

**CLARK COUNTY  
STAFF REPORT**



**DEPARTMENT:** Department of Community Services (DCS)  
**DATE:** July 7, 2015  
**REQUEST:** Request to increase the current patient limit for the Opiate Substitution Program operated by Columbia River Mental Health Services

YES	NO	ACTION
		County Manager review and approval
X		Consent

**BACKGROUND**

Opiate addiction is increasing at alarming rates in Clark County and data from detox, emergency rooms, the public health district, law enforcement and the jail support this concern. As reported to the BOCC by the Substance Abuse Advisory Board during their December 2014 work session, the most commonly identified drug used at intake to both detox and inpatient treatment is heroin. Local media outlets have reported on the soaring rates of crime and availability of heroin in the county as well as a rise in the abuse of prescription medication. In both national and state studies, there is clear evidence that treatment results in significant declines in the number of arrests, emergency room costs and overall costs to families and the community.

Columbia River Mental Health Services currently operates an opiate treatment program in their Northstar clinic, but the clinic has reached the maximum number of patients allowed to be served under in program. RCW 70.96A.410 (1) (e) provides that no opiate treatment program shall exceed 350 participants **unless specifically authorized by the county in which the program is certified**. Because the maximum participant level has been reached at the Northstar clinic, opiate-addicted residents are not able to get into publically-funded treatment programs. State law grants the County Legislative Authority the ability to waive the three hundred fifty (350) limit on patient capacity. Given the alarming rise in the use of opiates, it is in the best interest of the County and its citizens to provide treatment to a greater number of individuals in need.

**OUTREACH**

The Executive Director of Columbia River Mental Health Services (CRMHS) has conducted outreach to the local neighborhood associations about the requested proposed expansion of the Northstar census. The Bagley Downs Neighborhood Association, which is where CRMHS is located, is inactive so there is no one to contact. The Executive Director did, however, contact the Ogden Neighborhood Association which is on the east side of CRMHS. Their president, Mr. Tracy Weedman, personally toured the Northstar facility and gave his approval of the request. The Executive Director of CRMHS has offered to begin attending the Ogden Neighborhood Association meetings on a quarterly basis and they are pleased with his offer.

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The Executive Director of CRMHS also contacted Eric Jennings and Stuart Hemstock, the Vancouver police liaisons to the Ogden and Bagley Downs neighborhoods respectively. They were informed about the proposed expansion and they expressed no problems or concerns with the Northstar program currently or as proposed.

### BUDGET AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Fund 1954 will be used for these services. Current grant funding is sufficient to accommodate an additional 100 patients.

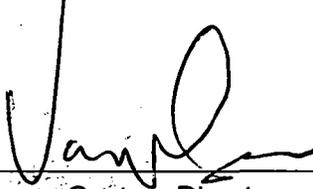
### FISCAL IMPACTS

Yes (see attached form)       No

### ACTION REQUESTED

This request is to raise the existing patient limit from three hundred fifty (350) to four hundred fifty (450) for the Northstar clinic operated by Columbia River Mental Health Services.

**PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT:** DeDe Sieler, ext. 7823



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Vanessa Gaston, Director  
Department of Community Services

APPROVED: July 7, 2015



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CLARK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNCILORS

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