

SNOHOMISH COUNTY LEAD

ANNUAL
REPORT



LEAD

2024

About Our Program

Snohomish County LEAD began in 2020 after we recognized an ever-present problem in our community: individuals with behavioral health issues cycled again and again through the criminal legal system leaving community members frustrated and police overburdened while the health conditions of many vulnerable individuals remained unaddressed. To address this, Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney's Office received a grant from Washington Health Care Authority to start LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) as a pilot project.

LEAD gives police officers and prosecutors the ability to divert individuals away from jail when committing low-level misdemeanors that may stem from mental illness, substance use and extreme poverty. They are instead connected to care through dedicated case managers who work to address the root cause of the person's challenges and connect them to appropriate care.

LEAD's work is rooted in harm reduction principles which aim to reduce the level of harm that can be associated with unmanaged behavioral illness, including drug use. Rather than demanding abstinence, harm reduction focuses on opportunities to incrementally change behaviors that cause harm to oneself or others.

Snohomish County LEAD is committed to keeping the community and our stakeholders informed. This report is one of our efforts to fulfill that commitment. We welcome your comments and questions.

From The Director

In 2024 we added two more law enforcement partners to Snohomish County LEAD, allowing nearly every law enforcement agency in Snohomish County the ability to offer a pre-booking diversion at the time of arrest and another option for effectively addressing the root causes of many low-level misdemeanor crimes in our area.

LEAD continues to play a role in improving public safety and reducing recidivism which benefits the community, relieves a burden on law enforcement and invests appropriate resources towards supporting people in need. We continue to see LEAD participants find not only success, but hope. They begin to see their inherent worth and look forward to the future with a newfound ability to navigate challenging systems and situations.



ASHLEY DAWSON, LICSW
Program Director

It is a great privilege to be a part of change and to walk the bumpy road alongside our clients while providing non judgmental support as they achieve their goals. This community-minded approach continues to fill a missing gap in service delivery and we are proud to join our partners in this work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Dawson', with a long horizontal line extending from the end.



Law Enforcement Partners

Arlington Police Department
Bothell Police Department
Brier Police Department
Everett Police Department
Lake Stevens Police Department

