do not have disabilities. We often measure success by how many people are participating in volunteer activities or are members of generic community clubs and organizations.

- **CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

These services are available to Children birth to age three providing necessary therapies such as physical therapy, speech therapy, special education services, and others.

- **SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAM**

The School-to-Work Program plays a pivotal role in aiding Individuals with developmental disabilities as they make the critical transition to employment during their final year of high school. In 2023, this program engaged 57 students, offering them the support and resources necessary to navigate this transition successfully.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD) DIVISION



Photo Credit: STCU

Michaela Adams, now working at STCU as a Support Services Assistant. Michaela receives employment support from our CSD Developmental Disabilities Division to obtain and retain this position.

• THE BRIDGE PROJECT

The Bridge Project, a program unique to Spokane County, offers a lifeline to Adults who are not receiving Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Medicaid Waivers by providing them access to employment services until they become eligible for long-term funding. This initiative bridges the gap for those awaiting long-term support, ensuring they receive the assistance needed to pursue employment opportunities in the interim.

• JOB FOUNDATION PROGRAM

The Job Foundation Program targets students in their penultimate year of school, equipping them with the skills and preparation needed for active job development as they enter their last year. This program acts as a precursor to the employment journey, laying the groundwork for a smooth transition into the workforce.



People with disabilities need to be part of the ebb and flow of everyday community life...As far as the Adults we support in our employment and community inclusion services, our job is to help people find jobs and keep jobs...If you work, you win.

-Brian Nichols, Developmental Disabilities Program Manager

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD) DIVISION

CULTIVATING OPPORTUNITIES

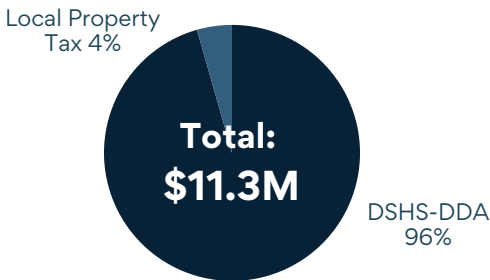
In addition to the DD Division's primary programs, the division supports mini-grant projects, which are short-term, innovative initiatives funded to assist people with developmental disabilities and their families with needs that fall outside the scope of our DDA contract. These projects exemplify the DD Division's commitment to flexible, responsive support tailored to the unique challenges faced by the community.

Beyond the direct provision of services, the DD Division is actively involved in advocacy for Individuals with developmental disabilities.

This advocacy takes the form of hosting and participating in trainings, conferences, and community consortiums, both locally and on a national scale.

Through these efforts, the DD Division not only raises awareness about the needs and rights of those with developmental disabilities, but also fosters a greater understanding and inclusion within the broader community. This year-round commitment to advocacy and education underscores the division's dedication to enhancing the lives of Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of support within the community.

