Frequently asked questions

How do I make a referral to your team?

You can use our user-friendly on-line referral form located on our website, or you can send an email with the following:

- Best facility contact name, phone number and email address.
- If you are referring on behalf of a facility/ provider, acknowledgment that they are requesting to work with our team.

Do you provide resident specific consultation or support?

No this is outside our team's scope. We cannot discuss any protected health information (PHI), including names, dates of birth, or specific individual cases.

Do you work with all facility types?

Yes, BHST serves AFH's, ALF's, NH's, Supported Living and SOLA's. Additionally, ESF's can attend monthly training offerings.

Is the info you provide guaranteed to be 'citation-proof?'

We can't guarantee this, as there are too many factors that impact each situation. However, please know that we work hard to ensure the information we provide aligns with the regulations. This includes working with RCS policy staff and other subject matter experts as needed.

For more info or to make a referral, contact us at:

RCSBHST@dshs.wa.gov
(general inquiries)

ALTSABHSTTRAINING@dshs.wa.gov
(training inquiries)

Website
Scan the QR code to access

Residential Care Services
P.O. Box 45600
Olympia, WA 98504-5600

What providers are saying:

"[The consultant] listened to my concerns and enlightened me with great ideas."

"I know that support is always there and available only a phone call away."

Department of Social and Health Services
HOME AND COMMUNITY LIVING ADMINISTRATION
Residential Care Services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

A Service for Long-Term Care Providers

DSHS
WASHINGTON STATE
Department of Social and Health Services

DSHS 22-1940 (Rev. 5/25)

About the BHST

As a part of Washington state's effort to transform lives and increase the community-based services available to behavioral health clients, Residential Care Services created the Behavioral Health Support Team.

The primary goal of the RCS BHST is to provide regulatory and informational support to long-term care providers and their staff. To accomplish this, the BHST offers clinical and regulatory expertise to facility staff so they can provide quality care while remaining in compliance with regulations.

Our support is voluntary, free and available statewide. Although we are part of RCS, we are not complaint investigators, surveyors or licensor's. However, we are part of DSHS and as such, are mandated reporters.

Our services

Provider Support

In this 1:1 meeting BQIC's will focus on the LTC providers areas of interest related to behavioral health, care and/or regulatory topics. Our support will provide a unique blend of behavioral health and regulatory expertise to give providers a new way to understand and approach care.

Open Office Hours

Every month BQIC's will offer "office hours" for each facility type, to include AFH's, ALF's, NH's and CCRSS. This is an opportunity for facilities to attend an on-line, informal meeting to ask questions and cover staff selected topics. All topics will be chosen based on survey responses from LTC providers who have participated in open-office hours surveys. Please see our website to access the BHST Training calendar to register.

Training

The BHST training specialist has a unique blend of behavioral health and regulatory expertise. In each 1-2 hour training, you will learn techniques and strategies to respond effectively to a variety of challenging behaviors while remaning in compliance with WACs.

Meet the team

Our trainer and consultants include licensed social workers, licensed mental health counselors and more – with experience working at Western State Hospital, the Special Commitment Center on McNeil Island, community mental health agencies, Home and Community Services, local courts and behavioral health crisis units.

Consultants

Melissa Thomas, MS, LMHCA
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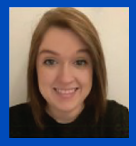
Unit Manager



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Trainer

Krystle Malo