

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

DATE: February 03, 2025

TO: Human Services Commission Members

FROM: Saada Hilts, Human Services Planner
Parks & Community Services

SUBJECT: Panel Conversation: Trends and Challenges in Addiction

Background

Addiction is a chronic condition that profoundly impacts many aspects of life, including physical and mental health, relationships, and career opportunities. It can also devastate entire communities, as shown by the sharp rise in drug-related fatalities. According to the Human Services Needs Update, both fatal and non-fatal drug overdoses have significantly increased in recent years, primarily due to the presence of fentanyl. In King County alone, there were more than 1,050 fentanyl overdose deaths in 2023, representing a 47% increase compared to 2022. This highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive response to the addiction crisis, focused on prevention, treatment, and long-term recovery support.

Johnny Ohta and Billy Allen will present to the Human Services Commission to raise awareness about addiction prevention and treatment.

Johnny Ohta, a member of Ryther's Medication-Assisted Treatment team, has worked extensively with underserved youth battling substance use. In partnership with Kaiser Permanente, he addresses challenges like homelessness and addiction, offering mentorship and support.

Billy Allen, Opioid and Overdose Outreach Coordinator for the City of Bellevue, leads efforts to promote education and safety around opioid use. With a focus on reducing stigma and equipping community members and first responders with tools to tackle the opioid crisis, leveraging opioid settlement funds to drive impactful programs.

Together, Johnny and Billy's work is essential in addressing the far-reaching impact of addiction, contributing significantly to ongoing efforts to support individuals and communities affected by this crisis.