



King County

Community Services Division

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2012 – 2017 Veterans and Human Services Levy

Activity 2.1.B Sobering Center and Emergency Services Patrol

1. Goal

Reduce unnecessary criminal justice and medical system involvement

2. Strategy

Strategy Two of the Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan (SIP) is “Ending Homelessness through outreach, prevention, permanent supportive housing and employment”.

3. Activity

The 2.1.B Sobering Center and Emergency services Patrol is one of four activities funded under Strategy 2.1 “Outreach and Engagement”.

4. Service Needs, Populations to be Served, and Promotion of Equity and Social Justice

a) Service Needs

The Emergency Service Patrol is a 24/7 transportation and engagement unit. The main duty of the screeners is to relieve fire, police, and medics in caring for chronic users. The screeners also patrol the downtown core seeking out clients in need of service and transporting clients away from the sobering center to other service providers.

Relationships are being developed with other local service providers to increase daytime use of the van. Procedures have been developed to extend the service beyond the traditional catchment area to serve the VA center on Beacon Hill and the Cherry Hill campus of Swedish Medical Center.

During 2011, the Emergency Service Patrol (ESP) transported 2,834 adults during the time period funded by the Veterans and Human Services levy. These adults moved from the streets to recovery entry points, such as the sobering center, treatment centers, medical services and case management services. ESP is continuing to develop new partners in the community to serve more people who are homeless and low income.

b) Populations to be Served

The population focus for this implementation plan is homeless adults in Seattle who experience primary or acute substance disorder issues, and who may or may not have co-occurring mental disorders. They are challenged by the rules in our society. It is hard for them to keep appointments, provide needed documentation, or to stay in touch with case workers. King County has made an active effort to reach out to this vulnerable population for more than twenty years.

The Emergency Service Patrol (ESP) frequently transports people to the Dutch Shisler Sobering Center (DSSC). Jointly funded by King County and the City of Seattle, DSSC serves as a safe and secure place for persons to sleep off the acute effects of intoxication. It also serves as a key recovery access point where clients can find case management services, outpatient chemical dependency treatment, and assistance to move towards greater self-determination. Pioneer Human Services has provided sobering and outpatient treatment services since January 1, 2009. Sobering services in King County date back to 1999. Many of the individuals served by ESP have a problem finding safe shelter because most homeless shelters will not take people who are intoxicated, due primarily to liability issues and not being equipped to handle their special needs. DSSC is set up to meet these special needs and point a way out of the street lifestyle.

The Sobering Center serves up to 60 adults at a time. The service never closes for new admissions; when the 61st person arrives at the door, someone in the original 60 is discharged. This might be a person who has been on site the longest, has housing or can access other shelter options. In 2011, the sobering center served 1,998 unduplicated persons for 18,522 admissions.

Within this subset of homeless people, veterans will be a population of focus. Currently, veterans account for 8% of the clients using the Sobering Center.

Other services onsite at DSSC include:

1. Outreach and treatment services provided by the REACH team of Evergreen Treatment Services.
2. On-site chemical dependency-focused case management services, provided by the Seattle Indian Health Board. American Indians/Alaska Natives are 25-30% of the sobering population.
3. Veteran's Outreach services, which provides veterans using sobering services a link to the range of care offered by the Veteran's Administration.
4. Chemical Dependency Involuntary Treatment services, which ensure frequent system users are investigated for treatment. Approximately 100 adults annually are placed in treatment at Pioneer Center North. The majority of the referrals are high utilizers of sobering services, emergency room services, and jail services.
5. Direct referrals to the Wintonia Hotel, a permanent housing project in downtown Seattle. The Wintonia is a service-enhanced building that supports the individual needs of residents.
6. Regular outreach by a Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) worker specializing in Native American issues but able to assist persons of all ethnic backgrounds in accessing needed funding sources.

c) Promotion of Equity and Social Justice

The Equity and Social Justice Ordinance requires King County to consider the impacts of its policies and activities on its efforts to achieve fairness and opportunity for all people, particularly for people of color, low-income communities and people with limited English proficiency. The King County Equity Impact Review Tool available online at:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity/toolsandresources.aspx> provides a list of the determinants of equity that may be affected by your activity. Evaluate your activity's impact by responding to the following questions:

i) Will your activity have an impact on equity?

Yes. ESP helps people gain recovery based services, such as treatment, case management and medical care.

ii) What population groups are likely to be affected by the proposal? How will communities of color, low-income communities or limited English proficiency communities be impacted?

23 % of ESP clients are Native American, 26% are African American and 10% are Hispanic. Income level isn't maintained, but staff report that 99% of clients are low income. ESP serves clients regardless of their English proficiency.

iii) What actions will be taken to enhance likely positive impacts on these communities and mitigate possible negative impacts?

The main action that enhances likely positive outcomes are transporting these community members to recovery based interventions and services that help them towards greater self-determination.

5. Activity Description

The Emergency Service Patrol (ESP) is a 24/7 transportation and engagement unit. The main duty of the screeners is to relieve fire, police, and medics in caring for chronic users. The screeners also patrol the downtown core seeking out clients in need of service and transporting clients away from the Sobering Center to other service providers. The drivers screen people, then transport them to safe locations, such as the Dutch Shisler Sobering Center, local hospitals, shelters, or other community locations. The van also returns people from the Sobering Center and hospitals to other community locations once their acute intoxication has stabilized.

Relationships have been developed with other local service providers to increase daytime use of the van. The traditional catchment area for ESP runs north to south from lower Queen Anne to the Spokane Street viaduct and east to west from the waterfront to mid-Capitol Hill. Procedures have been developed to extend the service beyond the traditional catchment area to serve the VA center on Beacon Hill and the Cherry Hill campus of Swedish Medical Center.

6. Funds Available

The 2012 Service Improvement Plan identified the following allocations for this activity.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Veterans Levy	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Human Services Levy	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total	\$145,000	\$145,000	\$145,000	\$145,000	\$145,000	\$145,000

A total of \$ 145,000 of Veterans and Human Services Levy funds was allocated for 2012 to implement this activity. Additional funds will be available annually through 2017 based on the activity's performance.

7. Evidence-based or Promising Practices

ESP staff use Motivational Interviewing concepts in their work with clients. Motivational interviewing is a client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence.

8. Service Partnerships

ESP partners with many community agencies and resources, including, but not limited to, the Seattle Police Department, the Seattle Fire Department, 911 dispatchers, Harborview Medical Center, the Veteran's Administration Hospital, Dutch Shisler Service Center, Swedish Medical Center, Virginia Mason Medical Center, REACH, the Seattle Indian Health Board, Chief Seattle Club, Downtown Emergency Service Center, Urban Rest Stop and an array of housing and shelter providers in the downtown Seattle area.

9. Performance Measures

The following performance measures were identified by the Levy's Evaluation Team.

Objectives	Service Outputs/ Measures	2012 Target(s)
Engagement/ Assessment	• Clients transported to the Sobering Center	1,800
	• Clients connected with supportive services	95%