

September 18, 2017

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Briefing on the King County Heroin and Prescription Opiate Task Force Recommendations

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POLICY ISSUES

At the August 7 meeting, Council discussed an ordinance that would establish an interim official control in the City Land Use Code to ban safe injection sites within the City of Bellevue. During that meeting, Councilmembers referenced and asked questions about the recommendations contained in the King County Heroin and Prescription Opiate Addiction Task Force (Task Force) Final Report. In response to those Councilmember questions, staff has prepared a briefing on the recommendations in the Task Force Final Report and a summary of efforts being undertaken by King County and Bellevue to address the Task Force recommendations.

Of the eight Task Force recommendations, the final recommendation proposed is to establish a pilot program to locate at least two safe injection sites in King County for supervised consumption of opiates.

Council has scheduled a public hearing on September 25 regarding the interim official control to ban safe injection sites in Bellevue. Nothing in tonight's briefing is intended to address the issue of safe injection sites, rather tonight's item addresses the other seven recommendations included in the Task Force Final Report in response to Council questions.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

ACTION

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DIRECTION

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INFORMATION ONLY

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Tonight's briefing is for Council information only. No action is required by Council.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

According to research from the Journal of the American Medical Association, the University of Washington and the King County Medical Examiner, opioid prescribing has increased significantly since the mid-1990s and has been paralleled by increases in pharmaceutical opioid misuse and opioid use disorder, heroin use and fatal overdoses. When new limits were put in place on legal opioid prescriptions, heroin addiction increased significantly due to its greater availability and lower cost. In 2016, out of 332 drug-caused deaths in King County, the total number of deaths caused by opioids and heroin was 219. This is the highest number since at least 1997. From 2010 to 2014, the number of people who entered the publicly-funded treatment system for heroin use disorders in King County grew from 1,439 to 2,886.

Recognizing the extent of this public health crisis, the King County Heroin and Prescription Opiate Addiction Task Force (Task Force) was established in early 2016 and charged with developing short and long-term strategies to prevent opioid use disorder, prevent drug overdose, and improve access to treatment and other supportive services. The Task Force included 50 representatives from various King County agencies and organizations that deal directly with opioid users. These included hospitals, police agencies, fire agencies, pharmaceutical agencies, user advocacy groups and various social services providers.

The final report and recommendations from the Task Force were unanimously adopted by the Seattle and King County Board of Health in January, 2017 (see **Attachment A** for the Final Report and Recommendations).

The eight recommendations from the Task Force are summarized below and information is included after each describing efforts related to that recommendation:

Primary Prevention

1. Raise awareness and knowledge of the possible adverse effects of opioid use, including overdose and opioid use disorder.

King County:

- King County Department of Community and Human Services staff is providing briefings on the Task Force recommendations to King County Boards/Commissions and other stakeholder groups, including presentations hosted by the King County Library System.
- King County Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD – a sales tax reauthorized in November 2016) funding is supporting primary prevention activities such as communications and education for physicians, pharmacists, health care providers and the general public.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- On February 7, the Bellevue Human Services Commission received a briefing from Bellevue Fire, Police and Probation staff on the scope of the problem and efforts to address the problem locally.

- On May 16, the Human Services Commission hosted a panel of providers of substance use disorder services in East King County/Bellevue, including Youth Eastside Services (YES) which provides mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment to children and youth; Therapeutic Health Services which provides intensive outpatient drug and alcohol treatment; Sound Mental Health which provides school and community based services to youth, adolescents and adults with mental health and substance abuse issues; and HealthPoint which provides affordable health care services to low-income populations.
- Eastside Human Services Forum (EHSF) held an educational forum on June 16 - “The Growing Opiate and Heroin Crisis: Moving from Awareness to Action”. A panel of experts gave an overview of the extent of the problem using current data and recommendations from the Task Force Report. EHSF staff compiled feedback from participants, and the EHSF will be discussing further steps at future meetings.

2. Promote safe storage and disposal of medications.

King County:

- King County residents can dispose of the medicines they no longer need by taking them to one of 100 drop-box locations in King County. Participating pharmacies, clinics, hospitals and law enforcement agencies will accept most prescription and over-the-counter medicines for disposal. Mail-back envelopes are also available for residents who are home bound or have limited mobility. There is no cost to residents to use these services.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- The Bellevue Police Department hosts a Secure Medicine Return Box in the second-floor Police lobby in Bellevue City Hall. There are also seven pharmacy take-back locations in Bellevue, plus the Eastgate Public Health Clinic.

3. Leverage and augment existing screening practices in schools and health care settings to prevent and identify opioid use disorder.