FUNDING SOURCES



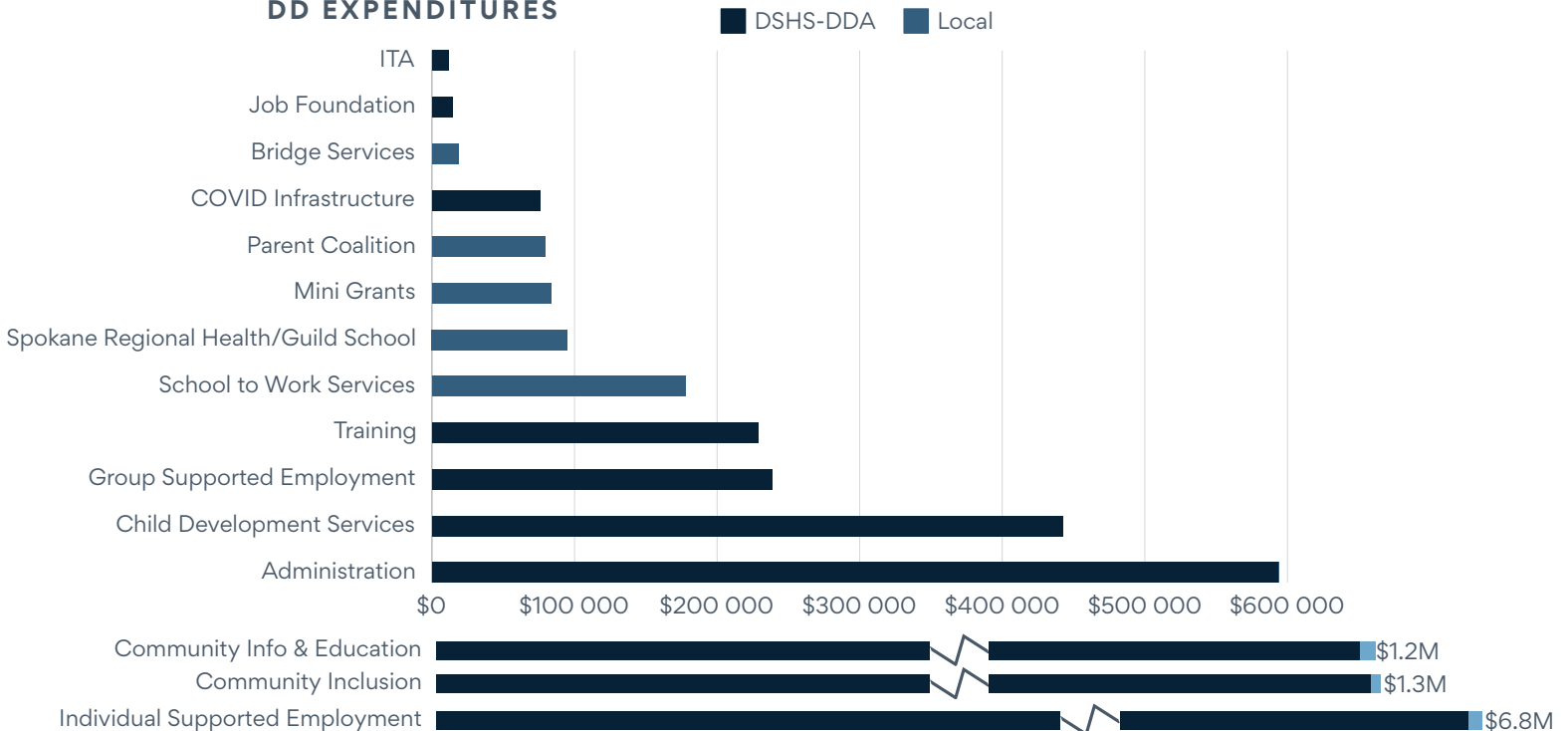
SERVICE SUMMARY*

1322 Individuals Supported by the DD Division

368 Children who Received Development Services

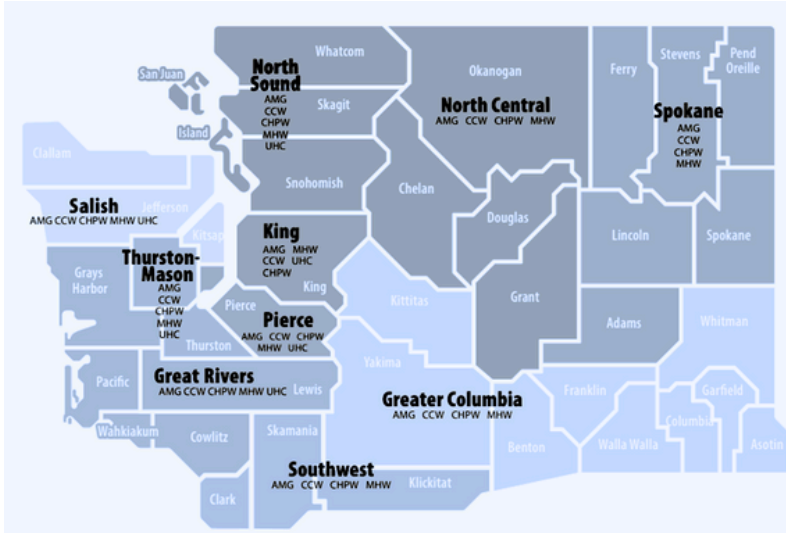
954 Adults who Received Employment or Community Inclusion Services

DD EXPENDITURES



*Data as of March 2024

SPOKANE COUNTY REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ORGANIZATION (SCRBH-ASO) DIVISION



The SCRBH-ASO manages and oversees regional behavioral health crisis response system services, including Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) services, and providing a full-service array of voluntary behavioral health treatment options for non-Medicaid, low-income Individuals at or below 220% Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This includes programming dedicated to diversionary efforts throughout the county and implementing services to improve the behavioral health system in the Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA), which includes Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties.

SCRBH-ASO COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The SCRBH-ASO works diligently to ensure a collaborative partnership with the Spokane RSA Area Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), Community Behavioral Health Providers, First Responders, Criminal Legal System, and Tribal entities to provide innovative, responsive behavioral health and crisis system services that are attentive to the needs of the entire region. Building upon the relationships and coordination efforts established over the years, the SCRBH-ASO has continued the goal of providing effective and efficient services. We accomplish this through enhancing partnerships, improving collaborative engagements, working to resolve crisis issues equitably, providing an avenue for receiving and incorporating necessary feedback, implementing new legislative and procedural changes, and maintaining an open dialogue with all crisis system partners. The SCRBH-ASO ensures this through a broad array of meetings and events with our region's providers, policymakers, community members, and other stakeholders.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

- Regional Family Youth System Partner Round Tables (FYSVRTs)
- Regional Crisis/DCR Meetings
- Spokane Regional Opioid Abatement Council
- Regional Interlocal Leadership Structure (SCRILS)
- "Hotspotters/Homeless Huddle"
- Spokane Regional Crisis Collaborative (SRCC)
- Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)
- Regional Hospital Collaborative
- Better Health Together Behavioral Health Forum
- Care Coordination
- Jail Transitions and Coordination

