

Spring 2023 Newsletter

Community Court at the Recovery Café Clark County

A new Community Court program launched in Vancouver, WA last month and is being hosted at the Recovery Café Clark County. Lifeline Connections' HOST Program is honored to have been invited to participate.

This new court addresses 10 types of low-level offenses:

1. Criminal Trespass 2
2. Disorderly Conduct
3. Intoxicating Liquor in the Park
4. Park Curfew Violation
5. Pedestrian Interference
6. Unlawful Bus Conduct
7. Unlawful Camping
8. Unlawful Storage of Personal Property in Public
9. Unlawful Transit Conduct
10. Urinating in Public



Law enforcement refers these offenses to Community Court, then the court finds alternative, appropriate sentences. For example, some will be work crews. These individuals have access to court-appointed attorneys. Currently most offenses are Unlawful Camping and Unlawful Storage of Personal Property in Public.

An opportunity for needs assessments will also take place and the courts will then refer some of the individuals to community-based providers for behavioral health conditions, housing, access to medical benefits, and overall medical assistance.

Community Court is held weekly on Mondays at the Recovery Café Clark County and many local organizations are there to help with initiating care. Those that are referred to a provider are expected to maintain regular contact and attend meetings as assigned. If they do, their charge(s) will be dismissed and will not appear on their permanent record.

We are Hiring!

Are you or someone you know looking for a career change? We have many openings across the state of Washington.

Lifeline Connections offers a generous benefits package, including 12 paid holidays and more! Many positions even include a hiring bonus!

Review the full list of current openings [here](#) or see if any of the below positions are a good fit for you!

- **SUDPT** – Vancouver, Mount Vernon, and Bellingham, WA \$19.75-\$23.25/hour with a \$5,000 hiring bonus
- **Engagement Specialist** – Vancouver, WA \$22-\$25/hour with a \$3,000 hiring bonus
- **Advanced RN Practitioner** – Bellingham, WA \$57-\$72/hour
- **North Sound Program Assistant** – Bellingham and Mount Vernon, WA \$18-\$20/hour
- **HOST Program Assistant** – Vancouver, WA \$17-\$17.50/hour
- **Director of Human Resources** – Vancouver, WA \$75K-\$90K/year

Medicaid Enrollment and Eligibility

The federal public health emergency for COVID-19 is now over. What does that mean for us and our community? That means that beginning in May, Medicaid programs (Apple Health in Washington) will resume as normal, and the continuous enrollment is over.

Medicaid members will need to re-enroll on or before their original renewal date. Their provider will send out notices via email, phone calls, standard mail, and text messages.

However, as a community-based behavioral healthcare agency, Lifeline Connections will also be vigilant to remind all patients, new and existing, to renew coverage and report any changes. There is a 60-day window for renewal and if the individual doesn't respond, the coverage will be terminated.

To continue coverage, individuals must contact Medicaid as soon as possible. If they're found to be eligible within 90 days after they lost their medical plan, they will be covered for the period they were without.

The fastest way to renew is to go online to wahealthplanfinder.org or call (855) 923-4633.

If you are a part of a community-based behavioral health agency, please remind all of your patients how important this is.

Share Your Story



Many times people learn through the experience and the 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.

Share your story [here](#) and make an impact.

This year Lifeline Connections participated in GiveBIG 2023 with the goal of raising funds to support scholarship programs.

These scholarships help pay for treatment services for individuals that need financial support or cannot otherwise pay.

We are grateful to the community for coming together, spreading the word, and continuing to support behavioral health in our local communities.

Thank you!

Skagit County Expands!



A new office opens in Mount Vernon this month on College Way that allows for more space so patients can be better served.

The Continental Place Office will solely offer Medication Assisted Treatment/Recovery (MAT/MAR) while the College Way Office will offer:

- Youth and Adult Outpatient and Intensive Outpatient Substance Use Assessment and Treatment
 - Individual and Group Therapy
- Youth and Adult Outpatient Mental Health Treatment and Assessments
 - Individual and Group Therapy
- Jail Transition Services
- Peer Support Services
- Housing Support Services

The newest Skagit Valley location can be contacted using the following:

1413 E. College Way
Mount Vernon, WA
(360) 397-8246 ext. 33150

Meet Ashley Oakes, LSWAIC, SUDPT

Ashley Oakes is Lifeline Connections' [Crisis Services](#) Program Director. She was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest and grew up in rural Washougal, WA.

