



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
Aging and Disability Services Administration  
*Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery*  
PO Box 45330, Olympia, WA 98504-5330

August 1, 2011

Dear Stakeholder:

We are pleased to share with you the first public draft of the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery's (DBHR's) Unified (Mental Health and Substance Abuse) Block Grant Application (UBG), feedback form, and supporting documents. These documents may be downloaded from DBHR's homepage: [www.dshs.wa.gov/dbhr](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dbhr), in the *Information For Stakeholders* link. You will note that there are significant changes in both the application and our approach to it.

We did not try to answer all the questions regarding how our system will shift between now and FFY 2014; or, how our funding allocations will change. We will be doing that together with you over the next year or two as we learn more about how health care reform will affect the future of behavioral health.

We did describe our current mental health and substance use systems and some of our current initiatives, which fall within the requirements of the block grant application. We are asking for your feedback on what has been written and your input on how we need to move forward.

The Department of Social and Health Services and DBHR have a strong history of stakeholder involvement in the formation and management of our programs. These groups include, but are not limited to, the Washington State Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking, the Mental Health Policy Advisory Council, the Association of County Human Services, Regional Support Networks, and our many mental health and chemical dependency provider groups. All of these groups have a stake in our future and the future of the UBG.

We are approaching this process with a strong commitment to consumer voice, choice and a recovery orientation. We also recognize the importance of the perspectives and practical experience of providers, local and county governmental structures and our allied systems.

As we finalize our work on the UBG application, due September 1, we will be incorporating your input about what would be the most effective ways for us to engage in shaping our future together over the coming two years and beyond. We would appreciate your thoughts on the following questions, included on the feedback form on our website, to help us think through how best to involve you and others in the important work ahead:

- 1) Who are the partners who need to be included besides those that will plan and deliver behavioral health services? Employment programs? Housing? Justice system? Veteran's services? Others?
- 2) How would you suggest we identify representatives from the various groups?

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- 3) How should we engage these groups in the decision making process? Create a "Partner Group" in addition to the Behavioral Health Advisory Council? Have a series of regional meetings?
- 4) Do you have any other thoughts or suggestions about what makes for effective participation in important decisions like this? Are there specific things we should do, or not do?

Please submit your feedback by close of business on August 10; feedback received after the deadline will be looked at later in the year. A summary of feedback will be available on our website around the end of August.

Thank you very much for taking the time to review our draft UBG application for 2012 – we appreciate your comments and welcome your participation in the grant application process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Dickinson", written in a cursive style.

David A. Dickinson, Director