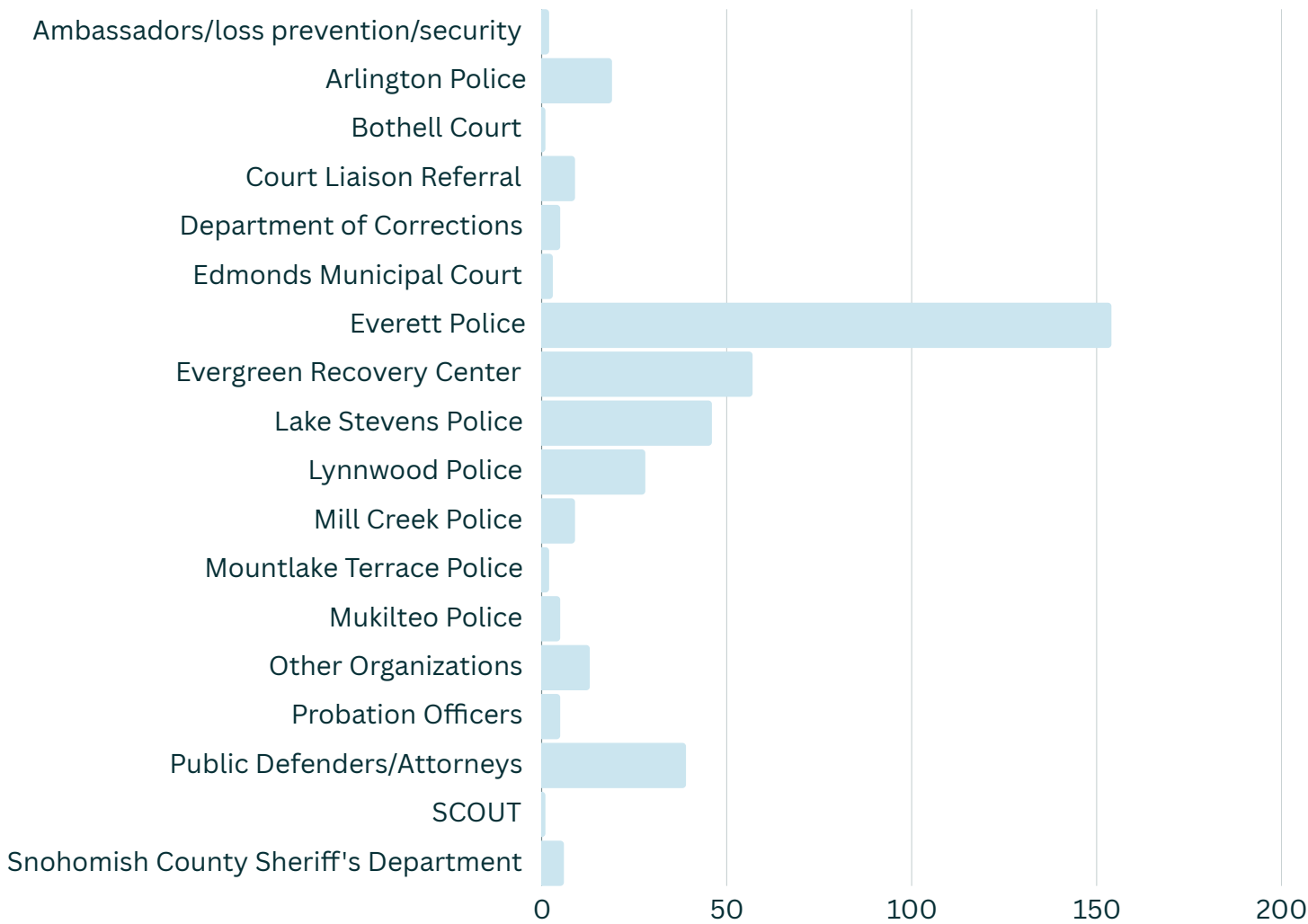
Lynnwood Police Department
Mill Creek Police Department
Mountlake Terrace Police Department
Mukilteo Police Department
Snohomish County Sheriff's Department

Community Partners

Carnegie Resource Center
Community Health Center
Downtown Everett Association
Esther's Place
Everett Gospel Mission
Hands of HOPE, Northlake
Christian Church

Hope 'N Wellness
Feldman & Lee
Ideal Option
Jean Kim Foundation
Snohomish County PDA
South County Fire
Zachor, Stock & Krepps Legal

2024 Referrals Per Source



413

total referrals made to Snohomish County LEAD in 2024

Referral Pathways

Participants come to us through multiple avenues. Each referral receives the same vetting to make sure they are a good fit for the program.

SOCIAL CONTACT REFERRAL

Officers or other members of the legal system refer people whose law violations may be related to behavioral health issues without waiting for a potential arrest.

PREBOOKING REFERRAL

The participant is arrested and instead of booking in jail for the eligible misdemeanor crime, they are diverted by the officer into to the LEAD program.

SELF REFERRAL

People who interact with LEAD staff and are interested in long term support can proactively contact LEAD to receive support if they have a history of law enforcement involvement and meet eligibility criteria.

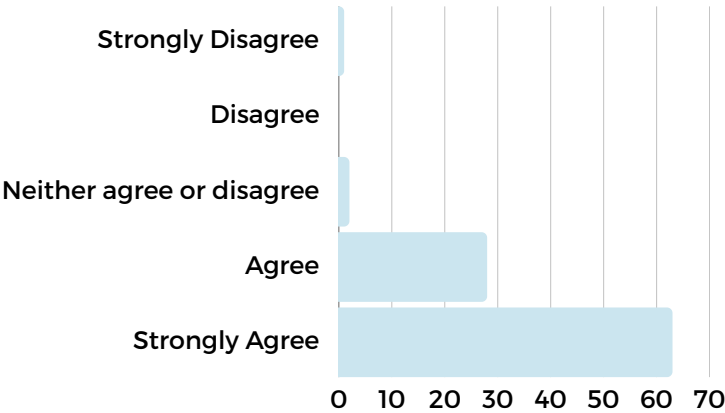
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners have the opportunity to refer presumptively eligible people to LEAD without police involvement and without using the emergency response system.

