

# Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

## Call Details

**Facility:** WSP / Teleconference

**Date and Time:** 1/26/2021, 1:00PM

## Attendees

- Associate Superintendent Barker, Sgt. Rocky Beal, AA3 Carrie Meyer, SFC Rep Wendy Dubinsky, Hattie Wolf, Dean Dubinsky, OCO Caitlyn Roberts, Anna Ivanov, Steve Kugler, Tina Wright, Connie Hollis, Loretta Pedersen, Carolyn Melhuish, Lonnie Roberts & CUS Shumate

## Weekly Update

Please provide the most up-to-date stats:

*The website numbers are accurate.*

There have been a few changes to the COVID-19 status of some living units as of today.

Please see below for where we are as a facility:

- **William Unit B-Side** returned to normal operations after the final 15 incarcerated individuals who have not tested positive were placed in quarantine in Echo Unit.
- All of the inmates that were received from AHCC have cleared Intake Separation and been moved into other housing units

## Units/Areas on Medical Quarantine-

IMU-N, C-Mod

Golf Unit, East Side

Unit 6

Unit 10, A & B Tier (Currently Empty)

## Units/Areas on Medical Isolation-

IMU-N, A & B Mods

Echo Unit, East Side

Fox Unit

Golf Unit, West Side

## Intake Separation-

IMU-N, B & D Mod

## Submitted Questions

1. Status of vaccinations? Incarcerated and staff at WSP?
  - The staff vaccines are moving along and are currently working through the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. The incarcerated vaccines are currently being offered to those guys who are 65 and older.
  - There is more coming and we hope to be doing vaccine clinics in the units starting in February.

2. What is the number of vaccinated, and the plan going forward?
  - Unsure of the exact number but it is in excess of 200 staff and several dozen incarcerated with the plan to vaccinate hundreds more incarcerated while abiding by the governor's plan for the most at risk first. The plan is actually still being solidified by medical staff and should be approved and implemented later today.
3. Why can't post positive inmates return to A-side when right now there are numerous post positive inmates celled up with negative inmates on B-side?
  - This is not the case. Everyone on A-Side was positive in the past.
4. Why is the Department of Corrections continuing not to acknowledge that inmate workers from both sides of the unit are interacting every day, several times a day, thereby undermining all illusion of quarantine?
  - This was brought to CUS Matson who stated: after talking with William unit staff, there are workers assigned to A side that are post positive and there are workers assigned to B side that are on quarantine. They are not supposed to be mixing and staff are trying their best to keep them separate. There are not moving throughout the unit freely and are being secured in their areas of work.
5. Why can someone on William B side who hasn't even tested positive, but merely communicated that they've experienced symptoms, go to Fox for a week and then return to William A side? What is the difference between their stay in Fox and a post-positive prisoner's stay in a William B side cell? Why can't prisoners who were originally on A side who have been disrupted and moved to B side go back to A side celly assignment?
  - Because that person would go to an isolation unit if they are experiencing symptoms. Once tested negative twice, they would be moved back to their original living unit. The difference is being symptomatic or not. If they are symptomatic and we don't know if they are positive or not, they could infect the rest of the negative guys in the unit.
  - The unit is now running the same on both sides so they can move back to their original cells.
6. Why are B-side inmates being denied access to outdoor exercise?
  - Quarantine protocols in William Unit do not allow for everyone to go to outdoor exercise.
7. William Unit prisoners have seen, in numerous instances, local authorities flout clear directives from HQ, including official policies – as an example I would point to the mail policy – why have WSP staff members been so reluctant to push back against HQ when it comes to protocols that clearly are doing more harm than good? (Basically, why do local WSP employees pick and choose which HQ directives they decide to deviate from?)
  - Local authorities have not "flouted" HQ directives. When individual WSP employees are found to not be following protocols, they are addressed individually.
8. Most important question of all: Why is the DOC refusing to remedy this harmful situation of keeping post positive prisoners on quarantine for over two months by simply moving the relatively few inmates who've not tested positive?
  - 8a. DOC, Jeremy Barclay is checking on the tracking of units being on and off quarantine, he may be checking with WSP. Is this being done at WSP.

