

Lobbyist Report  
Month October, 2022



Meetings/Workgroups attended

October 4 - Workforce and Rates Subgroup  
October 7 - Rep. Slatter (re: compact)  
October 14 - WMHCA Board Meeting  
October 17 - Rep. Schmick  
October 17 - Behavioral Health Lobby Workgroup  
October 25 - Health Care Lobby Workgroup  
October 26 - Sen. Muzzall

With only weeks to go for the 2022 elections, legislators are still actively campaigning and planning for the 2023 session. There are a few races that are projected to be very close and all lawmakers are waiting for November 8th to see the final outcomes. WMHCA has been avidly working on preparing for running the Counseling Compact bill; this includes meeting with lawmakers and stakeholders and researching how other states moved forward with this legislation. We have already gained strong support and interest from both lawmakers and stakeholders and have been included as a priority on the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Work Group.

In most circles of those who are working on behavioral health issues, the priorities are typically the same. For example, King County has listed the following as their 2023 priorities:

1. Develop and sustain the essential behavioral health workforce.
2. Enhance community-based response to behavioral health crises.
3. Fund capital investments to expand and enhance access to care.

Building the workforce is the highest priority that is being discussed and WMHCA is eager to support legislation to help meet this demand. Lawmakers and citizens alike also would like to see more access to care in schools and to strengthen crisis teams to help with the mentally ill living in poverty or on the streets.

WMHCA has become an organization that others are reaching out to as well. For example, the Department of Health is using us as a resource and other groups are following suit. We are looking forward to working on important legislation that will help those living in Washington lead healthy and happy lives.

#### Meetings Requested

Rep. Leavitt

Sen. Muzzall

Rep. Ybarra

Sen. Cleveland

(others to be determined post election)

#### General Legislative News

Campaigning is the number one priority of all lawmakers through November 8th. There is little to report on this issue in addition to last month's report.

The next important dates are December 1 & 2 which are legislative committee days. This is when lawmakers will come to Olympia to decide on committee placings and they will hold hearings and workgroups during these two days.

We are following the priority lists of other groups/stakeholders so we can align our priorities with theirs and hopefully work together on issues that will affect our membership and clientele.

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