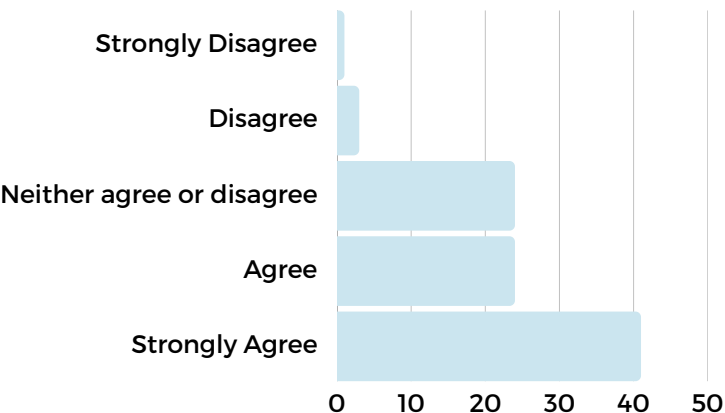
Client Feedback

94 participant surveys were completed in 2024. They were asked to respond to the below statements with one of five options: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, agree, strongly agree.

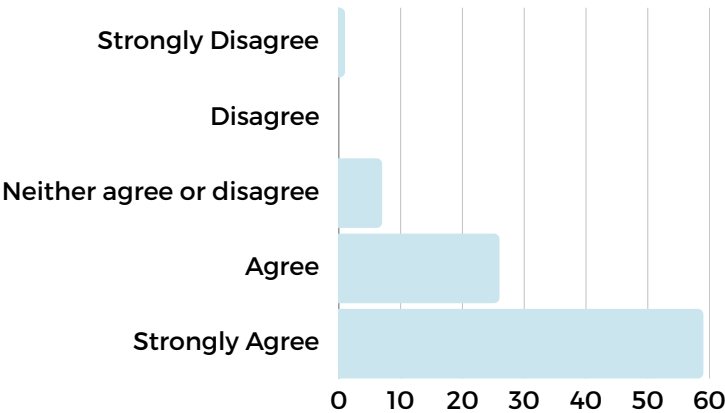
LEAD IS HELPING ME WORK
TOWARD MY GOALS



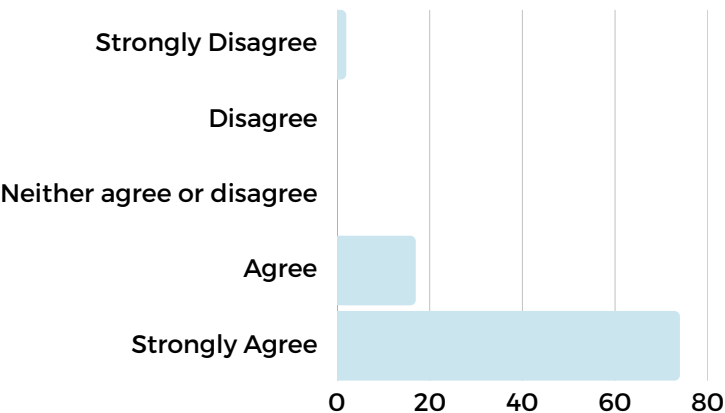
I'M HAVING FEWER
ARRESTS/CITATIONS



I'M SEEING POSITIVE
CHANGES IN MY LIFE



I'M SATISFIED WITH THE TEAM



Case Management

We contract with Evergreen Recovery Centers and PDA (Purpose.Dignity.Action) for our case management. Case managers provide direct services to a caseload of approximately 20-25 individuals. Case managers provide screening, outreach, long-term engagement and supportive services for participants through intensive case management activities and collaboration with LEAD partners, service providers, housing providers and other community organizations.

