

WSP LFC COVID-19 Teleconference Notes

Date 3/26/2020 Time 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Attendees

Department/Facility Co-Chair: Steve Barker

LFC Co-Chair: Anna Ivanov

Secretary DOC : Melissa Hutcherson / CPPA

Secretary LFC: Susan Wade, taking notes

Members Present: Don Holbrook, Rob Jackson, Steve Barker, Bill Copland, Melissa Hutcherson, Wendy Dubinsky, Dean Dubinsky, Danita Parkins, Anna Ivanov, Susan Wade, Tina Wright, Stewart Johnston, Steven Kugler

OCO and DOC HQ: Joanna Carns, Paige Perkinson, Caitlin Robertson

The following questions were addressed:

- 1. How many people are in quarantine and where are they housed? How many have been tested for COVID-19, what are the results and what qualifies someone for a test? Does the facility have any test kits?**

Superintendent Holbrook explained that as of 3/26/2020 there were 29 incarcerated in isolation; isolation equates to showing flu-like symptoms, 10 incarcerated in quarantine: quarantine equates to exposed but asymptomatic. WSP established 100 beds in East Echo unit (close custody) for isolation use, 45 beds in IMU North (max security) for quarantine use. All persons on isolation are to be tested, some locally at the facility, others in downtown, 13 tested with no positive results. Individuals qualify for testing qualifications if they are showing symptoms that have been listed in association with the virus and if they are symptomatic in some capacity. WSP confirmed that they have COVID19 test kits onsite.

- 2. How are you promoting social distancing? What do facilities do to encourage this rather than give the incarcerated infractions for not following the rules? More specific to WSP, we hear that people are let out for rec time by tier, but there is no cleaning that takes place in between, which defeats the purpose. Please confirm. In his memo to the facilities, Rob Herzog requested that facilities give praise more so than usual for following the social distancing recommendations. How is this communicated to the correctional officers who, for the most part, are used to punitive measures?**

Superintendent Holbrook stated that although the facility is short approximately 200 staff members, most have rallied to be on top of this situation, 50 holes to fill per shift. 200 staff members are away due to their responses during the screening process. Staff is doing their best to encourage social distancing, there are no known infractions issued for not following social distancing guidelines. Staff communicates the reasoning behind the social distancing. *"Things have been good for the most part. Minimizing confrontations, avoiding escalations this is aiding in keeping infraction clear. We are pushing the envelope on daily cleaning, if they are out, they are cleaning – the population is moving, we want to stay ahead of the game. Guys are cleaning phones, wiping down surfaces."* ~Superintendent Holbrook

Expectations of all Managers, Supervisors, Unit Managers are to be on top of the situation. Written correspondence to staff, memos, Channel 12 for the population that staff has access to as well. Postings placed in units. First time ever it has come up as a good thing that there is in cell meals at WSP, not having to reduce yet another avenue of being out of the cells.

3. Now that all the programs and activities are suspended, how much rec time do the incarcerated have outside of their cells? How much time out is available to those in quarantine? Given that the facility is not experiencing as much movement with activities being closed, volunteering and visiting cancelled, is it possible to increase rec time?

Not all programs have been suspended, DOCART, Legal library, Chemical Dependency classes are still active. Most jobs have been reduced; Sustainable Practices Lab activities are suspended due to no staffing. Staff was screened out by compromising situations, yielding question #3 - close proximity, not necessarily symptomatic. Dayrooms are being accessed and social distancing practiced, WSP staff strives to adopt these new practices without incidents. The weight piles were taken away due to potential risk caused by the sharing of the equipment. LFC members asked that consideration be given to adding a ½ hour to each rec time/ yard time daily, since facility is operating with limited movement and incarcerated population is out of their cells half the time normally allotted. Staff requested patience as they try to keep things under control as in the short time they have had to manage this issue, priority was to close the risk factor however, they will look into adding rec time. There was mention of a multi-disciplinary team that is working on creating other activities that the day room could offer to engage the incarcerated population. All gyms are closed. BAR Units have an internal yard and an internal dayroom. They are not using the Big Yard time in the am currently, which is shared with the medium units. Since BAR is not using the yard – the Medium units should be receiving morning, afternoon and evening yard times. In addition, it was mentioned that Rec and Weight Cards will be refunded for this quarter.

