



PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2016

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LEESW— AN UPDATE

Last year the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office began a "pilot" program, in the Office of Neighborhoods, called Law Enforcement Embedded Social Worker (LEESW) to provide outreach to the county's large homeless population in order to deliver social services such as addiction and mental health treatment. The program started with a Sergeant and one social worker. It soon added two deputies and over the summer it added a second social worker.

This team has learned that, as one of the deputies has put it, "These are decent people who have fallen on hard times." The majority of clients are on heroin or have mental problems. In the case of heroin/opioid addiction, once addicted, an individual's daily goal becomes to avoid the nasty withdrawal that the drug imposes for non-use.

The homeless that the team contacts are all from the local area. Very few are from other parts of the country.

Some people become homeless due to eviction. However, evicted tenants often are able to find help quickly on their own. The difference is that someone addicted to heroin/opioids or with mental problems are so focused on their ad-

diction or mental health problem, that they cannot function like someone without these problems.

The deputies and social workers concentrate most of their operations in South Precinct. While the largest concentration of homeless are in the south county area, homeless can also be found in North and East Precincts. The team works in those areas when they can.

As a rule, the homeless have two priorities, food, and not getting sick. What money they may have goes to food and if they are addicted, to drugs to avoid withdrawal. The second priority can present a challenge for the individual and those who want to help. Sometimes the most challenging thing that the individual can do is to show up on time for an appointment while the social workers and deputies do all of the leg work to make arrangements for treatment.

This effort tries to prevent crime by helping people out of their addictions or their mental health issues. It requires the cooperation of the clients, many governmental agencies, private organizations and the public. The effort is worth it to improve our community.



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NARCAN– TO SAVE A LIFE

Heroin and opioids affect a person's respiration, slowing it down. An overdose is not a dramatic looking event. Death comes from a cessation of breathing.

Narcan (also known as Naloxone) can temporarily reverse the effects of opioids and help the victim start breathing again.

Narcan has been distributed to first responders throughout Snohomish County.

You can get narcan, without a prescription if you think that you could overdose or help someone who has overdosed.

Narcan rescue kits can be obtained at select pharmacies in Snohomish County. For more information about Narcan and where you can obtain a kit, go to:

http://www.snohd.org/Portals/0/Snohd/Diseases/files/VH-OpioidBrochure_CD.pdfFINAL2015.pdf

LEESW TEAMS– CONNECTING WITH THE HOMELESS

The challenge for the LEESW team is to find the homeless camps and then develop the trust that allows them to help individuals obtain treatment.

They cannot order an individual into treatment. They can explain the options that an individual can use to obtain treatment. It is up to the individual to decide that they want help.

The team regularly makes the rounds of known camp sites that they have found or have received tips about from the public. They talk to the camp residents to get to know them and to offer services. Camp residents do not always jump at the chance for treatment on the first contact. Team members will return, check on their welfare, and try to be available when an individual is ready for help.

When someone decides that they want help, they become "clients." A process begins so that the client can receive help.

The first step is to be sure that the client has insurance. Most clients have run out of resources to pay for insurance, but they can sign up for Medicaid.

Next, is to be sure that the client has a government identification. Many times in becoming homeless, the client has lost their identification.

Then, the client needs to go through a

chemical dependency assessment. An evaluator writes a confidential assessment with a diagnosis and a recommendation for level of care.

Finally, the team works out a treatment plan and helps the client with the paperwork to enter the treatment.

I saw how this works one day last month when I joined Sgt. Ian Huri, Deputy Bud McCurry and Social Worker Lauren Rainbow on their rounds.

The team let it be known to ten clients, who they thought were ready to accept help in kicking their heroin addictions or mental issues, that they would be at a McDonalds located in South Snohomish County at noon. When they arrived, five of the ten showed up to talk about getting help. This turn out was considered a great success.

Bud McCurry passed out bottles of water, snack foods, and \$5 McDonalds gift cards as a thank you for showing up. The food is important. For someone who is homeless, and who is addicted to heroin their two overriding priorities are food and not getting sick from withdrawal. The \$5 McDonalds gift cards are important, because the clients can get a meal later on. The amount of \$5 is important because an amount of \$10 or more can be converted to cash, which can then be converted to

LEESW TEAMS– CONNECTING WITH THE HOMELESS CONT.

drugs, as one of the clients reminded Sgt. Huri.