Our staff includes:

- 7 Case Managers
- 1 Recovery Navigator
- 1 Outreach Case Managers
- 1 Case Management Supervisor
- 1 Senior Staff
- 2 Senior Case Managers



Eli Rosser
Senior Case Manager

“Working as a case manager for the LEAD program has been an incredibly rewarding experience. It has not only provided me with the opportunity to help individuals in the criminal legal system receive the support and resources they need, but it has also allowed me to grow professionally. Through LEAD, I've seen firsthand how a collaborative, compassionate approach can transform lives, offering clients a path out of the cycle of instability and giving them hope for a better future. This program has not only shaped my career, but it has reaffirmed my belief in the power of second chances.”

Client Story

C.H. was referred to LEAD in August 2021 by the Everett Police Department and he had many goals for himself from the beginning. He reported needing identification cards, help navigating his legal issues, access to mental health counseling and assistance with applying for state benefits and obtaining a primary care physician. C.H.'s long term goal was to obtain his high school diploma or the equivalent and start his own landscaping business. At the time of referral, C.H. was in the process of leaving an abusive relationship which meant he would be losing housing.

C.H. was also struggling with substance use disorder and reported using several substances daily. He had tried to take steps on his own by attending support groups and starting medically assisted treatment, but he needed extra support. While spending some months contemplating inpatient treatment, C.H.'s case manager was able to help him get new ID and EBT (food stamps) cards. Together they began completing housing applications and researched shelters. His case manager also connected him to proper dental care and medical care for various wounds sustained while living outdoors. There were many ups and downs within those months, but LEAD continued to offer support through every step.

In late 2022, C.H. made the decision to go to inpatient treatment. His case manager was available to help him schedule an assessment and take him to necessary appointments as preparation prior to treatment. C.H. completed a 90-day stay at Legacy Lodge in Mount Vernon and moved into a clean and sober house in Bellingham shortly after. From there he started to address his pending legal issues and by March of that year, he obtained employment and bought a car. However, by June 2023 he started feeling lonely and found it difficult to work on his legal issues, living so far from where they had taken place. With that in mind, he moved back to Everett. Unfortunately, he moved before housing could be arranged and was back on the street. However, he still had LEAD. He spent the rest of that year looking for housing options with his case manager and battling a relapse, before finally being accepted into a shelter in Shoreline.

By April 2024, C.H. decided to go back to detox which he successfully completed before returning to the shelter. Shelter staff then helped connect him to housing in King County and by that summer, C.H. was moved into permanent supportive housing in Seattle and was successfully "completed" from LEAD in September due to achieving all his stated goals. C.H. has reached a new level of self-sufficiency, planning to find a new job and seek help for his mental health on his own as he continues to move forward.

-Submitted by a Snohomish County LEAD Case Manager

Recovery Navigator Program

The Recovery Navigator Program continued to offer recovery-based assistance to the community in 2024. Short term outreach (educating individuals on Naloxone, sharing information about LEAD, making connections at tabling events and in the community, etc.) was provided **176** times in 2024.

James Dixon, Regional Recovery Navigator Coordinator, commented on just how impactful the program has been:

“The Snohomish County Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) has been vital to the community. By offering law enforcement a diversion option in- lieu of arrest, it has lessened the strain on criminal justice systems. Collaborating with community entities, RNP has been able to stabilize individuals in the community with a variety of programs and services, including intensive and less intensive case management.

With dedication and compassion for helping people in need. RNP will continue to grow with community support and plans for expansion in the near future.”

