

Recovery navigator program

Background

As a result of ESB 5476, the intent of the Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) is to provide behavioral health services to individuals who intersect with police because of simple drug possession (ESB 5476§13), people who have frequent criminal legal system contact, and others who are referred from community sources (ESB 5476§2§2). These programs are to serve people who are at risk of arrest, or already have been involved in the criminal legal system due to unmet behavioral health needs.

Overview

The Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) is a statewide effort, in partnership with Behavioral Health Administrative Organizations (BHASOs), to provide community-based outreach, intake, assessment, and connection to services. These services support individuals with substance use disorder (SUD), including individuals with co-occurring substance use disorders and mental health conditions. Before receiving funding, each BHASO submitted a regional recovery navigator program plan that demonstrated the ability to implement statewide program standards. The RNP framework incorporates harm reduction and trauma-informed care principles to support the individual throughout their recovery journey. Coordination and communication between regional RNP staff, law enforcement, prosecutors, medical providers, and community partners is essential to the success of each individual. RNP staff facilitate and coordinate connections to a broad range of community resources for youth and adults including treatment and recovery support services (RSS).

Uniform program standards

From June to the end of August 2021, HCA convened an ad-hoc committee to develop Uniform Program Standards (Standards) modeled upon Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) core principles. Consideration for the nature of referrals

into the RNP are outlined in the Standards and individuals can engage in a referral to appropriate supportive services or light to intensive case management if they choose to participate in the RNP. In developing response time requirements within the Standards, responses to referrals from law enforcement occur immediately. Response times for urban programs such as emergency departments, community businesses are 30 to 45 minutes once the referral is received and response times for rural areas are 60 to 90 minutes.

Recovery navigator program strategic plan

As of October 1, 2021, all BHASOs have appointed a regional Recovery Navigator Administrator and collaborated with LEAD National Support Bureau to ensure adherence the Standards in program plan development. Each recovery navigator strategic plan addresses requirements to provide intake and referral services. Recovery navigator teams specialize in conducting assessments and delivering light to intensive case management. Recovery navigator staff encompass the skills necessary to provide warm handoffs to treatment and recovery support services along the continuum of care.

Next steps

December 2021

- BHASOs begin to hire and implement regional RNPs. The Substance Use Recovery Services Advisory (SURSA) Committee will begin developing the Substance use recovery services plan to monitor program effectiveness.

January- December 2022

- The SURSA Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the RNP and recommendations for program improvement.

Authority

2021 Washington State Legislation

- ESB 5476

Funding

- \$25 million General Fund-State SFY22
- \$20 million General Fund-State SFY23

Key partners

BHASO Recovery Navigator Program Administrator: Pierce (Ahney King), Southwest (James Jensen), North Central (Dina Goodman), King (Susan Peacey), Salish (Martian Lewis), Thurston-Mason (Jason Bean-Mortinson), Great Rivers (Troy Achord), Spokane (Jessica Watson, Cara Reidy), Greater Columbia (Cameron Fordmeir), North Sound (James Dixon).

LEAD National Support Bureau/Public Defenders Association

Oversight

The Authority and Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) are the appointed administrators of the Recovery Navigator Program. The Behavioral Health Service Organizations (BHASOs) provide local oversight and sub-contract with local, state licensed private, non-profit mental health agencies to provide services directly.

Questions?

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