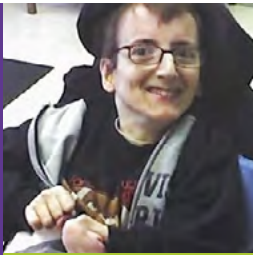


# Overview



# OVERVIEW

## The Bellevue Human Services Needs Update for 2017-2018

The City of Bellevue publishes the Human Services Needs Update at the beginning of each two-year human services funding cycle. Since 1989, this report has offered a summary of trends within Bellevue, East King County, the Puget Sound region, Washington State and the nation. Through this report, we hope to provide a broad vision and context for understanding human service needs, and for inspiring actions that will ameliorate barriers to achieving a high quality of life for all Bellevue residents.

### Methodology

Some of the multiple sources of information that support the conclusions of the Needs Update include:

- A phone/online survey of 484 Bellevue residents (123 by phone, 361 online).
- All outreach materials (letters and emails) contained information in four additional languages: Chinese, Russian, Korean, and Spanish.
- A written survey of about 30 consumers of human services in Bellevue translated into five languages in addition to English.
- Online surveys completed by 39 human services providers.
- Key informant interviews with 7 administrators or community representatives, including providers or member of groups such as older adults, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, low-income consumers of human services, and health care professionals.
- Meetings with City of Bellevue staff, such as Neighborhood Outreach, Police, Fire, Civic Services and Development Services.

- Over 30 Community Conversations with over 200 Bellevue residents and providers of human services.
- Reports, studies and online databases covering a wide range of service areas and issues and offering a broad national, statewide, and regional perspective.

### Bellevue: Community Profile

- In 2017, Bellevue's population was estimated to be 140,700, making Bellevue the fifth largest city in Washington. This is compared to a population of 109,569 in 2000, and 86,874 in 1990.
- Average household size has continued to increase since 2000 after a decreasing trend. In 1970 there was an average of 3.4 persons per household, dropping to 2.4 in 1990, and 2.37 in 2000 then increased to 2.41 in 2010. In 2016, Bellevue's average household size is estimated to be 2.49.
- Over the decades the proportion of people who are under 20 and ages 20 to 44 has declined, while the proportion of 45 to 65 year old and 65 and older has increased. In 2016, about 41% of Bellevue residents were ages 18 to 44 and another 26% were 45 to 64 years old.
- Bellevue's continues to become a more diverse community. For the first time in 2015, non-Hispanic whites no longer represented the majority of Bellevue residents. Since 1990, the proportion of People of Color in Bellevue has more than tripled growing from 15% in 1990, to 28% in 2000 to 41% in 2010 and more recently to just over 50% in 2016.
- In 2016, about 37% of Bellevue's residents were born in a foreign country up from 33% in 2010, 25% in 2000 and 13% in 1990. Over 70% of Bellevue's foreign-born population were born in Asia, followed by 11% from Europe, and 10% from Latin American. India and China were the country from which most of the foreign-born population were born. A little over a third

were recent immigrants to the United States, having entered the country in 2010 or later. About 42% of Bellevue residents (age 5 and over) spoke a language other than English at home in 2016, up from 27% in 2000 and 14% in 1990.

- In 2016, Bellevue's median household income was estimated to be 113,877 up from \$99,892 in 2015. Between 2015, and 2016, the percentage of households in Bellevue with incomes between \$15,000 and \$24,00 and between \$50,000 and \$75,000 dropped 2% and 4.7% respectively and the percentage of household with income between \$100,000 and \$149,00 rose 4.8%. Since the decreases and increases in the households were not from non-adjacent brackets they did not likely represent many households improving their economic situation. Instead, it is more likely that lower income household moved out of Bellevue and higher income households moved in.
- As the economy recovered and cost of housing rose, poverty rate in Bellevue declined. About 5.9% of people living in Bellevue were in poverty in 2016, down from a high of 9.1% in 2013. Poverty rate were higher for families with children under five years old (15.7%) and for families with a female head of household with children under 18 years old (18.9). The poverty rate was also slightly higher for older adults 65 years and over at 6.5%

## Quality of Life in Bellevue

Nearly all (95%) of respondents to the phone/online survey said that the quality of life in their community was "excellent" or "good". Respondents were asked to rate each of 32 problem areas as a major, moderate, minor or not a problem in their community. The majority of respondents to the 2017 phone/online survey (54%) rated at least five of the twenty-four community problem issues as a major or moderate problem in their community. This is similar to the results in 2015 when 53% rated it as such. Twelve issues received a "major"

or "moderate" rating from at least three out of ten (30%) respondents including:

### Lack of affordable housing (77%)

- Lack of affordable medical insurance (45%)
- Lack of affordable child care (44%)
- Having jobs that do not pay for the basics (44%)
- Lack of affordable medical care (42%)
- Groups of residents who perceive more problems in the community included women, residents who are 55 and older, residents that have lived in Bellevue 10 years or longer, white (non-Hispanic) residents, and residents who have not recently immigrated her.

## Accessing Services

- In 2017, the majority (71%) of those taking the phone/online survey believe that people in the community have adequate access to services.
- The 7% who indicated that there was inadequate access to human services most frequently mentioned the following areas: affordable housing, transportation, health/dental care/insurance, housing services, and counseling/mental health, lack of information, shelter for the homeless, access to food, recreational services, and drug/alcohol addiction.

## Connectedness in Bellevue Communities

A number of City efforts contribute to the high quality of life that Bellevue residents enjoy. Some of these include:

- Neighborhood Outreach Program works with neighborhood leaders and residents to build up the health, livability and community connections, such as Mini-City Hall, Neighborhood Liaisons and Neighborhood Forums;
- Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy was approved in June 2017. The strategy includes the following components: help

people stay in affordable housing, create a variety of housing choices, create more affordable housing, unlock housing supply by making it easier to build, and prioritize state, county, and local funding for affordable housing.