- The WSP ICP has not refused to remedy the issues in William Unit. The issue was dealing with space availability. We were finally able to move the final 15 negative people from William Unit and place them in a quarantine unit. William Unit was moved back to a normal schedule starting this morning (Tuesday).
  - Tracking is not being done to our knowledge. This would probably be more of a medical question, but we will check with them. (fu)
9. It is common knowledge that there is a dislike between general population prisoners and protective custody prisoners, and when one of these groups is allowed to prepare food for the other group (it's definitely a two-way street), the food is often intentionally contaminated with any number of biological fluids or foreign objects (rocks, fingernails, etc.). These concerns were reported by protective custody prisoners in the surveys the OCO took of WSP prisoners back in 2018. Victor Unit prisoners currently have concerns that their food is being prepared by protective custody prisoners who are contaminating it. While we understand that WSP has limited options right now in which non-quarantined prisoners are available to work in kitchens, are CI staff carefully supervising prisoner workers to ensure that food is not contaminated? (The surveys collected by the OCO back in 2018 expressed concern that kitchen supervisors often spend time on their computer instead of actively supervising food prep activities carried out by prisoners.)
- This is a misconception. The BAR unit prisoners do not prepare food. They work as the night shift cleaning crew in the kitchen. Yes, the kitchen workers are closely watched and in fact, do not know where the food is actually going when they prepare it.
  - I'm sure this has been done in the past but it has not been brought to our attention in a long time.
  - The BAR unit food is delivered very similar to a TV dinner with a plastic film over it.
  - The WC and SC is warmed and delivered from the units.
  - BAR unit incarcerated individuals are working in the kitchen but to clean only, not prepare or deliver food.

## Other Questions

What is happening with the Stimulus payments? We were told that there should be no deductions taken from the 2<sup>nd</sup> checks. Will they refund anything taken from the 1<sup>st</sup> one?

- HQ should be sending a response out. As of right now they are being secured in our Business office waiting for direction from the IRS.
- The deductions is something that the Business office and HQ will need to respond to.

CUS Shumate: How often do you meet with Ms. Snyder? In what order does the supervisory happen at WSP? How is the mailroom doing with books and mail?

- The mailroom Sgt. Or the Supervisor meet with Ms. Snyder bi-weekly
- The Mailroom Sgt. To CUS Shumate to CPM Roberts to Associate Supt. Barker
- Mr. Barker has authorized OT and we have also been approved to hire a replacement for the vacancy in the mailroom. They are nearly caught up.

When will they start running the Dog program or the Bee program?

- We are currently talking with the Humane Society regarding the dog and cat program. They have a new director who indicated that they don't actually have any dogs due to pandemic response (all adopted out).
- We have not been released to do the Bee program yet and the bees are dormant right now.

Will WSP be starting the religious programs back up?

- We do not have the Religious volunteers ready to start back up. We are hoping to have the approval to hire the CPPC soon so that we can get the volunteers back on board with training. An issue is the requirement to offer all requested religious services when they resume.

Fund Raisers? Why do all the units have to do fund raisers in order for one unit to do them?

- They don't. This is per unit. The CUS has to have the planning laid out, and approval from the CPM.
- Other factors play a role in this. Do we have a vendor available? Do we have the staffing available? What status is the unit?

What is going on with the comfort items?

- I do not know, but I will get an answer for you. (fu)

What are the qualifications of an I & I staff member? Can you have an I & I member attend a meeting?

- I'm not sure. Qualifications, education, background and experience? We can try to have someone from I & I to a meeting.

Family member update re: video visiting indicated having an excellent video visit on their PC, noted that it's still difficult on Apple/Mac; also noted that Adobe Flash is disappearing at the end of 2021. This issue has been forwarded for continued discussion at the March SFC meeting.