King County:

- The Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidenced based tool used to identify, reduce and prevent use, abuse, and dependence on alcohol and drugs. The Best Start for Kids Levy, approved by voters in 2016, is funding SBIRT efforts throughout King County middle schools.
- International Community Health Services (ICHS) is a health center that provides affordable health care services to underserved populations and administers SBIRT to patients at its clinics.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- The Bellevue School District is developing its SBIRT plan for all seven middle schools. Each middle school will have an internal SBIRT planning team to give input to the overall plan. The planning timeline is from September to December. The plan will be submitted to the Best Start for Kids Levy staff. Once the plan is accepted, the Bellevue School District can apply for implementation funding.
- Earlier this year, the International Community Health Services (ICHS) received a grant from the Best Starts for Kids Levy to locate a school-based health clinic at Highland Middle School in Bellevue. Research shows good outcomes for early identification of opioid use among teens in a setting that is familiar and convenient such as a school-based clinic.
- HealthPoint administers SBIRT to patients at its clinics.
- Eastside Pathways Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaborative supports prevention and intervention for all Eastside children and youth by connecting them to services and resources. Eastside Pathways has had discussions about the increase in mental health and substance abuse issues in the schools and how it is important for this collaborative to address these issues.
- Eastside Academy, a private high school in Bellevue, offers a choice for youth who want to attend school in an abstinence and recovery environment.

Treatment Expansion and Enhancement

- 4. Create access to an opioid replacement (buprenorphine) in low barrier modalities close to where individuals live for all people in need of services.** Buprenorphine is used to reduce withdrawal symptoms in opioid addicted patients.

King County:

- There are approximately 100 public and private health care providers that have received special training and can prescribe buprenorphine.
- \$500,000 in King County MIDD funding will be used to expand buprenorphine access, and the County is selecting service providers by the end of September.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- 16 public and private health care providers in Bellevue can prescribe buprenorphine.
- 5. Develop treatment on demand for all modalities of substance use disorder treatment services.** Modalities include detoxification/withdrawal management, outpatient therapy, residential treatment and medication-assisted treatment.

King County:

- King County is evaluating the adequacy of the available network of treatment sites and geographic accessibility to these services. According to the Task Force Report, the King County Recovery Help Line is developing a plan for how King County could achieve centralized access and referral to treatment services in order to facilitate treatment on demand.

Bellevue/Eastside:

Bellevue funds the following programs that provide substance use disorder treatment services. Some, not all, have next-day appointments available:

- Youth Eastside Services (YES) Early Intervention is receiving \$168,747 to provide mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment to children and youth ages 6-22. Staff report that over the past five years they have seen the growth of a new high-risk population of children and youth with high levels of depression and anxiety, often including substance abuse. The service gaps identified include the lack of detoxification facilities for youth covered by Medicaid and no medication-assisted treatment for youth as few prescribers are willing to see youth. YES reported a 36% increase in the number of youth served in their treatment program for substance abuse and related disorders between 2014 and 2016.
- Therapeutic Health Services is receiving \$105,509 to provide intensive outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, including medication-assisted treatment such as methadone.
- Sound Mental Health is receiving \$38,500 to provide school and community based services to youth, adolescents and adults with mental health and substance abuse issues.
- Friends of Youth is receiving \$88,960 to provide substance abuse treatment services to youth, young adults and their families.
- HealthPoint is receiving \$60,272 to provide medication-assisted therapy at its medical clinic.

6. Alleviate barriers placed upon opioid treatment programs, including the number of clients served and siting of clinics.

King County:

- International Community Health Services (ICHS) is a health center that provides affordable health care services – including medical, dental, vision and behavioral health care – to underserved populations in King County. ICHS now offers medication-assisted treatment for people experiencing opiate addiction.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- HealthPoint is a health center that provides affordable health care services to low-income populations and offers medication-assisted treatment, including Suboxone which is a brand name for buprenorphine.
- Therapeutic Health Services provides intensive outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, including medication-assisted treatment such as methadone and buprenorphine.

User Health and Overdose Prevention

7. **Expand distribution of naloxone (Narcan) in King County.** Narcan is used to reverse the effects of an opiate overdose.

King County:

- King County MIDD funding is being used to implement strategies for addressing the opiate crisis, including the distribution of Narcan.
- Narcan has been carried by paramedics on Medic Units for over 35 years and was initially administered only intravenously. It is now available in a nasal spray form as well.
- Narcan is now carried by all fire department response units due to the availability of the nasal spray.
- State legislation authorized pharmacies to supply a nasal spray form of Narcan without a prescription.

Bellevue/Eastside:

- In Bellevue, Narcan has been carried by paramedics on Medic Units for over 35 years and was initially administered only intravenously. It is now available in a nasal spray form as well.
- Narcan is now carried by all fire department response units due to the availability of the nasal spray.
- Police Department narcotics officers have received training and carry the nasal spray version of Narcan.

8. **Establish, on a pilot program basis, at least two Community Health Engagement Locations (CHEL or safe injection sites) where supervised consumption occurs for adults with substance use disorders in the Seattle and King County region. Given the distribution of drug use across King County, one of the CHEL sites should be located outside of Seattle.**

Seattle and King County are currently investigating potential locations for two pilot safe injection sites. Several cities in the County are in the process of banning the sites, including Federal Way, Auburn and Bellevue.

Other Efforts

Sound Cities Association Mayors gathered for a roundtable meeting on opiate addiction in November 2016. They discussed the challenges their communities are facing and actions to address the crisis. Some of the actions supported by the Mayors included convening community forums, working with school districts and engaging with health care providers to increase awareness of the problem and seek solutions.

Bellevue Human Services staff is finalizing the 2017-2018 Human Services Needs Update. The Update includes information regarding opiate addiction, and Council will receive a briefing and presentation on the final Update in January.

OPTIONS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

A. Heroin and Prescription Opiate Addiction Task Force Final Report and Recommendations