- Downtown Livability Initiative is a targeted review of regulations that guides development and land use activity. An Advisory Committee recommended 25 code changes on topics such as public open spaces and desirable amenities;
- Diversity Focus Group is comprised of concerned and involved community members that are committed to improving the relationship between the Bellevue Police Department and Bellevue's diverse community.

## Special Focus Area

### Homelessness System, Services and Needs in King County, Bellevue, and East King County

- Homelessness continues to be a crisis in King County and the number of unsheltered people have steadily and visibly increased on the Eastside. In 2015-16, over 1,200 men, women, and children received temporary shelter.
- All Home (formerly The Committee to End Homelessness) is leading and effort, along with over 500 stakeholders, to make homelessness in King County rare, brief, one-time, and to eliminate racial disparities. The response systems include prevention, diversion, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and permanent housing with supportive services.
- The number of homeless students in Bellevue continues to rise and the increase is not explained by growth in the district population. The number of students reported

to be experiencing homeless in Bellevue School District was 228 students in 2013-14 and 257 students in 2016-17.

- East King County partners with local non-profits to provide a wide range of services to homeless individuals in our community, with specialized services for single women, single men, families with children, and youth and young adults. Outreach programs reach out to people experiencing homelessness to build trust, provide resources, and help them navigate the system. Day and Drop in Centers provide access to showers, meals, case management, and resources. Winter Shelters, Safe Parking, and Emergency Shelters provide a temporary shelter along with case management services to connect them with longer term housing resources and assist them in overcoming barriers. Longer term housing offered in our community includes transitional housing, permanent housing with supports and permanent supportive housing. These programs serve households with higher levels of barriers and provide more intensive and deeper levels of support service.

#### Implications and Gaps

- While efforts are currently underway for a dedicated location(s) for the Eastside Winter Shelter(s), this will take several years to implement and, in the interim, finding suitable sites for the shelters will continue to be a challenge. Shelter space during non-winter months is also needed.
- Employment opportunities that pay living wages for people experiencing homelessness as well as to keep them from becoming homeless is needed.
- The affordable housing supply is far short of the need. Increased diligence is needed to bring funding and to find appropriate sites on which to build housing that people exiting homelessness can afford.
- Two of the many reasons people become homeless are mental illness and substance

abuse disorders. Funding for services, both in-patient and outpatient, is inadequate to meet the need. Through advocacy in the State Legislature more funding should be prioritized.

- Safe parking facilities for people residing in their vehicles are needed, especially for single men and for those living in recreational vehicles.
- Community education and awareness is critical to align all partners to action in ending homelessness. Engaging new sectors, such as the business community and service clubs, is needed; the strong commitment of congregations countywide could be a model for engaging this new community.
- More outreach especially in the evening hours and more flexible funding for people experiencing homelessness would be an important addition to the array of services currently available.

## Heroin & Prescription Opioid Use in King County and Bellevue

- King County, like many places across the country, is seeing sharp increases in the use and abuse of heroin and prescription opiates. In 2016, there were 332 drug-caused deaths in King County and 219 of them were from heroin and prescription opioid overdose. Despite the need, the region suffers from the lack of services and treatment beds to address substance abuse. The number of people seeking treatment for opioids treatment has outpaced those seeking help for alcohol treatment.
- On March 1, 2016, King County Executive Dow Constantine announced the formation of a heroin and prescription opiate addiction task force. The Task Force included 50 stakeholders, including University of Washington Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, behavioral service providers, hospitals, human service agencies, the recovery community, criminal justice

partners, first responders, including City of Bellevue Fire Department Deputy Chief of Operations, Andy Adolfson, and others.

- The Task Force was charged with developing both short and long-term strategies to prevent opioid use disorder, prevent overdoses, and improve access to treatment and other supportive services for individuals experiencing opioid use disorder. The Task Force met over a six-month period to review the following areas. 1) Current local, state and federal initiatives and activities related to prevention, treatment and health services for individuals experiencing opioid use disorder. 2) Promising strategies being developed and implemented in other communities. 3) Evidence-based practice in the areas of prevention, treatment and health services. The Task Force strived to avoid redundancy with other related activities and to leverage existing partnerships and activities where appropriate. Also, they applied an equity and social justice lens to the work.
- To confront the region's growing heroin and opioid epidemic, the Heroin and Prescription Opiate Addiction Task Force recommends a comprehensive strategy that focuses on prevention, increasing access to treatment on demand and reducing the number of fatal overdoses. Primary Prevention recommendations: 1) Raise awareness and knowledge of the possible adverse effects of opioid use, including overdose and opioid use disorder. 2) Promote safe storage and disposal of medication. 3) Leverage and augment existing screening practices in schools and health care settings to prevent and identify opioid use disorder. Treatment Expansion and Enhancement recommendations: 1) Create access to buprenorphine in low-barrier modalities of substance use disorder treatment services. 2) Develop treatment on demand for all modalities of substance use disorder treatment services. 3) Alleviate barriers places upon opioid treatment programs, including the number of clients served and siting on

clinic. User Health and Overdose Prevention recommendations: 1) Expand distribution of naloxone in King County 2) Establish, on a pilot program basis, at least two Community Health Engagement Locations (CHEL sites) where supervised consumption occurs for adults with substance use disorders in the Seattle and King County region.

- In response to the recommendations, efforts have been occurring under each of the recommendations throughout King County in East King County, and in Bellevue. Some of the significant responses within Bellevue and East King County have been increased educations through panels and community conversations, medication drop boxes and pharmacy take back locations, health clinic at one middle school and SBIRT (Screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment) being developed for middle schools, increase of prescription of buprenorphine, continuing funding for treatment facilities, and Narcan being carried by fire, police, and the medic unit.
- Even with the significant amount of work and effort that have occurred, services providers and professionals in this area express a need for more focus in each area of the Task Force recommendations. In additions, King County has seen an increase in the use of the opioid Fentanyl, which is 50 times stronger than heroin.

