

Memorandum

DATE: December 13, 2019

TO: City of Shoreline Planning Commission

FROM: Nora Gierloff, Planning Manager, AICP
James Hammond, Intergovernmental Relations Manager

RE: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services presentation on behavioral health

State investment in community-based behavioral health treatment

Staff from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) will make a presentation to the Planning Commission about the State's effort to transform the behavioral health care system and the resulting emphasis on community-based treatment. This presentation is intended to inform the work of the City of Shoreline and the Planning Commission as it reviews code amendments that will add definitions for enhanced services and evaluation and treatment facilities in the Shoreline Municipal Code.

According to Governor Inslee's Policy Brief on the subject,

Washington's behavioral health system is based on an outdated model of care. We know the best way to treat patients is in the community and in smaller facilities that help them stay closer to home. Yet today, we lack enough community-based treatment options. This puts too much of a burden on our aging, oversized state psychiatric hospitals, where staffing and safety concerns strain treatment efforts. Meanwhile, a host of other problems—such as opioid abuse and a shortage of mental health treatment professionals—further stress our treatment systems.

Source: December 2018 Policy Brief, "Transforming Washington's Behavioral Health Care System"

DSHS is evaluating sites for community-based facilities across the state, including in Shoreline, on the Fircrest Campus. The presentation from DSHS will address the physical and operational characteristics of a community-based evaluation and treatment facility, and staff will be available to answer questions.