

## Recovery Navigator program

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### Overview

The Recovery Navigator program (RNP) provides behavioral health services to individuals who intersect with law enforcement because of simple drug possession or other alleged criminal activity. This includes individuals who have frequent criminal legal system contact, social contact referrals from first responders, and others who are referred from community sources.

The program serves individuals who are at risk of arrest or who have already been involved in the criminal legal system due to unmet behavioral health needs.

RNP is a statewide effort, in partnership with Behavioral Health Administrative Organizations (BH-ASOs), to provide community-based outreach, intake, assessment, and connection to services for individuals referred through pre-booking diversion and community referral. These services support individuals with problematic drug use and individuals with substance use disorder (SUD), including individuals with co-occurring substance use disorders and mental health conditions.

### Program framework

The RNP framework is modeled upon core components of Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) and incorporates peer support, 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 program participants. RNP staff facilitate and coordinate connections to a broad range of community resources for youth and adults, including treatment and recovery support services.

### Uniform program standards

From June to the end of August 2021, the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) convened an ad-hoc committee to develop uniform program standards modeled after (LEAD) core principles. Consideration of the nature of referrals 82-0503 (10/23)

into the RNP are outlined in the Standards. Individuals can engage in a referral to appropriate supportive services or case management on a continuum of light to intensive, if they choose to participate in the RNP. The Health Care Authority will be revising the Uniform Program Standards by June 30, 2024 in response to 2nd Engrossed 2nd Substitute Senate Bill 5536 from 2023.

### Strategic plan

Before receiving funding, each BH-ASO submitted a regional recovery navigator program plan that demonstrated the ability to implement statewide program standards. With dedicated funding, the BH-ASOs hired a regional Recovery Navigator Program Administrator and collaborated with the LEAD Support Bureau to ensure adherence to the Standards in regional 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 provide warm handoffs to treatment and recovery support services along the continuum of care. HCA arranges for technical assistance to all BH-ASOs for their RNP, provided by the LEAD national support bureau.

### Eligibility

The intent of the Recovery Navigator program is to assist in the provision of social services to individuals who intersect with police because of simple drug possession and/or people who have frequent criminal legal system contact because of unmet behavioral healthcare needs. Those who fall in this category are eligible.

The program is primarily focused on serving people who are at risk of arrest, or already have been involved in the criminal legal system, though it can also accept referrals made through social contact or outreach efforts.

### People served

The Recovery Navigator Program collects data on the encounters through different referral and outreach pathways. These data are collected quarterly and reports are provided to the Substance Use Recovery Services Advisory Committee (SURSAC). For the two most recently

available quarters covering a time period from January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023 RNP staff:

- Logged 12,492 outreach and referral contacts (of that total, 1,443 originated through law enforcement)
- Had 20,860 Case Management encounters with individuals

These numbers reflect individual encounters rather than individuals served, and some participant counts may be duplicated.

## Authority

Enacted through Engrossed Senate Bill 5476: Drug Possession- State V Blake Decision, codified as [RCW 71.24.115](#).

## Budget

- \$22 million General Fund-State (SFY24)
- \$22 million General Fund-State (SFY25)

## Key partners

### **BHASO Recovery Navigator program administrators**

- Beacon Health Options- Pierce (Ahney King)
- Beacon Health Options- Southwest (James Jensen)
- Beacon Health Options- North Central (Katie Person)
- King (Susan Peacey)
- Salish (Jolene Kron)
- Thurston-Mason (Jason Bean-Mortinson),
- Great Rivers (Lisha Coates)
- Spokane (Cara Reidy)
- Greater Columbia (Cameron Fordmeir)
- North Sound (James Dixon)

### **LEAD national support bureau/public defenders association**

- Lisa Daugaard (director)

## Oversight

HCA is responsible for the Recovery Navigator program administration. This is a cross-divisional effort between the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR), Medicaid Programs Division (MPD), and Clinical Quality Care Transformation (CQCT).

The BHASOs provide regional oversight and sub-contract with community behavioral health

agencies and community-based organizations to provide direct services.

## More information

Contact: Ryan Keith  
Recovery Navigator program administrator  
[ryan.keith@hca.wa.gov](mailto:ryan.keith@hca.wa.gov)

Contact: Suzanne Straub  
Behavioral Health program manager  
[suzanne.straub@hca.wa.gov](mailto:suzanne.straub@hca.wa.gov)