### Implications and Gaps

- The Heroin and Prescription Opioid Task Force created a plan and made progress to address this crisis, but this problem will take years to address. Efforts need to be continued and adjusted for the new challenge of Fentanyl.
- Community education and awareness on the adverse effects of opioid use as well as promoting safe storage and disposal of medication is critical. Approach must engage the critical partners, include physicians, pharmacist, parents, and schools,

for both education and screening, and the entire community.

- Our community needs to provide on-demand treatment for substance abuse treatment and both mental health. There is often a long wait for treatment and when a bed become available it is over 100 miles away. Funding for both in-patient and outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment is inadequate to meet the need. Advocacy in the State Legislature for more funding should be prioritized.
- Increased access to buprenorphine prescriptions for treatment. Expand the distribution of naloxone to substance users, police, and other in our community to reduce overdose deaths.

## Community Goals and Specific Populations

### Goal #1: Food to Eat and a Roof Over Head

#### Key Trends

- The percentage of students receiving free and reduced-cost lunch can also help measure community food security. According to Bellevue School District, the total percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch assistance has remained steady at 18.8% as of October 2016.
- Local emergency financial assistance providers, like the Salvation Army, Catholic Community Services, Solid Ground and Hopelink, reported that they provided services to 1,320 people in Bellevue in 2016, largely through one-time rental assistance to avoid eviction or foreclosure. They also aided with utility bills, car repairs, prescription drug costs and food vouchers.
- About 31% of Bellevue households are cost burdened, paying more than 30% of their household income for housing. This indicates a cost of housing that is not in proportion

with what people earn, significantly impacting people's ability to maintain a stable housing situation.

- Over 9,100 Bellevue households (17%) have low and very low income. There are only 3,095 units in Bellevue (6% of Bellevue's housing supply) that are affordable to these households.
- In 2017, the One Night Count of homeless found 284 unsheltered individuals in East King County (including portions of Bellevue, Kirkland and Redmond). Compared to the 245 individuals counted in 2016, this represents a 15% increase.

### Gaps Include

- Emergency financial assistance for basic needs, such as rent, food, mortgage or utilities assistance.
- Year-round emergency shelter for homeless individuals and families, with expanded nightly shelter during the winter months.
- Affordable housing for low and moderate-income individuals and families, including those leaving homeless shelters or housing programs.

### Implications for Action

- The lack of affordable housing continues to be perceived by residents as the top community problem in Bellevue. Housing prices continue to rise and this trend is likely to continue in the future.
- Rising housing prices means single family homes in Bellevue have in most cases become out of reach for households earning the median wage. Little relief is found in the rental market as rental rates are also continuing to increase.
- There continues to be a significant need for housing affordable for moderate-income households (also termed workforce housing) on the Eastside as well as housing for low-income (30% of median income or below). While efforts are currently underway for

a dedicated location(s) for the Eastside Winter Shelter(s), this will take several years to implement and, in the interim, finding suitable sites for the shelters will continue to be a challenge.

- The impact of the system changes occurring through ALL HOME (formerly the King County Committee to End Homelessness) on the Eastside are still unknown. With coordinated entry systems now required by the federal government for all populations (families, single adults, and youth/young adults), it is possible that Bellevue and Eastside residents will no longer be served by Eastside programs. In addition, the results of rapid re-housing and diversion programs have yet to be determined whether they are successful in East King County in preventing people from becoming homeless.
- The need for food assistance has not decreased significantly since the recession ended and will likely continue in the future.

## Goal #2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods and Communities

### Key Trends

- Social support for individuals and families is especially important during hard economic times. Adults with children under age 18 were asked in a survey in 2011 how often they have someone to turn to for day to day emotional help with childrearing. In East King County, 79% said they had support in parenting all or most of the time. People of color, foreign born or household with incomes under \$50,000 reported getting less emotional support. Single parents may also have more need for support. In the 2017 Bellevue phone/online survey, 16% of respondents reported that stress, anxiety and depression was a major or moderate problem in their households, about the same as in 2013 and 2015.

- Research has shown how important quality early learning is for young children to succeed in school and in life. Programs that support parents, such as Healthy Start and Parent Child Home Program, both evidence based home visiting programs, and groups for family, friends and neighbors who are watching young children in their homes while their parents work, are important resources, especially for some families who are new to this country and culture.
- Best Start for Kids Levy passed in November 2015, which will raise approximately 392.3 million to improve outcomes for all children and youth in King County. Its primary focus is to improve the health and well-being of children, youth, families, and community. BSK funds myriad of service strategies, commencing with prenatal support, sustaining strategic gains through children, teens, and young adult development and reinforces system changes that lead to safe and healthy communities.
- The Wrap-Around Services Program, a collaboration of the Bellevue School District, the City of Bellevue and United Way of King County, is designed to provide eleven objectives for students, their families and the surrounding school community. Wrap-Around Services partner with numerous local agencies and organization to bolster academic achievement and family involvement in schools.
- Eastside Pathways is a community-wide partnership of more than 60 public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including City of Bellevue and both Bellevue and Lake Washington School Districts, supported by a backbone organization that is transforming the way our community works together to make a positive impact in the lives of children and youth. Eastside Pathways use the collective impact framework to engage organizations and work collaboratively to align efforts to address the systemic barriers that hold back some of our children. Families, providers, schools, and cities unite around common goals, measurements, and strategies to maximize every child's opportunity for success in school and life.
- There are many indications that requests for information about resources continue to be in high demand in the county and in Bellevue. In 2016, the number of calls for assistance in King County increased significantly to 151,841 calls and 78,747 answered and logged at the Crisis Clinic, the designated Washington Information Network agency for 2-1-1, the Community Information Line. 56% of the calls were for basic needs and 25% for financial assistance. During the first six months of 2017, staff at the City of Bellevue's Crossroads Shopping Center Mini City Hall received 27,724 contacts from consumers requesting resource information, with about 56% related to human service needs. This is on pace to meet or exceed 2016 with 50,871 contacts.
- Statewide client demand for low-cost legal services has increased and that trend is reflected locally. Eastside Legal Assistance Program reports they have seen a significant increase in requests for legal services. More people are seeking help with evictions and foreclosures, family law (including domestic violence), and credit card and debt issues. There is a shortage of volunteer attorneys to help clients beyond a forty-five minute, free consultation. Another service in high demand is help with immigration issues. The King County Bar Association reports the same trends, adding that many of their clients face barriers such as language, mental health, disability, and financial.