4. Does WSP have PPE such as gloves, masks? Is it available to staff and/or the incarcerated or neither?

Supplies are a touchy subject. WSP has some and they are dwindling. Limited supply of N95 masks that are used for medical personnel. Persons in isolation and quarantine as well as medical transfers are given masks. We have surgical style masks that are also available. Gowns are for medical personnel and medical transfers. *"The key is barriers. Protect your eyes, your nose, your mouth, gloves or not - do not touch your face."*

The question of laundry was asked. Laundry goes into rice bags, then linen bags, placed in the yellow bags and then into washers. The virus cannot survive laundry processes.

The question of sanitation and dishes was asked. The isolation/quarantine meals are being removed from trays and placed in clamshells. All dishes and utensils are going to the landfill. There is no washing of dishes for those areas. Again, anyone doing dishes or is looking for PPE – should talk to their managers. Staff stated they would talk to Managers assuring PPE's requests are met.

5. What would it take from the facility perspective to obtain hand sanitizers or disinfectant wipes for the common areas, especially for phone and kiosk use?

Our supply of cleaners is good. We have some Sani wipes that are used sparingly. Primary use is on items that need cleaning after each use i.e. thermometers, etc. WSP has been lucky enough to work with a distillery to receive sanitizer that is 80% alcohol based. However, this cannot be used on premises where incarcerated are housed– so it is only for staff use. Staff purchased 12-2 GAL Sprayers for the shower spaces to fully clean and sanitize. As for the use of bleach, we will not be using bleach at WSP.

WSP has created "jobs" for the aiding in community cleaning, phone handling, kiosks, have people with rags and cleaner ready to wipe things down as needed. Discussion of the lack of hot water and the hot water heater going out 3 weeks ago. Equipment is currently being rebuilt and will be installed as soon as possible.

6. We know that WSP is using CorrectPak sanitary products. It's our understanding that these products are not approved by CDC. What would it take to obtain CDC approved sanitary products at least for temporary use during this pandemic?

Research has been exhausted on products to find better ones, we are working with what we have. We are not rationing the “germicide”, it is not regulated, but we must account for it. There will be a shipment of soap bars coming, every incarcerated individual will receive 2 bars.

7. What is WSP experiencing in terms of transfers?

As for transfers WSP is obligated to accept transfers that are the DOC's. CCJ's - They have a 6 digit DOC # - you have all heard of the overcrowding in jails, incarcerated sleeping on the floors at some facilities, well if there is space available and we have some, we are obligated to accept CCJ's.

These prison to prison transfers that cannot wait and will continue. We are looking at it like this – they came from a facility that has procedures and protocols in place as well, they have been screened somehow, somewhere. We are taking steps to segregate and isolate to the best we can. WSP is an attractive choice for transfers because it has bed space and all custody levels. Currently all CCJ's are in Isolation or quarantine, we are keeping them segregated. East Complex Unit 10, actually adjacent to Unit 10; has two tiers 64 beds. We are accepting more from Spokane, 2 of which are symptomatic. The current total is 17*.

8. What is the facility learning from this experience? What can be done in the future to be better prepared for an event like this? What can the advocates do to help promote such changes?

This is a defining moment for leadership. Everyone here has really stepped up. Having that many staff out and staff still stepping up and continuing to carry the loads. Safety & Protocols take precedence we all learn through struggle. We at WSP face a lot of situations and we are taking this one day at a time. Being out seeing and talking to staff and the incarcerated, we are currently not experiencing any added drama, we are working at keeping situation calm and are not seeing the violence or the staff issues we regularly see. In this time of crisis, everyone is stepping up!

Comments –

LFC member asked what we could do to support or help. Nothing came to mind.

An email was read about incarcerated doing dishes and asking for PPE, was told to “not breathe”. Staff stated anyone working needing PPE should ask and food service managers will be reminded to make sure PPE is given.

An email question related to the extenuating circumstances around this virus and what will be done to maintain nutritional guidelines if a shortage of food becomes an issue. There is no news of shifting to sack lunches, no it is not ideal. This is hard to speak to, it will be addressed on a larger scale. It is hard to say what things will look like in three weeks. Growing our own and the help of farmers may be part of the solution, but out in the community seeds are hard to come by and that speaks loudly. Communities everywhere will be affected.

The question was asked if WSP has requested an emergency hospital setup by the National Guard. The answer was no.

Walla Walla County has 2 cases to date, Franklin County - 7 cases

The members thanked one another, and the call was ended.