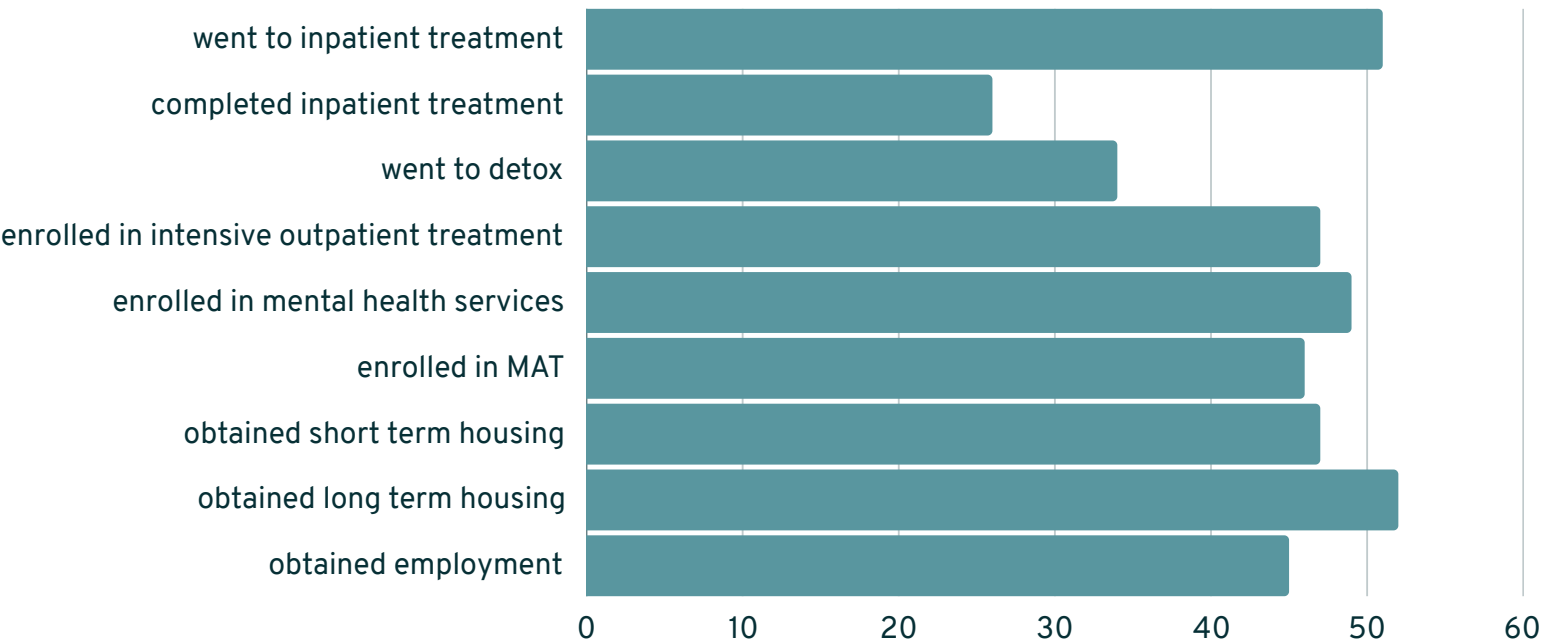
Our partnership with Washington State Department of Health as a Naloxone provider continued in 2024. Our Recovery Navigator Program Coordinator focuses on training and distributing Naloxone to the community along with educating on important harm reduction measures.

We handed out **1546** kits of Naloxone in 2024.
There were **41** overdose reversals reported.
122 participants were trained on overdose response.



Outcomes

NUMBER OF CLIENTS CONNECTED TO SERVICES BY TYPE



559

Participants were served in 2024. This number includes new referrals and existing clients.

12,595

Staff recorded encounters with participants which include in person visits, texts, phone calls, emails and care coordination.

Funding

Snohomish County LEAD is funded by 3 grants.



**Bureau of Justice
Assistance COSSUP**



North Sound BH-ASO

Future Plans

Growth: Our goal is to expand into every area of Snohomish County to ensure LEAD is available to every person who qualifies for services and support whether through a law enforcement referral, court partner or approved community agency.

Community Referrals: As capacity allows, we will continue to bring in community partners so people who access services through local social service providers will also be able to be referred to LEAD for additional support.

Community Awareness: We want to ensure we are transparent and trusted among the community so that anyone who interacts with Snohomish County LEAD knows what we do and feels confident that we are consistent in our approach and able to be a resource they can count on.

Diversified Funding: As seasons change and community need grows, we will continue to seek new opportunities to sustain our program and to reduce reliance on somewhat unpredictable legislative budgets.



Officer Amber Charouhas Lake Stevens Police Department

” In my experience with LEAD, I have witnessed a very hands on approach at getting people the services they need with dignity, grace, patience and respect. Each individual client is offered a tailored solution to their needs/desires which they are then assisted and encouraged along the way.



SNOHOMISH COUNTY
Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion

MORE INFORMATION

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