March 17, 2020 phone call

Participants

Charlotte Headley (DOC)

Rob Tarver (MCC)

Elisabeth Kingsbury (OCO)

Matthias Gyde (OCO)

Kara Morgan

Jennifer Bright (FEPPS)

Steve Sinclair (DOC)

Paige Perkinson (DOC)

Josephine Johnson (WSR)

Elizabeth Hendren (Northwest Justice Project)

Beverly Richmond (CRCC)

Melody Simle (MCCW)

Anna Ivanov (WSP)

Kay Crampton and Chuck MacQuinn (CCCC)

Dave and Jody Bullard (TRU)

Suzanne Cook (TRU)

Paula Bond (WCCW)

Rachael Seevers (DRW)

Carolina Landa (OCO)

Stella Spracklin (OCO)

EV Webb (OCO)

Domenica (OCO)

Kehaulani Walker (CRCC)

DOC Secretary Steve Sinclair shared that he was happy to be on the phone with everyone. This is unlike anything that the DOC has ever faced. He shared that he has been working with CDC to develop protocols that will be used nationwide. It was difficult at the beginning to get communications in place. The website is now out and running to provide information for both families and staff. DOC has a crew of 50 people at the HQ building who have been working 10-14 days, so they have been working through the weekends to crank out processes and communications. Having the emergency operations at HQ for work releases and community corrections officers out in the field – lots of moving parts to this. The EOC has been in operation since February. Working on social distancing – has it in place at the EOC. All 12 facilities have their EOCs open. Every year during flu season we have isolation and quarantine practices already in place. We have increased efforts – active cleaning going on at all facilities, no shortage of cleaning supplies. The two main geriatric facilities are taking greater precautions. The testing supplies are in the same boat as everyone else – the availability of the testing kits is low and the state is having a challenge there to acquire more of those tests. Staff are being screened at all facilities if they have the symptoms.

“DOC doctors developed protocols that the CDC has now adopted and recommending to other correctional facilities.” When asked for more details about those protocols (whether they were medical protocols or facility, specifics, etc) he said he did not know and would follow up by posting details about those protocols on the DOC site.

DOC is utilizing and redeveloping emergency staffing plans

Thermometers – the facilities all have thermometers for appropriate screening. Work releases does not yet have all the tools that they need, but they are working on it.

Telecommunications free or reduced cost for families to communicate while visitation is restricted? Steve still wants to have telecommunications be free, but doesn’t have any available information.

Any plan to test corrections officers before they come into the facilities? Certainly is something that is desirable. Current screening happens. As testing becomes more available, we are lobbying to be considered first responders so that we can be in the first round for first responders.

CDC protocols that Steve mentioned – can those be sent out/shared? Steve will look into that.

Now that DOC has a website – can it include specific data regarding tests? Steve will look into that.

Access to telecommunications from infirmary – will have to check on that.

WCCW there is a building that is on lockdown now in the prison system and the wifi has been down. It’s been several days. Steve said that he would look into the problem as it may not be wifi. Working to make sure people inside have communications.

WCCW – we’re aware that Supt Wofford has been absent for a week and a half and that there’s a high absenteeism rate. How are we doing with Ms. Wofford and what’s going on with making sure you have coverage. Steve – my priorities are making sure that we have the right screens up to keep the virus out and the second challenge is related to staffing so we are monitoring that very closely. We have to do the screening first as the first priority is to keep the virus out. As a matter of practice, we have emergency staffing plans that allow us to be able to operate on limited staffing.

Concerned that there’s no Superintendent at WCCW and haven’t had one for a while – Steve shared that other people at the facility are trained as incident commanders and can step into those roles. When he was the Superintendent, he usually wasn’t the incident commander.

How many people have been tested and how many are in quarantine. Steve acknowledged that they have not been sharing numbers related to quarantines - often precautionary so did not want to cause concern.

Steve had to leave the call and Paige took over as the remaining DOC representative. She had some information related to the questions submitted earlier in the week.

Hand soap – all prisons and work releases, etc, have instituted intensive cleaning. Encouraging incarcerated to wash hands frequently. Hand sanitizer is authorized.

Loved ones at IMU – very thin soap. Are they treated differently? Best guess is that if they request more, they will get it. Staff are told to provide it.

Sending communication through the kiosk system regarding covid-19 symptoms? Paige will provide a copy of the message.

What about social distancing for the incarcerated? The pill line at TRU people have to stand in three times a day. Could nurses provide the medications at cellfront or KOP? Social distancing is also a problem in the chow hall at TRU.

There are reportedly meetings happening with everyone in the right room – can families of the incarcerated get better information?

What’s happening with the incarcerated who are showing signs right now? WSP has 10 people with flu right now.

Could we get a medical person to answer these questions for us? How about a Superintendent? Paige said that she would look into bringing in different people, although probably not all at once.