After graduating from Gonzaga University, majoring in Biology, and minoring in Psychology, Ashley began working at Council for the Homeless and really enjoyed working with the homeless population. It was something about the way she was able to help people more than the way a doctor helps people.

When she went back to Spokane for her sophomore year of undergrad, she worked at Catholic Charities' family shelter. During that time Ashley also worked at a crisis nursery.

Through this experience she realized her passion for social work and advocacy which lead her to continue her education at George Fox University obtaining a master's degree in social work. While in graduate school, she worked in many shelters around Vancouver, WA along with teaching parenting classes at Childrens Home Society.

After graduation, she began to work as a Mental Health Professional for Lifeline Connections Crisis Triage & Stabilization unit and stepped into the Clinical Supervisor role in 2021, then the Program Director in 2022.

There was a short period of time when Ashley stepped away from Lifeline Connections full time to work in the Peacehealth Emergency Department in Longview, WA. The impact of how individuals with mental health and substance use disorders were treated led her back to Lifeline Connections. Her mission: Make healthcare better.

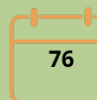
She is a strong, passionate member of the Lifeline Connections team and finds purpose and meaning in her work at the Crisis Wellness Center. Ashley believes strongly in the crisis units model and educating staff and the community about patient-centered care while helping make these services more accessible.



Number of Admissions:



Average Length of Stay (Days):



Established Primary Care:



Gained Employment:



Graduated Program:



Note: Data from 4/2022 - 4/2023

Men's Low-Intensity Residential Celebrates One Year!

[Men's Low-Intensity Residential](#) is a unique, 16-bed treatment program that has been successfully serving Washington State for one year. Residents participate in a minimum of five treatment hours a week, along with vocation and life-skills classes.



Primary Care Services Available – A Positive Step Toward Becoming a CCBHC

The receipt of the CCBHC (Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic) expansion grant helped Lifeline Connections launch medical services to existing Medication Assisted Treatment/Recovery (MAT/MAR) patients in 2019. Then in 2020, the MAT/MAR program included screenings for sexually transmitted infections (STI) and treatment for Hepatitis C. Soon after, screenings included hypertension, diabetes, and treatment of minor conditions such as rashes and infections.

To implement these primary care services, a full medical clinic was created from the ground up at the Orchards (East Vancouver) Office. This included fully stocked exam rooms and a laboratory that would allow for drawing blood and administering vaccinations.

The behind-the-scenes work involved establishing policies and procedures, clinic workflows, determining supply needs, setting up the clinic, identifying staffing needs, and acquiring an electronic medical record for medical care.

Starting in March 2023, Dr. Marika Wolfe, MD/MPH, Medical Director, and her amazing team continues the work to expand medical services. Services may include comprehensive medical care screening, acute medical treatment for minor ailments, referrals for imaging, and initiation of chronic care management to patients in all Lifeline Connections residential programs. She is excited to work with her team members, Melissa Waliezer, Nurse Program Supervisor, Tony Marino, Physician Assistant, and Taylor Blanchard, Care coordinator. The team works collaboratively with all inpatient programs to ensure patients access and get the medical care they deserve without stigma.

The team provides urgent care needs, decreasing the need to send patients out which can disrupt their recovery. The care coordinator works with each patient individually in collaboration with the residential care coordinators and staff to arrange any needed follow up, imaging, labs, dental, vision care, and MAT services.

A key piece is to ensure that patients who begin their healthcare management with us have primary care and mental health established before they transition. Everyone deserves person-centered, holistic care.

Thank you, Paddle for Life!

Thanks to the generosity and hard work of [Paddle for Life](#), Lifeline Connections was gifted \$11,000 to help children that participate in [Camp Mariposa](#).

Camp Mariposa is a year-round program for children ages 9-12 that are affected by the substance use disorder of a loved one.

This donation showcases the dedication and passion our community has to ensuring our future generations have all the tools and support they need for a healthy future.

Thank you!



How You Can Help

Giving is easy! Visit www.lifelineconnections.org/how-you-can-help/ for easy, secure online 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!

