

# 2019



# Winter Newsletter

## MAR - MEDICATION ASSISTED RECOVERY



The Lifeline Connections Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program continues to grow and evolve. The program provides medication, nonpharmacological pain management education, care navigators to answer questions or assist individuals through treatment, and a Rapid Response Clinic Mon–Thurs 10:30–11:30am. At Rapid Response, patients can walk in, see a provider, receive medication, and begin mapping out a plan for their recovery journey.

Finally, there is a Medication Assisted Recovery Anonymous support meeting held weekly at the Recovery Resource Center. This meeting is to support individuals involved in a MAT program who may not find acceptance in either 12-step or faith based support meetings.

With the addition of these services the former MAT Program has evolved into MAR (Medication Assisted Recovery) to encompass much more than the distribution of medication. In addition to the work done in the Rapid Response Clinic, and with our community partners who serve as spokes to the Hub and Spoke program, Care Navigators are working in the hospital to help educate patients on opioid addiction and offer services. To help expand that program Lifeline just received a grant from the WA State Health Care Authority that will fund positions at PeaceHealth to serve as a resource to hospital staff.

The Lifeline Connections MAR team was proud to participate in the Clark County Opioid Action Summit, sponsored by SW Washington Accountable Community of Health, held Friday, December 7, 2018 at the Firstenburg Center in Vancouver where approximately 120 people attended, including elected officials, community members, and professionals involved in helping to combat the opioid crisis in Clark County.

## LIFELINE CONNECTIONS EXPANDS INTO LEWIS COUNTY



A new resource for people with behavioral health disorders is now available to residents of Lewis County. Great Rivers Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) has contracted with Lifeline Connections to provide outpatient treatment in Centralia for people with substance use, mental health and co-occurring disorders. The office coordinates with Lifeline's two existing offices in Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties, areas that are also under the coordination of Great Rivers BHO. The Centralia location offers a full range of services to include intensive outpatient and assessments for mental health and substance use disorders; individual and group outpatient counseling and treatment for mental health and substance use disorders; medication assisted treatment and medication management.

Call 360.388.4048 to schedule an appointment.

## BELLINGHAM WELCOMES NEWEST AMERICORPS VISTA VOLUNTEER – CHRISTOPHER MANESS



In October of 2018, Lifeline Connections welcomed our first Behavioral Health Outreach VISTA in Whatcom County. Americorps VISTA volunteer Christopher Maness plays an important role for Lifeline Connections and the Bellingham area community. As a VISTA, one of Chris's key responsibilities includes working with community social service partners to increase healthcare access for low-income people who have substance use and or behavioral health disorders. Chris will also be partnering with local schools and community organizations to expand the capacity of Lifeline Connections through recruitment of interns and volunteers. His goal is to better provide treatment for the vulnerable population that we serve. Lifeline is thankful for Chris' commitment to serve and the valuable impact he will make in Whatcom County.

The Americorps VISTA program is a federally funded, nationally recognized program that offers service opportunities throughout the country with the mission to, "strengthen organizations and alleviate poverty". For more information on the Americorps VISTA program go to: [Americorps VISTA website](#).

## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING & SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



## Improving Recovery Outcomes Part 1: Supportive Housing

Lifeline Connections now offers people new in recovery the chance to move into safe, stable housing while continuing to receive treatment and support. The concepts are simple yet elegant:

- **Permanent:** Tenants may live in their homes as long as they meet the basic obligations of tenancy, such as paying rent;
- **Supportive:** Tenants have access to support services they need and want to retain housing; and
- **Housing:** Tenants have a private and secure place to make their home, just like other members of the community.

Participation in this evidence-based program is optional and not conditioned by whether the tenant engages in treatment. Nor is relapse an automatic cause for eviction. The program is supported by a contract with the Amerigroup Foundational Community Supports Program.

"Everyone has a better chance to succeed in life when they have a place to call home," said Debbie Peabody, Housing & Employment Supervisor at Lifeline Connections. "Especially in a community like ours where the cost of housing is so high, this program may be the most important tool we have to helping someone succeed in their recovery."

## Improving Recovery Outcomes Part 2: Supported Employment

Second only to shelter and safety, employment is essential to help people in recovery build lives of stability and self-sufficiency. Many folks have long periods of unemployment and even in a tight job market have difficulty finding and maintaining work. Supported Employment is an evidence-based program that shows people do better in recovery when they have meaningful, satisfying work and feel they are an important part of their community.

Lifeline Connections' Supported Employment program helps people address barriers, learn soft skills such as customer relations and team work, and complete job-specific training. They work with employers to facilitate hiring and to ensure the employee can maintain their new job.



*(Part 2: Supported Employment - continued)*

“Sometimes we can pay for things like uniforms, food handler’s cards, eyeglasses or tools that aren’t provided by the employer,” said Debbie Peabody, Housing & Employment Supervisor at Lifeline Connections. “If the only thing a person needs to become stably employed is a bus pass for the first month until paychecks start coming in, that shouldn’t keep them from working. We can help.”