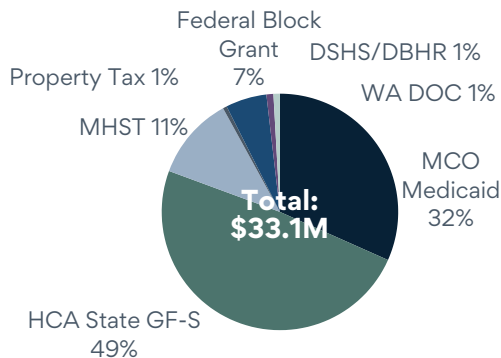
STATEWIDE MEETINGS

- Washington State Family Youth System Partner Round Tables (FYSVRT)
- Association of County Human Services
- DCR Care Coordination Meetings
- MCO-BH (ASO) Workgroups
- MCO/BH (ASO) Clinical Meetings
- MCO Credentialing
- Crisis Delegation

SCRBH-ASO BY THE NUMBERS

The SCRBH-ASO contracts with local/regional service providers and businesses, investing in local providers to enhance community well-being, improve the quality of behavioral health treatment services, promote recovery support services, and improve the health and well-being of Individuals. All funding represents direct investments into the community.

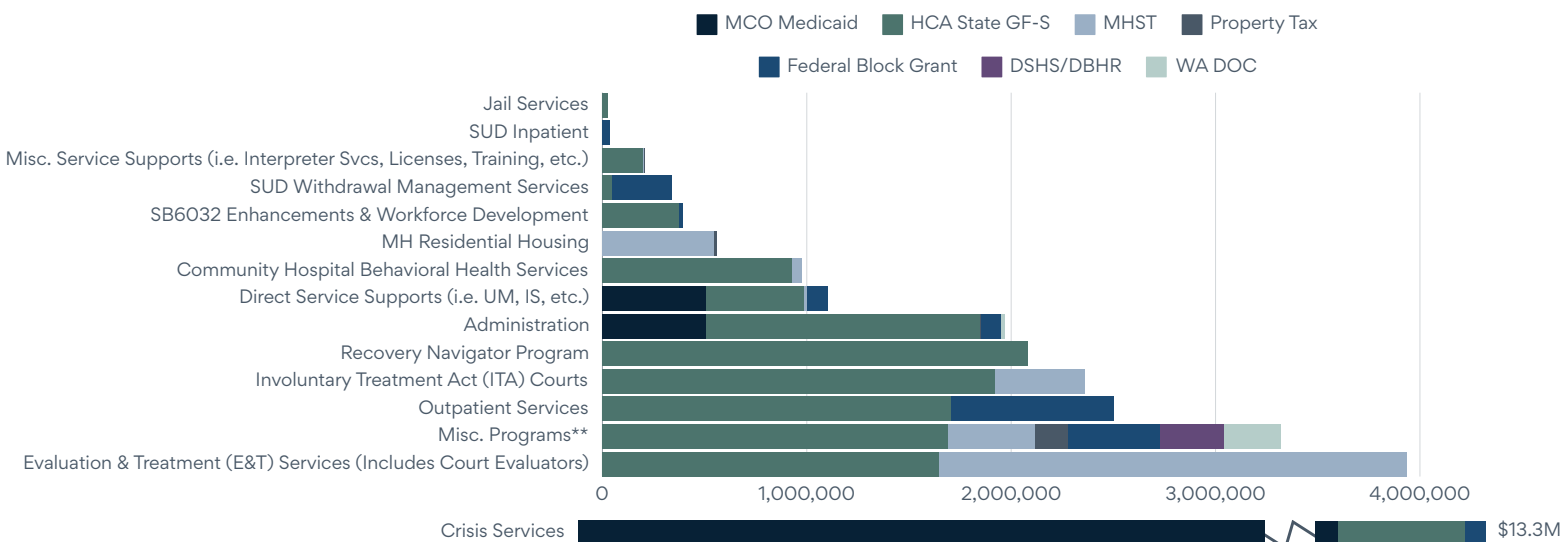
FUNDING SOURCES



SERVICE SUMMARY*

- 103K** Number of Behavioral Health Treatment Services Provided to Individuals in 2023
- 45** Unique and specific funding sources, including legislatively mandated provisos & individually negotiated Medicaid contracts.
- \$4M** Local funding used to fund services, supports, residential housing, special programs, and administrative costs.
- \$178K** Amount of BH-ASO Services Funded by Local Property Tax

SCRBH-ASO EXPENDITURES



*Data as of March 2024

**Misc. Programs include those such as Peer Bridger, FYSPT, HOST, PATH, Youth Text Line, ISW, Maddie's Place, NAMI, CBRA, BHST, Diversion.

OUR CONTRACTED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS PROVIDERS

Adams County: Adams County Integrated Health Care Services
 • 425 E. Main Street, Suite 600, Othello, WA 99334

Pend Oreille County: Pend Oreille County Counseling Services
 • 105 S. Garden Avenue, Newport, WA 99156

Spokane County: Frontier Behavioral Health
 • 107 S. Division Street, Spokane, WA 99202

Ferry, Lincoln, and Stevens Counties: North East Washington Alliance Counseling Services

- Ferry County: 65 N. Keller, Republic, WA 99166
- Lincoln County: 1211 Merriam Street, Davenport, WA 99122
- Stevens County: 165 E. Hawthorne Avenue, Colville, WA 99114 or 301 E. Clay, Suite 201, Chewelah, WA 99109