### Gaps Include

- Support for parents and caregivers who want to assist in their children's development, from birth through college or career, particularly people new to this culture and language, including parenting education and home visiting programs.



- Support for caregivers of frail older adults and people with disabilities.
- Adequate funding for the 2-1-1 Community Information Line to maintain services especially in the face of increasing community needs and information in other languages than English to meet the demands of a growing diverse population.
- Low-cost legal services.

### Implications for Action

- All families need support, regardless of socio-economic status. However, some Bellevue families may continue to need additional social support to raise their children, care for aging and/or disabled loved ones, or a combination of the three if they have limited resources. Family, friends and neighbors will be even more important to help because funding is often limited for many formal services, such as chore services and after school care, or some families may not meet eligibility criteria.
- The need for information provided in languages other than English continues to grow as the Puget Sound Region and East King County becomes more diverse. Human service providers, local government and businesses need to work together to meet this community need by providing resources in a variety of languages.
- Many residents still do not have easy access to computers and instead rely on the phone. Multi-modal forms of getting information out to the community is critical. The Crisis Clinic's King County 2-1-1 is one way to fill this critical information gap. However, sustainable funding for its operation needs to continue as funding cuts results in fewer staff to answer calls. Another way to improve access is partnering with non-profit agencies, cities and faith communities to include information about resources through "low tech" ways such as printed media, multi-ethnic radio stations, public TV access,

DVD's, and neighbors sharing information with neighbors.

- Low-cost or free civil legal services are a growing need for many residents. A major gap for services exists for direct representation, especially for survivors of domestic violence, immigration issues, landlord-tenant issues and credit counseling.

## Goal #3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse

### Key Trends

- Only a small percentage of survivors of personal violence access formal services, according to national and local data. Survivors who do not speak English, have limited economic means, who are elderly or who have a disability are even less likely or able to seek support services. Local providers continue to report an increase in the number of limited-English speaking clients. The Bellevue Police Department's Domestic Violence Victim Advocate averaged a caseload of 18 cases a month in 2016, which is a reduction from 22 cases per month in 2014.
- The number of reported domestic violence offenses statewide increased 5.7% between 2014 and 2016, from 49,360 to 52,159. Domestic violence offenses made up 50% of all crimes against persons in 2016. In Bellevue, the number of reports of domestic violence to the Bellevue Police department has remained relatively flat with the expectation in 2013. Long term effects of sexual assault and rape include mental health issues, substance abuse and suicide. Harborview Crisis Response Center and King County Sexual Assault Resource Center provide a wide range of services to survivors of sexual assault, including counseling, legal advocacy and referrals to other services. Community education about the identification and prevention of sexual assault is an important component of their work.

- National studies show that 3-4 million children ages 3-17 are at risk of exposure to domestic violence each year. Research indicates that children who witness domestic violence show more anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, anger and temperament problems than children who do not witness violence in the home.
- Providers of services for survivors of both sexual assault and family violence also report that more clients are in need of basic needs when they seek help. Safe housing is one such need; national statistics indicate that domestic violence is the number one cause of homelessness for women. There are a limited number of shelter beds in all parts of the County, but LifeWire (previously known as the Eastside Domestic Violence Program) is the only agency in East King County offering a confidential shelter. Overall, for every family they have the capacity to serve in emergency housing, 26 are turned away, which is a 37% increase from 2015.
- Legal assistance and mental health counseling remain the primary needs for survivors of domestic violence. Helping survivors legally pursue and obtain protection orders, custody, child support and other financial needs, gives them the physical safety and financial security that enable them to leave the abuser. Providers report that many survivors are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Order (PTSD) and suicidal ideation as a result of their abuse.
- National experts believe that older adult abuse, which includes physical and sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation, is greatly underreported; it is estimated that for every case reported, about five go unreported. Financial exploitation is the most frequently reported category of adult abuse in Washington State. In 2016, Bellevue Police received 35 reports of older adult abuse annually, a significant decline from 2012 with 81 cases. It is thought that a contributing factor in lower reports is the

reluctance for family member to report crimes committed and of victims reluctant to press charges against family members who may be the perpetrator.

### **Gaps Include (for both survivors of family violence and sexual assault)**

- Low-cost legal services including victim advocacy.
- Transitional, subsidized, and affordable permanent housing.
- Low-cost mental health counseling including counseling for children affected by domestic violence.
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Accessible community education about sexual assault and family violence.

### **Implications for Action**

- Survivors of sexual abuse often have multiple needs including treatment for substance abuse, parental support and childcare, legal aid, counseling and transitional and permanent housing. These services should not be created in a “silo” but rather developed so that they can assist survivors of domestic violence and child abuse seamlessly.
- Sexual assault continues to be a public safety issue; in order for the community offenders to hold accountable, services must exist for those victimized.
- It is critical to support community education about sexual assault, rape and child sexual abuse, as decreased staff levels at many agencies may complicate finding and getting help. This education can also be co-presented with topics related to other forms of family violence.
- Consent workshops for youth are rising in popularity among sexual assault prevention experts. Informing youth as to what sexual consent is, how to develop boundaries, and the legal definitions of assault can help

them to make more informed choices as young adults.

