

RCW 72.09.350 Corrections mental health center—Collaborative arrangement with University of Washington—Services for offenders with mental illness—Annual report to the legislature.

(1) The department of corrections and the University of Washington may enter into a collaborative arrangement to provide improved services for offenders with mental illness with a focus on prevention, treatment, and reintegration into society. The participants in the collaborative arrangement may develop a strategic plan within sixty days after May 17, 1993, to address the management of offenders with mental illness within the correctional system, facilitating their reentry into the community and the mental health system, and preventing the inappropriate incarceration of individuals with mental illness. The collaborative arrangement may also specify the establishment and maintenance of a corrections mental health center located at McNeil Island corrections center. The collaborative arrangement shall require that an advisory panel of key stakeholders be established and consulted throughout the development and implementation of the center. The stakeholders advisory panel shall include a broad array of interest groups drawn from representatives of mental health, criminal justice, and correctional systems. The stakeholders advisory panel shall include, but is not limited to, membership from: The department of corrections, the department of social and health services, the health care authority, behavioral health administrative services organizations, managed care organizations under chapter 74.09 RCW, local and regional law enforcement agencies, the sentencing guidelines commission, county and city jails, mental health advocacy groups for individuals with mental illness or developmental disabilities, the traumatically brain-injured, and the general public. The center established by the department of corrections and University of Washington, in consultation with the stakeholder advisory groups, shall have the authority to:

- (a) Develop new and innovative treatment approaches for corrections mental health clients;
- (b) Improve the quality of mental health services within the department and throughout the corrections system;
- (c) Facilitate mental health staff recruitment and training to meet departmental, county, and municipal needs;
- (d) Expand research activities within the department in the area of treatment services, the design of delivery systems, the development of organizational models, and training for corrections mental health care professionals;
- (e) Improve the work environment for correctional employees by developing the skills, knowledge, and understanding of how to work with offenders with special chronic mental health challenges;
- (f) Establish a more positive rehabilitative environment for offenders;
- (g) Strengthen multidisciplinary mental health collaboration between the University of Washington, other groups committed to the intent of this section, and the department of corrections;
- (h) Strengthen department linkages between institutions of higher education, public sector mental health systems, and county and municipal corrections;
- (i) Assist in the continued formulation of corrections mental health policies;

(j) Develop innovative and effective recruitment and training programs for correctional personnel working with offenders with mental illness;

(k) Assist in the development of a coordinated continuum of mental health care capable of providing services from corrections entry to community return; and

(1) Evaluate all current and innovative approaches developed within this center in terms of their effective and efficient achievement of improved mental health of inmates, development and utilization of personnel, the impact of these approaches on the functioning of correctional institutions, and the relationship of the corrections system to mental health and criminal justice systems. Specific attention should be paid to evaluating the effects of programs on the reintegration of offenders with mental illness into the community and the prevention of inappropriate incarceration of persons with mental illness.

(2) The corrections mental health center may conduct research, training, and treatment activities for the offender with mental illness within selected sites operated by the department. The department shall provide support services for the center such as food services, maintenance, perimeter security, classification, offender supervision, and living unit functions. The University of Washington may develop, implement, and evaluate the clinical, treatment, research, and evaluation components of the mentally ill offender center. The institute of for public policy and management may be consulted regarding the development of the center and in the recommendations regarding public policy. As resources permit, training within the center shall be available to state, county, and municipal agencies requiring the services. Other state colleges, state universities, and mental health providers may be involved in activities as required on a subcontract basis. Community mental health organizations, research groups, and community advocacy groups may be critical components of the center's operations and involved as appropriate to annual objectives. Clients with mental illness may be drawn from throughout the department's population and transferred to the center as clinical need, available services, and department jurisdiction permits.

(3) The department shall prepare a report of the center's progress toward the attainment of stated goals and provide the report to the legislature annually. [2019 c 325 § 5024; 2018 c 201 § 9011; 2014 c 225 § 94; 1993 c 459 § 1.]

Effective date—2019 c 325: See note following RCW 71.24.011.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2018 c 201: See notes following RCW 41.05.018.

Effective date—2014 c 225: See note following RCW 71.24.016.

Effective date—1993 c 459: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 17, 1993]." [1993 c 459 § 2.]