OUR REGIONAL CRISIS SYSTEM SUMMARY

CRISIS SYSTEM SUMMARY

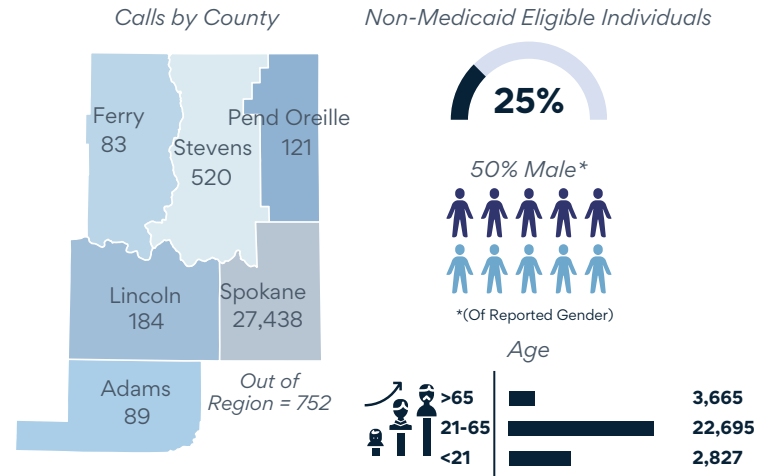
The SCRBH-ASO ensures there are Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services available 24 hours, 7 days per week, 365 days per year to all Individuals within the Spokane RSA experiencing mental health or substance use related symptoms impacting their safety, well-being, and functioning. Services include:

- The Regional Crisis Line, staffed by skilled professionals to assess and resolve crises by phone, make appropriate referrals, and/or dispatch mobile crisis teams or Designated Crisis Responders (DCRs).
- Mobile crisis response services are available to respond to behavioral health crises in the community (e.g., homes, schools, or hospital emergency rooms).
- Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) services (RCW 71.04 & 71.34).
- Short-term crisis stabilization services.
- Urgent and Emergent care services (e.g., Crisis Stabilization facilities, Evaluation and Treatment centers, Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization Services facilities, inpatient psychiatric admissions, single bed certification placement).

Walk-in crisis services are always available during business hours to contracted behavioral health crisis providers within the Spokane RSA.

2023 CRISIS LINE STATISTICS*

44K Number of Calls Made to the Regional Crisis Line **15K** Number of Mobile Crisis Outreach Services



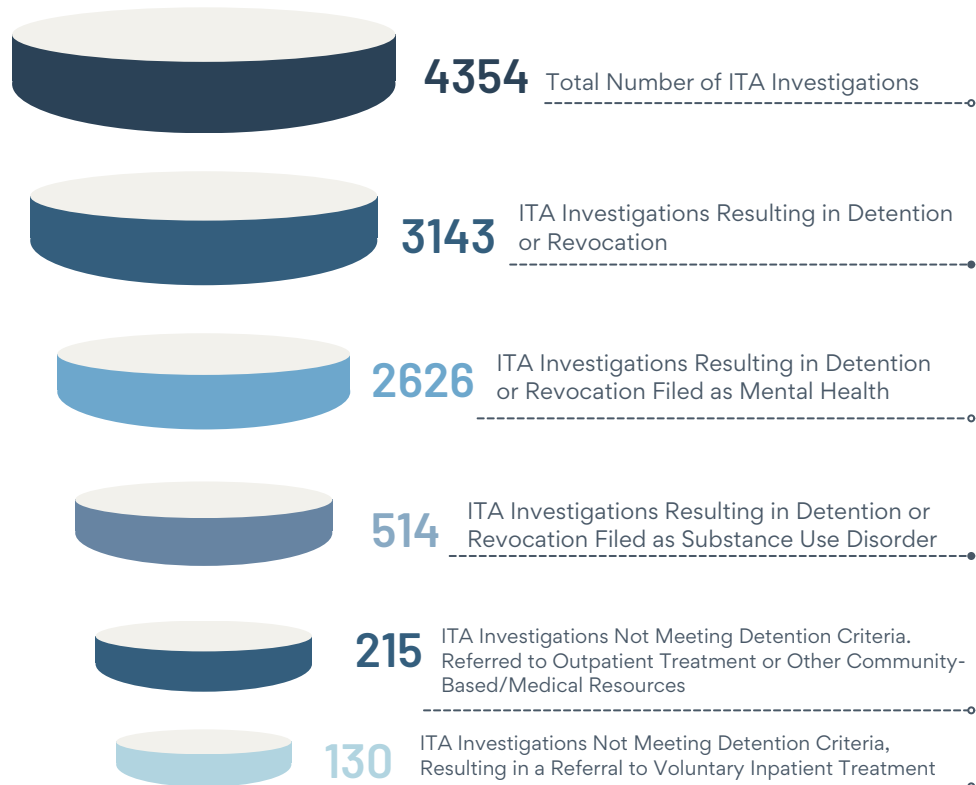
*Data as of March 2024

CRISIS SYSTEM INVOLUNTARY TREATMENT SYSTEM SUMMARY

Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) services include all clinical and administrative functions for the implementation and 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 Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) determines an Individual must be evaluated for involuntary behavioral health treatment. ITA services continue until the end of the court ordered involuntary commitment period.

