

Winter 2023 Newsletter

Giving Patients the Key to Their Own Success

Beth Lorenzo is a Clinical Supervisor that now works in the Vancouver, WA office after spending many years counseling patients in an outpatient setting in the former Aberdeen, WA location.

She's always believed that you need to be able to know your patients on a personal level to be able to connect with them and be supportive.

It was an unexpected 'would-be' dinner out that sparked her to question if the recovery coins had lost their value or significance. She watched a bartender in the restaurant toss a recovery coin into a bucket before serving someone who was giving up on their recovery. After confirming that was what had just happened, she left, appalled and wanted to give her patients something as unique and individualized as their own journey.

Soon after, Beth began to give a unique key to patients instead of a coin, that they can keep; whether it be on a bracelet, a necklace or something that they touch every day.

Before the men and women in residential services complete the program, Beth carefully selects a key that speaks to her about the individual patient. A small key to someone who 'sweats the small things' or a key that symbolizes travel to those that are adventurous. Most times, the key is given during their last group session. It's passed from person to person while everyone gives positive intention and prays over it while Beth explains why this key is significant to them. There is rarely a dry eye during this ceremonious meeting which speaks to the level of connection and dedication she gives to these patients.

Beth also wants them to understand that they have the key to their own success and in their journey it's possible that there may be a time where they're close to a relapse. During that time, all they need to do is reach out and grab their key and think about what to do.

"You have to have some way to think about the work you've done and ways to be accountable. It's not easy, change is very difficult and to be consistent with it long-term is hard, but it makes me want to keep coming back to work because I know how hard it is."

Not long ago Beth came across a former patient who was excited to let her know she still has her key. She said it helps her stay focused because she felt as though she earned it and by looking at it (on her keychain) she knows today is going to be a good day.



Are You Looking for a New Career?

Make a difference in your local community and consider a career in behavioral health!

We have a generous benefits package that includes tuition reimbursement, paid time off, medical coverage and many positions even include a hiring bonus.

Internal candidates please submit an internal application to the Recruiting team, while external candidates need to apply using our [website](#). You may also visit our [website](#) to view a complete list of openings.

- HOST Program Director (Vancouver, WA)
- SUDPT (Vancouver, WA and Bellingham, WA)
- Admissions Specialist (Vancouver, WA)
- Mental Health Professional (Vancouver, WA and Bellingham, WA)
- Engagement and Outreach Specialist (Vancouver, WA and Bellingham, WA)
- Peer Support Specialist (Vancouver, WA and Bellingham, WA)

North Sound MAT Has Four Locations Taking Walk-ins and Appointments

The need for substance use and alcohol use disorder treatment continues to rise throughout the United States. In addition, Synthetic opioids are a leading contributor to overdose deaths. In a recent [study](#) from the University of Washington, found that these deaths increased 71% statewide between 2003-2005 and 2018-2020, which far exceeded population growth. This number also increased 43% from just 2019 to 2020 alone.

This is one of the many reasons that Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) is so important to those that want to overcome a reliance on opioids, heroin or even alcohol. MAT was designed to help individuals overcome substance use and alcohol use disorder without the barriers of traditional treatment.

Individuals that want treatment can walk-in during Rapid Response times and get started right away. Or if a person prefers to make an appointment, they can choose from four locations with varying times to accommodate their needs.

If you or someone you know wants to begin their recovery journey, our dedicated team of compassionate professionals are here.

Click the QR code to connect with our North Sound MAT team or visit the below offices:

- [Bellingham Office](#) – Walk-in Monday-Thursday 11:20am-1:30pm
- [Mount Vernon Office](#) – Walk-in Monday-Thursday 11:20am-1:30pm
- [Concrete Office](#) – Walk-in Tuesdays 10am-2pm
- [Oak Harbor Office](#) – Walk-in Wednesdays 10am-2pm



The Gifts of 2022

Thanks to our donors, community partners [Restored and Revived](#), [Recovery Café Clark County](#) and our key sponsor [Molina Healthcare](#), we were able to provide a warm holiday season filled with gift baskets for over 300 people.

The men and women in our residential programs and community members experiencing homelessness, received thermal blankets, socks, hats and many other personal items.

If you would like to donate, please click the QR code.

Thank You



Welcome, Kinh Reynolds



After an extensive, thorough search we are proud to announce that [Kinh Reynolds](#) has joined Lifeline Connections as the new CFO!

Kinh graduated from Oregon State University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and comes to Lifeline Connections with over 20 years of financial leadership along with extensive experience as a deputy audit manager and independent consultant for healthcare providers.