The group talked about options for treatments. Plans were made with each individual to meet with the team, who would take them to their next step toward treating their addictions.

There were no lectures. The team was not judgmental. They merely explained the programs that are available and the steps that each client could take. The team refers to the people that they contact as clients. Not victims. Not druggies. Clients. The team is there to help the clients. And the team will make phone calls to arrange for treatment. They will transport their clients to where they need to go.

Team members have found that the treatment system is really set up for those who are functional. And finding vendors who can best serve the specific needs of a homeless addicted client can be a challenge.

Next, the team checked in on a nearby camp. Sgt. Huri had arranged for the county Public Works to cut down some tall grass and brush along the road. Tall brush can hide activities in wooded areas. Clearing tall brush can discourage camps, drug dealing, or other low level criminal activity.

The team talked to a female resident of the camp. There was no pressure placed on her. The team asked how she was do-

ing. They asked if she had eaten. She even complained about the mess that some of the other camp residents were making and wished that she had garbage bags. Sgt. Huri promised to deliver garbage bags the next day.

The team also talked to a concerned neighbor, who had been giving the Sheriff's Office tips about the homeless activity, about the best options to discourage future encampments.

At the last camp, the team talked to several people. They asked how people were doing. One resident would only talk through their tent and was not interested in help. The team talked to another resident about his problems in obtaining a government identifications. They made plans to meet with him, and take him to the appropriate agency.

Through all of this, the team was non-judgmental. They had built up enough trust that they talked to each individual in a casual, relaxed way. The point is to develop enough trust that the homeless individual will take the step to turn to the team when they are ready for help.

HOMELESS SERVICES THAT OFFER HELP

HASCO- The Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO) offers help to the homeless or those who are at-risk of homelessness to prevent or find housing and other mainstream services.

HASCO has several programs that provide housing and supportive services.

For more information go to:

http://www.hasco.org/housing_assistance/resources

Project Homeless

Connect- This is an annual one-day event that provides services to homeless individuals and families. In 2015, it served about 1,000 clients. Services include DSHS and Social Security screening, housing information, medical and dental care, eye care, substance abuse screening, and more.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.uwsc.org/phcsnoco>

COMMUNITY ACTION- HOW YOU CAN HELP

Clearly, the efforts of five people will not eliminate homelessness, addiction, or mental health problems overnight. A sustained effort, however, should help reduce crime in Snohomish County as well as help the homeless improve their quality of life and the quality of life for everyone in the county.

The team works with many governmental and private organizations to focus its efforts on this problem. It can use your help.

First, do not give panhandlers money. Giving cash often tempts addicted homeless to pay for drugs.

Second, let the Sheriff’s Office know about new camps in your area and about abandoned houses. You can call one of the non-emergency number for SNOPAC which services the Sheriff’s Office- (425) 407-3999, or send an email to Sgt. Ian Huri at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org.

Third, donate to or volunteer with organizations that help the homeless, those with addictions, or with mental health problems.

To find volunteer opportunities go to the following organizations:

- Call 211 or go to <http://win211.org/>
- Contact the Volunteers of American of Western Washington at <http://www.voaww.org/>
- United Way of Snohomish County at <http://www.uwsc.org/>

MORE RESOURCES-

For more information about heroin addiction and homelessness, go to:

- Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office: <http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/4317>
- Snohomish Health District: <http://www.snohd.org/heroin>
- Everett Police Department: <https://everettwa.gov/1368/Everett-Safe-Streets-Plan>
- Snohomish County Office of Community and Homeless Services: <http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/901/Community-Homeless-Services-OCHS>

OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOODS

MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

Homeless Outreach-
Sgt. Ian Huri
Phone: (425) 508-8291
Email: neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org

Community Outreach-
Sgt. Marty Zelaya
Phone: (425) 388-5250
Email: Luis.Zelaya@snoco.org

SHERIFF’S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/289/Crime-Prevention>

NEWSLETTER INFO

EDITOR
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If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org

TIP LINES



Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office: 425-388-3845

Online Tips: <http://snohomishcountywa.gov/303/Anonymous-Tips>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477