The ITA process may be initiated for anyone within Washington State. An Individual is typically referred by family members, first responders, caregivers, medical providers, and care providers for an ITA investigation/evaluation. Referrals arise from concerns regarding an Individual's safety related to presentation of mental disorder or substance use disorder symptoms. An ITA investigation includes examining and investigating alleged facts through reasonably available information, records, and witnesses, and consists of an interview with the Individual to determine if symptoms of the Individual's mental disorder or substance use disorder places them at risk due to the likelihood of serious harm, and/or grave disability. ITA evaluations are often conducted in hospital emergency departments or outreach into the community.

ITA INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES



*Data as of March 2024

PROGRAM UPDATES

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS ADDRESSING REGIONAL NEEDS

The Spokane County Community Services Department (CSD) employees and contracts with a dedicated cadre of leaders and trained behavioral professionals, providing a unique understanding of the needs and challenges facing the region. Leveraging the knowledge and expertise of well-established providers, the CSD effectively responds to the behavioral health needs of the community, while ensuring a proactive approach to addressing emerging challenges; recognizing that unique solutions to addressing systemic challenges and barriers requires creative solutions and innovative thinking.

We strive to not only address the existing behavioral health challenges facing Individuals in our community, but also aim to prevent Individuals facing these challenges from experiencing a crisis through the development of pioneering programs that provide early intervention, to support everyone in our community, and provide the opportunity to live healthier, happier lives.

RECOVERY NAVIGATOR PROGRAM (RNP)

The Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) provides community-based outreach, assessment, and connection to services for people who interact with law enforcement and first responders due to an untreated mental health or substance use issue. Through recovery support services and connection to crucial services, the aim of the RNP is to decrease contact with and time spent in the criminal justice system by offering assistance before arrest, or as early on in contact with law enforcement/first responders as possible. RNP Services are provided by Peer Support Specialists, Case Managers and behavioral health professionals. RNP teams in the six-county RSA provided 1,730 case management services and responded to 3,075 Individual referrals in 2023.

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE (CYFMC)

Children, Youth, and Family Mobile Crisis (CYFMC) provides an enhancement to the continuum of Mobile Crisis Response services to include a specialized targeted response to Youth and families experiencing behavioral health crises. CYFMC provides rapid response, assessment services, crisis intervention, linkage to resources and appropriate community-based mental health and substance use treatment services for ongoing treatment and follow-up. CYFMC services are primarily provided in the community such as homes, schools, parks, and anywhere that the Youth and family feel most comfortable. The CYFMC team started accepting referrals in September 2022, and within the first month served over 85 Youth. In 2023, the CYFMC has served 1,407 Youth.

HOMELESS OUTREACH, STABILIZATION, AND TRANSITION (HOST)

The HOST program serves to engage and support Individuals experiencing homelessness in conjunction with severe substance use and/or mental health challenges. The HOST team meets people where they are in the community to provide an intensive, tailored, whole-person approach to services from a multidisciplinary team that includes an ARNP, peer support specialists, mental health and substance use disorder professionals, and case managers. The HOST team coordinates with and participates in monthly Homeless Coalition meetings, weekly Community Court, bi-weekly Street Outreach case-conferencing, and the Spokane Valley Huddle/street outreach meeting. HOST held its first Holiday Party for clients in December of 2023. In most cases, this was the first time that these clients have agreed to come into The HOST building. It was well-attended and a big step in building trust and rapport, paving the way for further engagement into life-changing services. Last year alone, HOST provided over 1,000 services to enrolled participants.



Photo Credit: Spokane County CSD

A HOST Peer Specialist hands out supplies to a program participant.

MOBILE RESPONSE AND STABILIZATION SERVICES (MRSS)

Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) provides Youth and their families with immediate services to allow for upstream intervention to prevent unnecessary hospitalization or criminal justice involvement. The MRSS philosophy understands families are often in the best position to identify changes in their Children's behavior, allowing for earlier intervention and prevention of the need for higher-level interventions. The MRSS model allows for Youth and family to define their own crisis, even if it does not rise to the level of a typical crisis as defined by RCW 71.24.025. The MRSS Program is a further enhancement to the mobile crisis response continuum of care and allows for expanded engagement and services to Youth and families by allowing for up to eight (8) weeks of stabilization services after a crisis regardless of insurance coverage. MRSS started providing services in December of 2023 and served 19 Individuals with a total of 52 contacts in just that one month alone.

PROGRAM UPDATES

INITIATIVE FOR STUDENT WELLNESS: SCHOOL-BASED SCREENING, BRIEF INTERVENTION, AND REFERRAL TO TREATMENT

The Spokane County Community Services Department (CSD) has launched an innovative program targeting mental health and substance use among Youth. The Initiative for Student Wellness: Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment Program (ISW) employs a universal screening tool to assess the well-being of middle and high school students through an evidence-based questionnaire. The screening helps categorize students by risk level, ensuring those at risk or seeking help receive follow-up services, including mental health treatment, until they can be referred to outpatient care. Available to all students in participating schools, regardless of their financial situation, ISW aims to shift the approach to Youth mental health by emphasizing preventive care and timely intervention for emerging issues. This model not only fosters a healthier community but also guarantees equal access to essential mental health services for Spokane County's Youth.

