Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Call Details
Facility: WA Corrections Center for Women
Date and Time: 6/4/2020, 12:00PM

Attendees
- Deborah J. Wofford, Superintendent; William Swain, Assoc. of Programs; Melissa Johnson, AA4; Correctional Program Manager Vaaia Gaines, AA3 Shawnna Boutwell, CPPC Janice Zimmerman
- Jason Rice; Laurie Dawson, Babs Roberts, Cindy Robinson, Susan Sherman, Paula Bond

Weekly Update

Social Distancing – Social Distancing is still being encouraged, reminded and enforced. Our numbers are down because of this. Kudos to everyone!

Activities – All events are still cancelled until we re-open and figure out what our new normal will be like. Ms. Zimmerman has been brainstorming fun activities for the incarcerated population. We have already given extra crafting supplies and extra time outside when the weather is nice. If the Family Council has some ideas of fun things to do here at the facility to please email her or call her. Please send your recommendations to jmzimmerman@doc1.wa.gov or call her at 253-4653.

Screenings – No visitors or volunteers are being allowed to come in. We are maintaining social distancing and everyone (staff and incarcerated individuals) are wearing masks appropriately. Only essential staff are being allowed in after passing a screening process. This has helped us maintain a healthy population.

Population Concerns - Management have been making daily rounds to listen to the incarcerated individual’s concerns as well as meet with the Tier Reps weekly.

Minutes have not been posted in the last few weeks. Can you please share your minutes? Minutes are up on the forward facing website under WCCW. The webmaster posts the notes as soon as they are able to do so. The address is: https://doc.wa.gov/family/council-wccw.htm

We propose reducing the number of these meetings from every week to every other week and work towards a longer meeting at a time when more of the LFC is able to attend. We’d like to discuss this option.
- These teleconferences are required by HQ weekly. This is a time to brief the council and to get information related to the COVID 19 outbreak out to the families to help them understand the steps being taken by DOC to keep the Incarcerated Individuals safe and healthy. We will consider a different day during the week and a different time as long as it is during the week.

Pre-Submitted Questions

Question 1
HEALTH/MEDICAL
A. Any updates on medical issues in the facility - COVID related or otherwise? Any changes in medical/mental health delivery?
B. Can we please allow women in isolation to shower at least daily?
C. Glasses are apparently not accessible because of the closure of CI at CRCC. Glasses are essential needs, can WCCW set up an alternative method for obtaining these?
Answer

A. New patients in isolation brought in from outside the facility. First test is negative, awaiting second test results.

B. Due to the need to ensure isolation is maintained for possible Covid 19 we must work to limit exposures as much as possible. It is recommend that these patients have little movement around the unit to limit exposing other incarcerated individuals and staff. Our overall goal to keep this virus out of the facility and this has been one of the protocols that has helped us do that since the pandemic started. Hygiene kits have also been provided to patients in isolation. That said, we have not had anyone stay in isolation for longer than 7 to 8 days since the implementation of the 2nd COVID test.

C. We are running into the same issues as everyone else in regard to getting glasses for patients. Health Services does not have an answer for CI but for those patients who do not qualify for DOC issued glasses our patients can utilize the offender paid health care program and request an offender paid DME request. This allows the patient to have medical durable medical equipment sent to the facility at their own cost from the vendor or provider. Health Services will be happy to speak with anyone who wishes to engage this process for further details. If there are questions your loved ones can send a kite to Ms. Howard box 56.

Question 2

FACILITY

A. We hear there are a number of changes to room configuration and planned usage of those rooms (for example in the RPP section of J Unit). Can you give us a better understanding of this and the planned ongoing usage of these changes?

B. Video Visits: There is some confusion regarding when video visits are allowed? Some believe they are any day per week, others believe they can only happen on “visit” days. Can you provide some clarity? Women in TEC need access to video visitation which we are hearing they are not being given. If the issue is that the technology is not available in their unit, can WCCW work on a method to allow them to access it in another unit?

C. Is there an update on the fencing project?

Answer

A. Changes have been done for the emergent need to social distance. Two tiers were used for RPP mothers with babies, 10 mothers and 10 babies per tier. Since COVID19 and social distancing, we are temporarily using one tier for incarcerated individual housing (two per room). On the other tier, we have two mothers with their babies only.

B. Clarity about video visits are being looked into.

C. No, we are still working on this project. Once the fence is up, we will be able to house M13’s if needed. These are our long term minimum incarcerated individuals.

Question 3

DATA

Current facility numbers?
Transfers in/out?
Numbers in isolation/quarantine?
  • What are women allowed to take with them?
• What are they provided?
Testing done?
Pregnant women facility wide?
• Where are they housed?

Answer
Currently have 758 at the facility. 8 in Yakima, 5 pregnant women and they are housed throughout the facility based on their classification. 68 tests have been done. GRE standards are the same; they are still working on GRE at the HQ level. Transfers in/out breakdown is as follows:
• 6/1 released 2
• 6/2 released 4
• 6/3 released 5
• 6/4 released 2
• 6/5 Released 2

Question 4
REENTRY
A. How many women have released thus far, and how many more will be released?
B. With recent quarantine at MCCCW, are transfers from that facility halting?

Answer
A. Commutation and rapid reentry total is 110 releases. We are no longer releasing for rapid release or commutation.
B. No, we are still accepting individuals for ISO, Work Release and regular releases. All MCCCW individuals are being housed separate from our incarcerated individual’s until they are released and/or returned to MCCCW.

Comments/Closing
• CO Chair Babs Roberts thanked WCCW for the weekly meetings and is appreciative for all the work WCCW is doing to care for their loved ones. Supt Wofford thanked the group as well for