

Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Call Details

Facility: WSP

Date and Time: 6/29/2020, 2:00PM

Attendees

- Co-Chair Associate Supt Steve Barker, Associate Supt. Rob Jackson, AA3 Carrie Meyer, Sgt. Beal, Co-Chair Anna Ivanov, LFC Secretary Susan Wade, DOC Family Services Bill Copeland, SFC LFC Rep Wendy Dubinsky, Dean Dubinsky, Tina Wright, SFC Co-Chair Suzanne Cook, Karen Kane

Weekly Update

- COVID 19 Update

Pre-Submitted Questions

Question 1

Please provide the most up-to-date stats:

of men in quarantine? 73

of men in isolation? 5

of men tested 191 and a total of 2 positives so far. 1 previous / 1 last week. There are 73 tests that were recently negative and those men are being tested again, after 48 hours and are pending results.

of staff screened out at this time? 23

of staff tested positive? 2

Additional Questions

Question 1

What are the food strike demands and what is the facility protocols in a situation like this?

What is the status of fundraisers to boost morale of the population especially during the pandemic?

Answer

There was an 11 page document of demands that will be sent to all of you. The demands were reasonable, some were not. Some were out of reach.

Examples of items requested were given: 2 JPAY Kiosks per Unit, Pictures of loved ones that are revealing (porn – the argument over what is porn and what DOC WSP defines as porn was discussed briefly), No LFO payments, smoking, bigger visiting room

Administrative staff met with the incarcerated in Victor, William, Delta and Echo units. Staff will meet with again with the units over the next few days. The responses were returned in writing; however, they could not be shared at this time on this call. Some of the demands were above facility level, involving policies and legislative actions. The leadership team has met with various staff and CUS staff on items that made sense and action taken.

Men of Victor / William requested increased times to the Big Yard and added dayroom times, in review they have one hour lockdowns on Tues/ Wed for security/cell inspections, and on one of these days it was found that they were not performing inspections. It was suggested to the CUS that they open the day room up. Education and program requests to be reopened. Walla Walla Community College is

looking to open back up and staff suggested that they review what is available and add on additional educational programs if possible. Access to showers and telephones in Delta/ Echo – these are shared times that we could allow extra time for these items. Food – food is always a topic due to the fact it is terrible, all concurred, the demand was related to the timeframes of trays in ovens when they go in and when they come out. The food is sometimes remaining in for excessive times due to staff head counts and other duties that take away from the pantry. These overcooks the food and in some cases, they food is not edible.

Currently, we are not doing fund raisers. They are staff and labor intensive.

We do not have the manpower to work a fund raiser currently. Most restaurants are just opening back up and some are not feeding customers in the restaurants, so they do not have the resources to partner up with us to do a fund raiser at this time. Family mentioned these items are important for morale, to give something to the men. Costco is in the tri cities area which is a “hot spot” for COVID and travel time makes this not a feasible option either. Family mentioned that the local grocers would be able to platter food and make trays as an option.

Question 2

Why are inmates that have other health issues besides COVID, unable to seek medical attention?

Answer

The population has access to medical care but the number of routine medical calls have been reduced due to prioritizing urgent medical issues and social distancing issues. The waiting rooms have been cut in half. If the incarcerated individuals feel that they are not having their medical needs met, they can send questions or concerns to the medical director, Darren Chlipala. They can file a grievance, they can be seen at sick call in the unit. Outside visits are still being based on their schedules downtown.

Question 3

Why is medical/custody depriving those in IMU basic consideration and care by rescinding HSRs, determined medically necessary at previous facility (with no change in medical condition), and putting people in reckless and dangerous health situations as well as denying them basic human decency?

Answer

Specifically this question was addressed and directed to family and that the acting Medical Director was aware of the situation, and some things were coming but could not elaborate on what exactly.

Question 4

How can transferring prisoners into WSP be justified when visitors are not allowed to come in? If new prisoners can come in after clearing COVID tests then the same should be allowed for visitors. I understand that much of this is an HQ level decision but surely Sup. Holbrook has some input in discussions about when and whether prisoners are transferred into his facility.