In 2023, the CSD received a national achievement award for the Initiative for Student Wellness (ISW): School-Based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SB-SBIRT) Program.



Each year, NACo's Achievement Awards are given in 18 categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include Children and Youth, criminal justice and public safety, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and more. Launched in 1970, the program is designed to recognize innovation in county government.

TEEN TEXT LINE

The Youth Behavioral Health Text Line Engagement Pilot Program, or "Teen Text Line" is designed to provide innovative telecommunications-based brief behavioral health screening and engagement, allowing teens and Adolescents the ability to securely text, call, or message a behavioral health specialist without concern for cost or meeting medical necessity. Unlike a crisis line, the Teen Text Line is a "warm line" that provides the support and education needed to prevent a situation from escalating to a crisis. Our program provides the behavioral health engagement utilizing the evidence-based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) model as a primary intervention to enhance Adolescents access to behavioral health services, promote recovery and resiliency, and ensure appropriate warm handoff to behavioral health treatment services. Through its targeted interventions and comprehensive outreach efforts, the program has successfully identified and addressed the needs of over 160 Adolescents, many of whom have reached out to the Teen Text Line multiple times for support.



The [ISW] program has been a MASSIVE win for our school! Students have more access to immediate mental health services, and we are able to collaborate regularly to find creative solutions to get kids the help they need. I believe our students are receiving a far more comprehensive system of support now than before this partnership. I greatly appreciate the team-approach we have with our clinician and the ISW program.

-Kaela Holm, School Counselor, Freeman High School



Photo Credit: Willow Treece Photography

A Maddie's Place nurse reacts to a baby held by an Infant Care Specialist. During its first 16 months of operation, Maddie's Place cared for more than 60 infants.

SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAMS

MADDIE'S PLACE

In 2023, Spokane County and Maddie's Place formed a partnership to assist infants born with drug addiction and their families. Maddie's Place, notable for its non-pharmacological approach to treating Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), is one of only four such facilities in the U.S. The program offers comprehensive care, including feeding therapy and gentle handling, and low stimulation, aiming to foster healthy development and attachment thus, enhancing the infants' future well-being. This initiative also provides extensive support to parents and caregivers, encouraging family reunification and education on the impacts of substance use. Services provided to the parents/caregivers and infants are available at no cost. This approach notably reduces the need for medications such as morphine to be given to infants by promoting close caregiver-infant bonds.

Spokane County supports Maddie's Place by covering 20% of its operational costs, making a lasting commitment to the well-being of the community's youngest and most vulnerable. This pioneering partnership embodies a compassionate response to a challenging issue, offering hope and tangible support to affected families. It represents a significant leap forward in treating infants with NAS and their families with dignity, empathy, and comprehensive care, paving the way for a future where every child has the opportunity for a healthy start in life.

RESOURCE ENGAGEMENT FOR ADOLESCENTS AND CHILDREN (REACH)

The REACH program is designed to reduce the recidivism of hospitals and crisis services by enhancing service collaboration and resource accessibility for Children and Adolescents dealing with complex behavioral health issues. REACH aims to coordinate care for Youth and families who may not be aware of available resources and works to broaden the support options for their behavioral health recovery. Achieving this goal involves improving communication and collaboration among different partners through establishing a steering committee, defining regional action plans, and conducting multisystem team (MST) meetings upon the request of providers, Youth and families seeking additional support and resource guidance.

SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAMS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT PILOT PROGRAM (BHTSP)

Through a partnership between the SCRBH-ASO and Volunteers of America, the Behavioral Health Transitional Support Program (BHTSP) offers comprehensive behavioral health interventions for Individuals facing housing and homelessness challenges. Through two (2) intervention pathways, the program addresses behavioral health needs impacting an Individual's ability to acquire and maintain safe, stable housing. Through the first intervention pathway, Behavioral Health Transitional Support Specialists provide outreach, engagement, and support to assist Individuals in connecting with vital community resources. In cases requiring more intensive behavioral health services, eligible Individuals receive a warm handoff to mental health treatment providers, which is the second intervention pathway of this innovative program. The BHTSP Program provides clinically necessary mental health outpatient treatment services to those not eligible for Medicaid and those at or below 220% of the Federal Poverty Level, ensuring access to essential support services to those who may not have access through traditional outpatient service providers, while promoting stability in housing and behavioral health recovery.

NAMI NAVIGATOR

Through the SCRBH-ASO's partnership with NAMI Spokane, Individuals living with a behavioral health condition and their loved ones can connect with NAMI's Behavioral Health and Community Services Navigator. Whether a parent needs assistance in finding care for their child who accepts Apple Health, or an Individual re-entering the community from prison would like help with enrolling in substance use treatment, the Mental Health Navigator uses their extensive knowledge of our region's available services to increase access to timely, appropriate behavioral health care. NAMI Spokane leverages over 40 years of experience in providing unwavering support for Individuals and families grappling with mental health challenges. The organization offers a wide array of support groups, workshops, and educational programs that provide a safe space for people to share their experiences, learn coping strategies, and connect with others facing similar situations.