- Several ongoing areas of concern in this service area that should still be monitored include Internet safety, on-line victimization of vulnerable youth, the potential needs of partners of returning veterans, or of women who are veterans, and exploited children and adults who are used for sex trafficking.
- There is a strong connection between early, untreated child sexual abuse and homelessness and trafficking. Upwards of 40% of youth who are homeless experience sexual assault prior to becoming homeless. It is important that conversations about homelessness and trafficking include the issue of sexual assault.

## Goal #4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

### Key Trends

- Health care reform under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) beginning in 2010 provides the uninsured adult population aged 19-64 opportunities to enroll in expanded Medicaid or through the Washington Health Plan Exchange, depending on their incomes. As of March 2017, more than 428,000 King County residents are enrolled in Medicaid programs, including 150,000 in Medicaid expansion.
- Children will continue to be eligible for the State Apple Health for Kids Program; those up to 200% of the federal poverty level will get insurance at no cost; those between 200-300% will be eligible for low-cost insurance. Children from undocumented households will also be covered.
- In 2015, 9% of all Bellevue residents are uninsured. 13% of adults age 18-64 in Bellevue were uninsured, compared to 15% across the country.
- Lack of health insurance was related to household poverty, education, race/ethnicity

and education. Low-income and individuals of color were more likely to be uninsured. For example, in King County, African American infant mortality rates are 7 per 100,000 compared to 3.4 for Whites. Low economic status and high rates of mental health problems are also linked.

- The Affordable Care Act does not require dental care for adults. 36% of phone/on-line survey respondents cited lack of affordable dental care as a major or moderate community problem; up from 32% in 2015. About 90% of consumer survey respondents reported that not being able to pay for dentist bills was a major or moderate problem in their household.
- Substance abuse, particularly use of heroin, is on the rise in Washington State and King County. Providers of services to both youth and adults in East King County report this trend, as well as more multi-problem clients who have both addictions and mental health problems.
- Frequent Mental Distress (FMD) was much more common in low-income respondents. 26% of those with household income below \$15,000 per year experienced FMD, almost four times higher than the rate of people in households earning \$50,000. 7% of Bellevue adults experience frequent mental distress (compared to 10% countywide). Low economic status are high rates of mental health problems are closely linked.
- The Crisis Clinic 24-Hour Crisis Line responded to nearly 9,000 calls from Bellevue residents in 2016.

### Gaps Include

- Accessible and low-cost health care and treatment services for under-insured or uninsured people, especially dental care and mental health services. This gap has been addressed for a large portion of the population due to Health Care Reform, but not for undocumented adults.

- Affordable prescription drugs, hearing aids, and eye care for low-income people, since insurance often does not adequately cover these costs.
- Health services and resources provided in culturally appropriate and linguistically competent ways.
- Support for children, youth and adults who are experiencing frequent mental distress due to lack of income, social isolation, or Adverse Childhood Experiences.

### Implications for Action

- Under the health care plans made available after the Affordable Care Act, many vulnerable people now have coverage who were uninsured before ACA. However, coverage does not automatically translate into positive health outcomes. Help-seeking behaviors, a lack of understanding of how to navigate health care settings, attitudes toward prevention, traditional beliefs regarding science, and even the need for patients to build trust in the medical profession, are just a few of the phenomena that can impact health outcomes even after one is insured. This presents a challenge both for health care systems to pivot such that they can affect attitudes and beliefs among the newly insured, as well as for the newly insured to adopt new beliefs and behaviors.
- Community education around co-occurring disorders and self-medication is still needed, both to combat the stigma around mental illness, but also to address the often-artificial perception that mental illness and addiction do not impact each other. Substance abuse among adults and youth continues to affect individuals and families, and the rise in heroin use has been particularly startling. Continued community education about the risks, and better understanding about the causes, need to be part of the community dialogue to address this increase. Fundamentally, however, the stigma attached to substance abuse must be met with education for

community members who may not understand or grasp that the social fabric of the Eastside is just as vulnerable to substance abuse as any other part of the county.

## Goal #5: Education and Job Skills to Lead an Independent Life

### Key Trends

- Bellevue residents are well educated for today's economy. 66% of Bellevue residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher. However, even though Washington State's unemployment rate in June 2017 was 4.5%, a significant reduction compared to 8.3% in 2011; data shows that recovery has been uneven. Some residents despite their higher education levels are still struggling to pay for all their basic needs.
- While Washington State's minimum wage in 2015 at \$11/hour is the highest in the country, it is not a living wage. An adult making the minimum wage and supporting two children is under the federal poverty level (FPL), \$20,160 for a family of three in 2017. It is estimated that for a single adult with a school aged child and a toddler, a living wage for King County is \$37.28 an hour (\$78,741 annually).
- Childcare availability, affordability and quality continue to be a concern for many working parents/caregivers, especially for lower-wage workers. Childcare in East King County is more expensive than in other parts of the County, and can cost on average \$30,876 a year for an infant and a pre-school child. Childcare cost can exceed the cost of housing and college tuition, especially if using rates for full time care for an infant at a childcare center
- Access to employment and training programs are critical in order to assist unemployed residents in increasing their skills to find higher paying jobs or to transition to jobs that are currently available in the marketplace.

Local colleges, community-based agencies and government programs provide English-as-a-Second-Language classes, job skills and training classes, and job placement services in Bellevue. Many of these organizations report a bigger demand especially for increased skills to get higher paying jobs and more difficulty finding jobs for people with limited English language skills.

- Bellevue residents increasingly report that finding public transportation is a problem, which includes getting to work as well as accessing human services and social support. 39% of 2017 Bellevue phone/online survey respondents rated “inadequate public transportation” as a major or moderate problem in their community; this has been a top household problem in Bellevue surveys in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. In the 2017 provider’s survey, 70% of respondents reported that their clients needed, but could not find, help with transportation. This was the highest rated barrier identified in the provider survey. Other identified gaps in public transportation are ineffective transportation for potential employment, lack of late night bus routes, and money for tickets. In 2015, King County Metro rolled out the Orca LIFT reduced fare program allowing people with low-incomes to purchase a card and load funds on it for use.