"I am honored and excited to be a part of the Lifeline Connections team in serving our mission – To inspire hope and support life-saving changes for people affected by substance use and mental health conditions. The work here is meaningful and impactful, and I am happy to have joined the Lifeline family in serving our clients and communities."

Follow us on social media for more news, updates and events!



Washington Recovery Alliance: Promoting Pro-Recovery Policy

Every year the Washington Recovery Alliance (WRA) comes together to advocate for legislation that supports recovery in our state.

Some of their recent influences in 2021 when they helped pass Senate Bill 5195 which increased immediate access to Naloxone. In 2022 the WRA helped pass a Medicaid reimbursement rate increase. This now allows community behavioral health agencies (such as Lifeline Connections) to retain and recruit more experienced providers by increasing their pay.

This year they have [eighteen plan recommendations](#) they plan to advocate for. Some include funding for training of foster parents with children with a substance use disorder, recovery housing incentives and vouchers and to establish health engagement hubs to serve as all-in-one locations where people who use substances can access a range of medical, harm reduction and social services.

On February 9th, from 7:30am – 5pm [Recovery Advocacy Day](#) will be held at [Temple Beth Hatfiloh](#) in Olympia, WA. It's an opportunity to build connections and meet directly with state lawmakers to ask for their votes on these and other behavioral health legislation.

Any individual that wants to take part in Recovery Advocacy Day is invited and doesn't need any prior experience. They will provide anyone without experience talking points and pair them with experienced advocates. In addition, WRA will arrange all meetings with the lawmakers and coordinate with participants.

[Registration](#) is required.

For questions, please contact Program and Events Manager, Tristan via email: Tristan@WashingtonRecoveryAlliance.org.



Project Homeless Connect

Thanks to incredible community partners like Council for the Homeless and Thrive2Survive Lifeline Connections had the opportunity to participate in this year's Project Homeless Connect.

This event provides a point-in-time count for our community members experiencing homelessness along with connecting them with services from pet clinics, housing help, healthcare and more.

Our Supportive Housing, Recovery Resource Center and HOST teams all participated and were able to provide resources to those that came.

Over 300 people attended this year from the greater Clark County area.



Damian's Recovery Story

Damian's life was hanging in the balance. After a life of alcohol use disorder, Damian was just one step away from a liver transplant. He was enrolled in Lifeline's outpatient substance use program at the time, and he was just about to complete a year of treatment and then had a positive urinalysis test. He had relapsed. The recommended course of treatment was residential treatment, but due to his fragile medical condition he wasn't eligible.

But then later, Damian rolled his truck into a ditch. He wasn't drinking at the time, but the side effects of his liver medication had impaired his driving, so his family asked him to stop driving. Losing so much independence was extremely hard. A few months later, Damian relapsed. He had promised his daughter he wasn't drinking, and this latest disappointment shattered the trust between them.

After that last failed drug screening, Damian was given the chance to repeat his intensive outpatient program. He admits he wasn't thrilled about it, but realized he didn't have any other options if he wanted to live. By the end of the first session in the new group, Damian couldn't wait until the next meeting! "This was just the right bunch of people, and we had an awesome counselor," says Damian. "I know they saved my life." Damian has now been substance-free since September 2016, and his medical condition has improved so much, he no longer needs a liver transplant.

Damian says he's much more open-minded now, and there's a lot less conflict and physical fighting in his life. He and his daughter are working to rebuild their relationship, and he is working to get in shape so he can secure employment. "I have to admit, I'm glad I'm fighting less. I'm not as spry as I used to be!"

Damian doesn't talk or think much about his recovery; that's not his style. He does want to be an example to young kids fighting the disease of addiction. He wants them to see a real-life example of what a life of substance use disorder can do to the body—but also to see that you can recover at any age.

Sometimes Damian wonders how he got so lucky to have the continual support of his wife, Ida, who has been with him for over 43 years. "I'm just so grateful for a life of sobriety," he says, "and all the possibilities my future holds."

Share Your Recovery Story and Inspire Others

Many times people learn through the experience and eyes of others. Your journey can be a powerful tool to others.

We would love to hear about your recovery journey and any key moments within it.

Click [here](#) to submit your story. It is completely your choice if you'd like to remain anonymous or share your name.

Thank you for helping make a difference in someone's life.



How You Can Help

Lifeline is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization. Your donations make recovery possible by ensuring people get help when they need it.

Giving is easy! Visit www.lifelineconnections.org/how-you-can-help/ for easy, secure on-line giving. You can also contact us at development@lifelineconnections.org or call (360) 397-8246 ext. 30548 to discuss how your gift can make the most impact. Thank you!