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RENTAL ASSISTANCE (CBRA)

The Community Behavioral Health Rental Assistance (CBRA) program provides long-term or bridge rental subsidies for high-risk Individuals with behavioral health conditions and their households. When partnered with programs offering supportive housing services such as Washington's Foundational Community Supports (FCS) program, Aging and Long-Term Supports (AL TSA) programs, Housing and Recovery through Peer Services (HARPS) programs, or others, highly vulnerable Individuals with complex behavioral health needs have opportunities to live independently in the communities of their choice.



The shortage of affordable housing in Pend Oreille County has posed a significant challenge, but with the CBRA program we were successful in working with a family who was living out of their vehicle at the time of initial enrollment in services at our agency. We were able to provide temporary shelter in a local hotel for four months while tirelessly pursuing permanent housing. Together we worked closely, diligently searching for housing opportunities and navigating the intricacies of the process.

Despite encountering obstacles, including financial constraints, our constant advocacy ensured continued commitment from all parties involved. Ultimately, through perseverance and strategic intervention, a suitable residence was secured for the family. Today, they are settled into their new home, empowered to focus on rebuilding their lives.

*-Kelly Alliger, CBRA Program Manager,
Pend Oreille County Counseling Services*

ADDRESSING THE OPIOID CRISIS

SPOKANE COUNTY REGIONAL OPIOID ABATEMENT COUNCIL

On October 3, 2022, the Washington State Attorney General’s Office, as part of a nationwide agreement, successfully resolved litigation against three (3) opioid distributors—McKesson Corp., Cardinal Health Inc., and Amerisource Bergen Drug Corp. The State’s comprehensive recovery amounted to \$518 million. Opioid settlement funds designated for the Spokane RSA will be disbursed in accordance with the One Washington Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).



Photo Credit: Getty Images

According to the MOU, Washington state and its counties and cities with populations exceeding 10,000 will collectively receive \$476 million over the next 17 years to combat the opioid epidemic. The utilization of Opioid Settlement Funding is strictly governed by the guidelines set forth in the One Washington MOU. Some of the approved uses outlined in the One Washington MOU include improving the treatment of opioid use disorder, providing support and resources for Individuals struggling with opioid use disorder, education on the harms of opioid use, addressing the needs of pregnant or parenting women and their families, preventing overprescribing, and implementing programs and education to support first responders.

Spokane County facilitates the Regional Opioid Abatement Council (OAC), which is comprised of professionals with work or educational experience related to one or more of the approved uses outlined in the One Washington MOU. The Spokane Regional OAC encompasses representation from various jurisdictions, including Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties, as well as the cities of Cheney, Liberty Lake, Spokane, and Spokane Valley.

PUBLIC SURVEY FOR OPIOID SETTLEMENT

In November of 2023, Spokane County released a survey to collect public feedback on the use of opioid settlement funds for approved uses, such as improving treatment of opioid use disorder, providing supports and resources for those struggling with opioid use disorder, prevention of overprescribing, and more.

Community members shared suggestions, ideas, and concerns with Spokane County Leadership to support decision making on the use of Opioid Settlement Funding in Spokane County.

SPOKANE COUNTY OPIOID SETTLEMENT PRIORITY SURVEY RESULTS

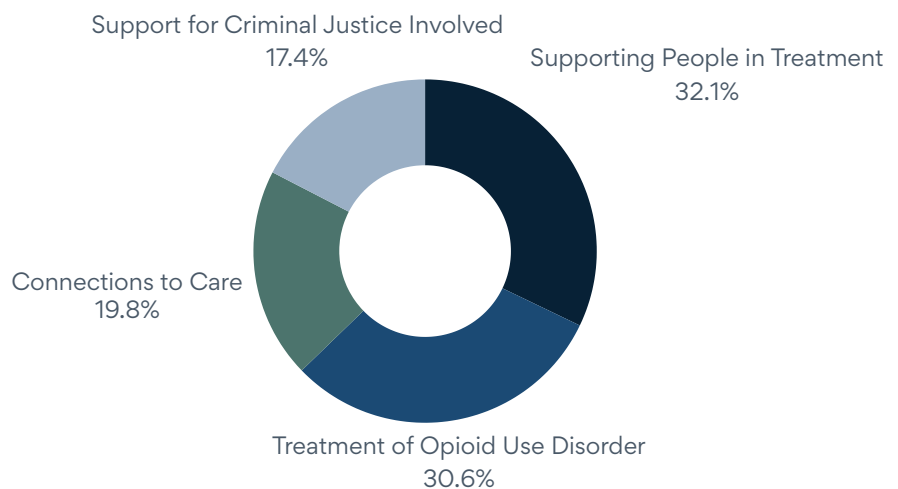




Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

DISASTER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESPONSE TEAM

MOBILIZED TO RESPOND TO OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

In 2023, our community and region were severely impacted by various devastating fires raging throughout our county. The Oregon Road fire near Elk, and the Gray fire on the West Plains, both began on August 18, 2023, and burned more than 10,000 acres each. They destroyed 366 homes and rank among the worst natural disasters in Washington's history.