### Gaps Include

- Jobs that pay a living wage with benefits.
- Affordable, quality childcare for low-income families.
- Affordable and accessible job training opportunities teaching “new economy” job skills and ESL classes.
- Affordable and accessible transportation options especially for public transportation.

### Implications for Action

- The decrease in middle-income job opportunities makes it harder for people at lower incomes to access better jobs. There

are more low-wage job opportunities, but along with these come financial instability, dependence on public supports that are dwindling due to budget cuts and less of a chance to obtain additional training to increase skills to find a better job. A living wage for a family living in Bellevue is higher than in other parts of King County.

- Bellevue residents have a high level of education, however, there are not many vacancies in some of the growing sectors like hospitality that pay a living wage. It will be critical to attract business and industry that pay living wages.
- Barriers to employment such as lack of affordable and quality childcare, limited English speaking skills, the absence of coordinated transportation and lack of training and education opportunities to secure higher wage jobs are key issues to be addressed to help people improve their economic conditions and the quality of their lives.

## Specific Populations

### Older Adults

#### Key Trends

- By 2030, more than one of every five Washingtonians will be an older adult. People age 65 and older represent 14% of Bellevue’s population. People 65-74 years of age comprise the largest portion of this population (51.3%), followed by those 75-84 years of age (33.1%) and those 85 years of age and older (15.6%). This last age cohort is the fastest growing segment.
- People are living longer, with life expectancy in King County at 77.8 years of age. An AARP study found that most older adults will one day need Long Term Care Services and Supports (LTSS) but about one third of people turning age 65 will have costs that exceed their ability to pay and will need to turn to Medicaid to help pay for LTSS. Many adults say they wish to retire and live at home, and some will likely use

a diverse range of services to maintain their independence, including adult day programs, home modifications and assistive technologies. Fewer people live in nursing homes which are the most expensive option, costing over \$114,000 a year in Washington State; resulting in the overall number of beds, residents and occupancy rate have declined or remained static in the last ten years. The result is increasing demand for in-home services and assisted living residences.

- There are an estimated 600,000 family caregivers in Washington State who provide over 610 million hours of care annually, valued at over \$5.4 billion. Caregiving can take a toll on the emotional, physical and economic health of the care giver. A recent survey found that the total wage, social security, and private pension losses due to caregiving on average were \$303,880. Another study found that the longer a caregiver has been providing care, the more likely they report fair or poor health (23%).
- The population of the people with dementia is increasing, with an estimated 110,000 people in Washington State with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. Washington DSHS estimates that between 2010 and 2040, there will be a 181% increase in the number of Washington residents aged 65 and older with Alzheimer's Dementia. The estimated cost of caring for a person with Alzheimer's in the last 5 years of their life is \$287,038.
- The cultural diversity of Bellevue's population as a whole is also apparent amongst its older adult residents though it is a smaller proportion than children. Asian residents who are 65 and older are about 16% of the population in Bellevue. This is the next highest after White, which is 78%. Hispanics make up 9% and Blacks 2% of the population 65 and older. Over 23% of older adult Bellevue residents speak a language other than English at home, and 16.1% speak English less than "very well".

- Older Bellevue residents, people 65 years and older, are less likely to have a vehicle (8%) than Bellevue adults 35-64 years old (4%). Making the decision to stop driving either for health or financial reasons can have an impact on the older adult's ability to meet their basic needs, such as doctor visits, shopping, and recreation. In response to the growing need for better transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities and low-income people on the Eastside, a group of government and non-profit agencies created the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative, and are working to improve access to public transportation and other transit options.
- The need for affordable housing for the growing older adult population in King County continues to surpass the supply. It is estimated that more than 900 additional units of affordable senior housing units are needed per year until 2025 when the percentage of people older than 65 years of age will be 23% of the population. Reports indicate an increasing in older adults represented among those who are homeless in shelters or living in their cars. In Bellevue, there are only 400 affordable (below market) rental units for low-income older adults, a slight increase from 2015.

### Gaps Include

- Low-cost dental, eye care and hearing aids for low-income older adults.
- Job training and job placement for those who need to or want to work after retirement.
- Access to accessible transportation options.
- Support for family caregivers, including grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Mental health services that are specifically designed to address aging issues.
- Affordable and accessible housing with services, including long term care services and supports.

## Implications for Action

- The rising cost of living strongly impacts many older adults living on fixed incomes. More older adults will likely delay their retirement and work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65, primarily because they can't afford to retire. More support for older adults to find employment may be needed, as well as training opportunities to gain skills in computers and using social media for job searching. Programs such as volunteer transportation and information and referral hubs, are critically needed to help bridge the gap.
- The demand for services for older adults from other countries newly settled here or long-time residents will likely continue to increase. These services include English and citizenship classes, culturally sensitive healthcare, and activities that will encourage them to share their talents and abilities to feel more included in their new culture.
- Coordinated transportation for older adults in the community is likely to become a major focus. Modes of transportation other than single-occupancy vehicles such as shuttles and buses will be increasingly important. Many older adults will give up owning their own vehicles and will need ways to get around to their jobs, to medical appointments, and to other activities essential to daily life.
- Providing support for family caregivers is critical. This is a wise economic investment given the enormous cost-savings to the Medicare, Medicaid and long-term care systems in addition to the positive impact on the disabled and older adult's quality of life. Providing information and resources such as affordable respite care, support groups for caregivers, and classes on planning for their disabled loved ones when they can no longer care for them can help provide some immediate resources to address their stress.
- Housing options for older adults is needed to address the huge shortfall of affordable

housing that is evident now, and will peak by 2025. Creative options are important to consider. These could include more low-income housing development for older adults, home sharing programs, Universal Design and zoning for Accessory Dwelling Units.