Answer

The answer to this question was sent out in the memo that came from Mr. Herzog and which was distributed to the population sometime last week. Incarcerated Inmates being transferred from CRCC have all had a double negative and have also been quarantined for 14 days. There is 2 – 5 days between tests, staff mentioned a

“sweet spot” for testing which is about 48 hours when testing can be performed, standard operating procedure (SOP), based on the CDC guidelines. Transfers are being accepted. They have not been assigned house yet but will be assigned to Seg. Transfers are happening between CRCC, Ahtanum View Work Release, Yakima, Benton County Jail and Spokane. Discussion related to Monroe and their practices. The result of some stronger actions due to the issues they faced earlier, whereas WSP has not had to address these issues.

Question 5

Why is the staff gathering leftover food items from pantry when this was a bonus or spread among the population at meals? Where is it going? and who directed this new practice?

Answer

There isn't supposed to be left over food stored in any of the unit pantries for sanitation reasons. The food is sent back to the kitchen. And this is not a new practice. There has been some food found that Incarcerated Individuals were hoarding, this has been disposed of. However, family stated this is new, past months reflect differently.

Question 6

Staff has been inquiring who is not eating and a detailed list of names is being compiled for the CUS - why? and what use or purpose does it serve?

Answer

We have been asked by Headquarters to track the number of incarcerated who are not eating. We monitor who is and who is not eating to make ensure that the vulnerable are.

Question 7

Can we have weekly meetings just like other facilities do?

Answer

Yes, Tuesday at 1:00 will work for us.

Question 8

Why are so many people being declined visits?

Answer

Video visits are being watched closely as there have been a lot of visits containing nudity, improper clothing, improper actions, allowing people who are not approved to be in the video. We must be firm, fair and consistent with visits due to the security. Sgt. Beal stated he first contacts the incarcerated about the issues pertaining to video visits, i.e. reminders that clothing must fall under regular visiting room guidelines. Staff stated they signed 5 letters just today related to inappropriate behavior on video visits. Family inquired to what the issue is with not being on a list. Staff reiterated the importance for background checks, judgement/sentencing guidelines, minors and the varied range of restrictions and safety practices required to have these privileges. They are in place for everyone's safety and best interest. The discussion of clothing and the wearing of a tank top when on video visit was discussed and it is against Visiting Guidelines. Family stated this needs further review and discussion. Family stated that they received a letter related to using electronics specifically cell phone on video visit, when it was only being used to document the failures based on JPAY stating they only watch the first and last five minutes of video visit to determine fails, this has been instrumental in

receiving validation of service and failures. The letter stated it was not policy, however change would be coming. Specifically, to enforce a warning and suspension based on violation of guidelines. Use of electronics is not always used for bad, explained the family member, it is shared with WSP staff and JPAY reps for review of the systems, when they are supposed to be working.

Question 9

Who can we talk to regarding curio policy?

Answer

CUS, CPM, Associate. This was an issue about two years ago and nothing was resolved really. Curio and property work closely together. There seems to be an issue with knowledge and who can or will answer questions related to policies on curio and property and there also seems to be confusion among staff on protocols and who can assist when staff is out. It seems like no one assists in curio or property when Sgt. Rupp is out.

Question 10

There was a new article in the WWUB, Food factory/ facial coverings.

Answer

This article took on a life of its own and did no justice for the population, it took away from what the real reasons were of the strike and made it about COVID, which it was not. Someone from the inside was in touch with a reporter and through a family member was able to get info published. In hindsight this should have lasted one week, but the paper and its article was detrimental and that caused the "strike" to continue longer than originally planned.

The food here is from food factory at AHCC, it was CRCC but not currently. The kitchen at WSP was gutted years ago. There is no food preparation here. Perhaps salads may be with the new gardens but otherwise nothing

ROUNDTABLE

Can we please try next week to do a Skyp meeting and whoever needs to can stay on the conference call. Everyone was thanked and meeting adjourned.