Behavioral health is crucial for ensuring community resilience after traumatic events have occurred. Traumatic events such as the wildfires have a significant impact on the community and our first responders with various emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive reactions. Those with pre-existing mental health conditions may face heightened symptoms, exacerbated by limited access to care and medications post-disaster. While some recover independently, others need extra support. Local health departments, integral in disaster response, collaborate with providers, social services, volunteers, and the federal government to ensure community access to behavioral health services, monitor impacts, share information, and guide Individuals to resources. They also prioritize the well-being of first responders through risk identification, behavioral health monitoring, training, and collaboration for necessary services .



Photo Credit: Betsy Robertson/American Red Cross

A Disaster Behavioral Health Response team member and Red Cross volunteer assist a shelter resident in making arrangements for his two cats.

Our regional Disaster Response Plan has been developed to provide behavioral health support and services to people affected by disasters in our community. In the event of a disaster, the plan is activated and the SCRBH-ASO reaches out to the trained volunteers to provide support to the affected Individuals and their families. Behavioral Health Disaster Responders are called upon to provide appropriate interventions for all types of disaster victims, including counseling, public education, linkage, and referral/advocacy services.

Our Disaster Behavioral Health Response team responded to the evacuation centers to provide Behavioral Health disaster response, mental health first aid, crisis intervention, and resource support to Spokane County Residents in a time of dire need.

2024 AND FORWARD

As we look toward the future, the SCRBH-ASO is dedicated to addressing critical regional needs through innovative programming, system improvements, and the implementation of new program development. The SCRBH-ASO will focus on improving access to care in 2024 through various means such as repurposing duplicative resources to provide streamlined response to those needing mobile crisis response, leveraging partnerships with emergency responders to better meet the needs of the community, and expanding available services for those needing a place to receive direct treatment. A few of the planned programs and projects include:

STREAMLINED MOBILE CRISIS RAPID RESPONSE

With the state and federal implementation of 988, the National Suicide Prevention and Crisis Line, the SCRBH-ASO has seen expanded Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team (MRRCT) services. Though Spokane County already has an established Regional Crisis Line, 988 implementation includes a regional Hub allowing for a unique opportunity to resource duplicative services by further expanding and enhancing the rapid response that can be provided. In 2024, the SCRBH-ASO will work with state and local partners to transition the Regional Crisis Line to a Regional Crisis Response Triage and Dispatch Team, ensuring any Individual calling for help will be connected to appropriate and necessary services, unique to their situation in a streamlined approach that promotes increased responsiveness and more immediate access to assistance.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CO-RESPONSE

The SCRBH-ASO looks to expand and enhance Behavioral Health Co-responder services with the addition of Fire Department Co-responder teams in 2024. Behavioral Health Crisis Systems are complex and when someone is experiencing a crisis, it is increasingly challenging to navigate. Training and deploying Behavioral Health professionals with emergency medical response allows for early intervention, diversion from emergency departments as well as diversion from law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Spokane County looks to build upon and enhance the current system of Co-response in Spokane County to allow for non-emergent, non-violent behavioral health emergency calls to be directed to a response that can meet an Individual's unique needs through engagement, assessment, and connection to appropriate resources. This response will assist with diverting Individuals from emergency rooms and ensure connection and even transportation to direct facility intake when necessary. The expansion of Co-responder services aims to leverage existing resources through partnerships to better serve and respond to Individuals in need while streamlining access to appropriate services and reducing overutilization of overburdened systems of care.

SOBERING AND TRIAGE SERVICES

As our community continues to face challenges associated with the opioid epidemic, Spokane County looks to increase access to more immediate assistance for Individuals experiencing behavioral health and substance use disorders. As larger regional plans are being developed, the SCRBH-ASO looks for opportunities to support the community through the provision of expanded access to sobering services and triage services that can be more immediately implemented to address the needs of the community while working on other long-term programs and projects. Through providing immediate access to sobering and triage services while long-term services are created, we can create a stronger, more comprehensive network of providers to serve those struggling with opioid use disorders and other substance use challenges.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On behalf of the Spokane County Community Services Department, we extend our deepest gratitude to the dedicated behavioral health providers, and the supportive taxpayers of Spokane County, as well as to our esteemed Board of County Commissioners. Your collective commitment to enhancing the mental health and well-being of our community does not go unnoticed.

To our valued community partners, your dedication and compassion are the backbone of our community's well-being. Your expertise and tireless work not only heal but inspires hope and resilience across our community. You are the heart of our mission, making a profound difference every day. We deeply appreciate your commitment to improving lives and shaping a caring, supportive environment for all. Thank you for your invaluable contributions.

We also express our heartfelt appreciation to the taxpayers of Spokane County. Your investment in the health and well-being of our community is a testament to your vision for a better future for all residents. Your support enables us to extend our reach and impact, ensuring that no one is left behind in their time of need.

Lastly, we extend our thanks to the Board of County Commissioners for their guidance, support, and leadership. Your commitment to fostering a healthier and more supportive Spokane County through policy and advocacy paves the way for meaningful change and sustained community well-being.

Together, we are making a profound difference in the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your partnership, your faith in our mission, and your contribution to our community's health. We look forward to continuing our work together, united in our pursuit of a brighter, healthier future for Spokane County.

Spokane County

COMMUNITY SERVICES

WEB

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