- Using technology to help improve the quality of life applies now more than ever for older adults. From Looping for those who are hard of hearing to assistive devices to help those with mobility issues, technology can become an integral part of the menu of resources from which older adults can select to help them lead rich, full lives.
- Dental, hearing and vision services, which are not covered by Medicare, will continue to be more in demand from older adults, and put increased pressure on community-based agencies to provide. Access to mental health counseling remains a critical gap for older adults; a system-wide expansion of service capacity for older adult behavioral health services, from prevention to in-patient treatment is needed.
- Planning is needed to making communities more livable for people of all ages, often referred to as "age-friendly". This includes increasing opportunities for social engagement, healthy lifestyles and civic participation.

## People with Disabilities

### Key Trends

- In the US, it is estimated that 1 in 5 adults have some type of disability. Older adults have the largest share of people with one or more disability with about one third of older adults having one or more disabilities.
- Affordable housing is a significant challenge for people with disabilities who seek an independent living arrangement. With the 2017 maximum federal monthly payment of \$735 per month, which is less than fair market rent for a one bedroom apartment in Seattle-Bellevue metropolitan area

(\$1544). In Washington State, the majority of people with developmental disabilities (97%) live in the community, most with their families. For those who can't live independently, supported living services that offer instruction and support to persons who live in their own homes in the community are available. Of the 10,414 living in King County outside of Seattle, the vast majority live in their parent's homes (9,772). However, more subsidized housing options for people with developmental disabilities are needed as parents age and their adult children look for more independent living.

- The 2014-2017 King County Plan for Developmental Disabilities Services identified the need for culturally competent services and outreach for the increasing number of people from diverse ethnic and cultural communities and with limited English language skills. KCDDD conducted several methods to obtain community feedback and the reoccurring themes were that language and cultural barriers prevent many families from understanding what services they might be eligible for or accessing services in King County.
- Services for children birth to three with developmental delays or disabilities are underfunded at a time when more children are being identified with these needs. In 2016, 287 children aged birth to three living in the Bellevue school district were receiving services compared to 214 in 2014. Early identification and intervention has shown to be effective; King County data indicates that in 2016, 37% of the children who exited Early Intervention services countywide did not need special education services.
- Transition services for youth with intellectual/developmental disabilities leaving high school increases their success in the community, including finding and retaining employment. Local non-profits working with the Bellevue School District have

provided such transition programs with good outcomes, and have begun working with students even earlier than high school to help them and their families understand the system and access services. However, more such services will be needed in the future.

- Even though the unemployment rate in the State is dropping, it is still challenging for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities to find jobs. Despite this challenge, AtWork!, a local supported employment agency, was able to work with employers to create jobs for this population and have increased job placements to over 70 per year. In the last seven years, 220 businesses have hired, for the first time, a person with a disability supported by AtWork!

### Gaps Include

- Limited housing opportunities for people with disabilities who prefer to live independently.
- Respite care for aging parents whose adult children with disabilities still live at home.
- Services for caregivers of children with disabilities, including childcare, recreational and after-school programs and caregivers of adults with disabilities, including respite.
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate programs and outreach to families with children with disabilities who come from diverse cultural and for whom English is not their first language.
- Coordinated, accessible transportation options for people with disabilities.
- Funds for early identification of children with disabilities.
- Lack of available paid and volunteer positions for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities.



## Implications for Action

- Funding for services to people with all types of disabilities continues to lag behind the growth of this population in the state, in King County, and in Bellevue. The result is that there are wait lists for certain services such as housing and family support. And for those programs in which waiting lists are not allowed, agencies are strapped to find additional resources to fill the funding gap. This trend is predicted to continue over the next several years due in part to the higher life expectancy of the aging population with developmental disabilities, the increase of referrals of children with disabilities, and the continued development of medical procedures that now save the lives of those who in the past may not have survived trauma or complications at birth.
- Lack of affordable housing is as much of a problem for people with disabilities as it is for the rest of the population, if not greater. The need is growing faster than housing stock is produced. It is especially critical for people with disabilities to find housing in familiar neighborhood settings, near support systems and convenient amenities, in order to maintain their independence to whatever extent they are able. Another growing need is for more paid and volunteer positions for people with I/DD.
- Early intervention services for children birth to three with disabilities are under-funded. Early intervention saves costs later; for some children whose special needs are identified when they are older, critical time is lost. All sectors of the community-medical, business, education, public and non-profit could increase their efforts to promote early screening and make it easier for parents and caregivers to find help.
- There continues to be a lack of programs for families with children with special needs that do not speak English as their first language. Especially when dealing with issues of disabilities, which can be viewed differently

by various cultures, it is critical that more multilingual, multicultural providers are available to work with families.

- Childcare for children with special needs continues to be in very short supply in the community, as are programs appropriate for children age 12 and older. Community-based organizations already providing such services to typically developing children could, with training and support, help to fill this gap.
- Inclusion of people with all disabilities in all communities needs to be a priority. People with disabilities who experience inclusion early in their lives are more likely to live in and actively contribute to their community as adults.

## Refugees and Immigrants

### Key Trends

- In 2015, Washington ranked 11th in the U.S., resettling 2,625 refugee arrivals, representing about 3.75% of total new refugee arrivals to the U.S. In 2016, King County resettled 4,537 refugee arrivals. The biggest group are from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Ukraine, and Iran. The largest group of immigrants in Bellevue are Hispanic/Latino, Asians including Chinese, Korean, and people from East Indian countries.
- As of 2016, 95 languages and dialects were spoken by Bellevue School District students. The top two languages are Spanish and Mandarin Chinese, with over 1,200 speakers each. Local organizations and colleges offer courses for English Language Learners to help adult refugees and immigrants learn English specially to increase their access to jobs. Agencies report that language barriers are the biggest issue for newcomers from other countries to find work.
- Bellevue's population continues to grow and diversify. In 2015, Census reported that 49.996% of Bellevue residents indicated as a single race, white, making Bellevue a majority non-white population for the first time in

its history. Specifically, Bellevue's Asian and Hispanic/Latino populations have been the fastest growing populations.