As with Supportive Housing, the program is supported by a contract with the Amerigroup Foundational Community Supports Program. Lifeline’s Employment Specialists are seeking employers interested in hiring motivated employees. Self-referrals and staff referrals to the Supportive Housing and Supported Employment programs may be submitted at any time in the person’s recovery. [For more information, call 360-397-8246 Ext. 30434.](tel:360-397-8246)



## GRANTS, GIFTS & PARTNERSHIPS

Lifeline Connections is pleased to announce several new grants, gifts and partnerships that are opening doors for more people to receive treatment and support. Premera Blue Cross, a Washington State health care plan, awarded \$85,000 through its Social Impact fund. The grant supports Camp Mariposa, a new year-round early intervention program for 9-12 year olds living in homes where someone has a substance use disorder.

**PREMERA  
BLUE CROSS**

**CLARK COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH  
SALES TAX**

**LIFELINE CONNECTIONS  
APPROVED AS NHSC LOAN  
REPAYMENT PROGRAM SITE**



According to Premera’s research, “Healthcare from doctors and other healthcare providers contributes to only 20% of a person’s overall wellness.” The company recognizes that more needs to be done to intervene with behavioral health conditions, many of which begin in childhood.

Stay tuned in the months to come for more information about Camp Mariposa, this exciting new initiative serving Clark County. Thank you, Premera!

**NORTHWEST CHILDREN’S  
OUTREACH**



An important partnership was recently formed between Lifeline Connections’ Pregnant and Parenting Women’s (PPW) Residential Treatment Program and Northwest Children’s Outreach, a faith-based non-profit organization providing clothing, infant care products, diapers, formula and many other necessities low-income parents need for their children.

“Since our children spend a few months with us, they can outgrow their clothes quickly,” said Trista Dunford, Childcare Supervisor at the PPW program. “Northwest Children’s Outreach gives us an opportunity to support them while their moms continue the important work of completing treatment.”

Thank you, Northwest Children’s Outreach, for helping us fill a critical gap!



Residents of Clark County continue to support people with behavioral health disorders through the legislatively-approved Mental Health Sales Tax. Lifeline Connections was recently awarded grants supporting three programs:

- **Camp Mariposa:** The County is especially excited to bring this innovative program to our region, and recognizes the benefits to everyone of intervening in children’s lives at a young age.
- **Connections Café & Catering:** This new supported employment initiative gives people in recovery a chance to quickly start earning money while also building important job skills.
- **Recovery Resource Center:** County funding will make sure this important community program, now serving up to 250 people each week, has the core operating funds it needs.

Lifeline Connections is deeply grateful to Clark County for funding these three initiatives.



Lifeline Connections has been selected as an eligible site for behavioral health clinicians wishing to participate in the National Health Service Corp’s new Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program.

The program offers health care clinicians the opportunity to have their qualifying student loans repaid in exchange for serving at an NHSC-approved SUD site. Clinicians can qualify for as much as \$75,000 in loan repayment by working full-time for three years. Part-time awards are also available.

“This is a tremendous benefit for our existing staff and for people who may join us in the future,” said Jared Sanford, Chief Executive Officer at Lifeline Connections. “The program is another way the federal government is addressing the nation’s opioid epidemic as well as the shortage of behavioral health care workers across the country, including in our own region.”

Awards are made to providers offering evidence-based treatment and serving patients who use Medicaid, Medicare or the Children’s Health Insurance Program. Clinicians wishing to apply for the program must submit their applications by February 21. The application process can take up to three weeks, so candidates should begin soon. [For more information, visit the NHSC LRP website.](#)

## MENTAL HEALTH ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST MAKES A BIG IMPACT

Many people who seek mental health care drop out and about 70% that drop out do so after their first or second visit. Mental Health Engagement is a process through which individuals with mental health conditions form a connection with people that support their recovery and wellness.

Lifeline Connections Mental Health Community Engagement Specialist, Jenny Estes, is an expert in quickly creating relationships and building trust with Lifeline patients. Jenny joined the Lifeline team in July 2018 and began making a difference in the lives of our patients right away. Her efforts have increased the overall interaction of mental health patients with their counselors helping the patients move further into their journey of recovery than they would have without her expertise. The numbers speak for themselves; at our Orchards office the failure to return statistics plummeted from 62% to 34% in just five short months.

Great job Jenny! Keep up the good work.



## I LOVE RECOVERY DANCE

The sixth annual I Love Recovery Dance and Speaker Event is scheduled for Friday, February 22, 2019 from 6-9pm in Gaiser Hall on the Clark College campus at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA. This fun evening is a popular family friendly event that is open to the public and includes food, dancing, photo booth, guest speakers, raffle prizes and games for all ages. This is one of Lifeline Connections Alumni Committee's signature events with a focus on giving back to the community. The event recognizes and celebrates the hard work people do to obtain and maintain recovery from substance use disorders.

"It is so fun to see so many people in recovery joining together to celebrate their journey to healthier happier life for themselves and their family. It is an honor to host this event for Vancouver's recovery community", says Keith Wells, Americorps Vista Volunteer.

The event will also help support the Clark College Penguin Pantry so attendees are encouraged to bring a canned food donation.



*As a nonprofit organization Lifeline Connections relies on donations to help accomplish its mission. Become a donor today and help individuals find hope. help. Healing.*

Visit the link to donate:

[www.lifelineconnections.org/how-you-can-help/](http://www.lifelineconnections.org/how-you-can-help/)