- In 2014, the City of Bellevue and its Council adopted a Diversity Advantage Plan. The plan's goal was to research and adopt best practices and engage the community to unlock the positive power of diversity in Bellevue. In 2016, they formed the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN), made up of a diverse group of 21 member who provide counsel to the city on how to better reach, serve, communicate, and collaborate with Bellevue's diverse community.
- The City, in addition to local coalitions, has been working on ways to make information about resources more available to non-English speaking residents. Resource guides and websites in multiple languages and bilingual staff answering phone information lines all aid non-English speakers in identifying and accessing much needed resources. In addition, City of Bellevue and its Council adopted the Diversity Advantage initiative. The initiative was developed to research and apply best practices for organizations and engage the community to learn from them on how to unlock the positive power of diversity in Bellevue. Bellevue implemented some of the recommendations by sponsoring forums on personal safety and immigration rights and developed a training for resident from other cultures on the value of volunteering and how to access volunteer opportunities.
- The need for free or low-cost legal assistance for immigration and family law issues provided in languages other than English continue to grow. Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) has a clinic that deals with immigration law issues and the multilingual clinic that for any civil legal issue through the use of Ethnic Bridge Language line staff and volunteer attorneys. ELAP reported that between November 2016 and May 2017, they met with over 1,000 East

King County residents on immigration issues. There are increasing reports of intimidation, harassment, mistreatment and fear due to immigration status.

- Access to health care, including mental health and dental care, has become increasingly difficult for many adult immigrants, even those who qualify for Medicaid or other insurance through private companies. For instance, some cannot afford the co-pays or deductibles for their insurance, or their plan does not cover what they need. In addition, mental health services are becoming less accessible, especially for minority communities, at a time when people are reporting a higher rate of stress and anxiety.

### Gaps Include

- Free and low-cost legal assistance for immigration and family law issues provided in languages other than English.
- Information about resources in languages other than English.
- Low-cost health and dental care for immigrants who do not have health insurance.
- Support for refugee and immigrant parents with children of all ages.
- ESL and job training programs for non-English speaking residents.

### Implications for Action

- The need for more culturally and linguistically responsive human services staff grows each year. Throughout the community, there is a need for information to be available in languages other than English, such as that provided through the Cultural Navigator program, and other culturally and linguistically specific non-profit organizations.
- There is a lack of culturally appropriate mental health counseling and medical care for recent immigrants or refugees. Use of mental health care can be unfamiliar and unacceptable in some cultures. Providing

culturally responsive care which takes into account diverse backgrounds is essential.

- Requests for English-as-a-Second-Language and citizenship classes at all levels for adults are increasing significantly, a result of larger numbers of refugees and immigrants living in Bellevue as well as a greater demand for better language skills to secure better paying jobs as the cost of living rises. More opportunities for people to learn English, especially those that offer childcare and evening classes, are needed.
- Many parents for whom English is not their first language may need assistance helping their children in school. This can include having more bilingual staff, materials for parents translated in their native languages, and events to educate parents about the school system and culture in the U.S. Opportunities to practice English in social situations would also help in developing language skills.
- More opportunities are needed for people to have cultural events and activities to increase awareness in the community about the richness of these cultures and engage new Americans in meaningful dialogue. There are more ways yet untapped to utilize the strengths and assets that the many immigrant and refugee groups have brought here with them, to enrich and strengthen the whole community. This is especially important for the spouses and parents of workers in the high technological industry that reside here from other countries to provide social support and decrease their isolation.
- In a time of potential implementation of significant changes to federal immigration laws it is critical that the community help immigrants and refugees feel welcome and safe, whether it is applying for services, seeking employment, or taking their children to school or to participate in activities.

## School-Aged Children and Youth

### Key Trends

- The Bellevue School District continues to be among the highest ranked school districts in the nation. In May 2016, 20,177 students were enrolled in Bellevue School District. Approximate 1,733 Bellevue households have students that attend school in the Issaquah School District.
- The student body in the Bellevue School District (BSD) is becoming more diverse. In 2016, 38% of students were White, compared to 71.4% in 1996, 38% were Asian, 12% Hispanic, 8% were black and 9% were two or more races. In addition to growing racial and ethnic diversity, there are now 95 first languages spoken at the district.
- The Bellevue School District created a Department of Equity. The department operates with the belief that, "An equitable and excellent school district is one which all students achieve high levels of academic success, regardless of any student's race, ethnicity, culture, country of origin, religion, gender, special needs, sexual orientation, neighborhood, income of parents, or mother tongue. In an equitable and excellent school district, there are no persistent patterns of differences in the academic achievement or treatment of students grouped by race, ethnicity, culture, special needs, and country of origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and neighborhood, income of parents or mother tongue. Equity and excellence occur when each and every student is served effectively to achieve high levels."
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Washington youth ages 15-24 and the third leading cause of death nationally. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, Washington has the 21st highest overall suicide rate in the nation. According to the 2016 Healthy Youth Survey for

Bellevue School district, 15% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 17% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 16% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders had contemplated suicide in the last 12 months. Further, the mental health of school-aged children and youth is a major concern expressed by teachers and school based counselors. Bellevue mental health providers report challenges in meeting all of the need for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Youth Eastside Services reported an increase over the past five years in the number of young people coming into their office with higher acuity than before: more substance abuse, anxiety, suicide ideations and depression.

- Housing for homeless youth continues to be a need throughout King County. The Bellevue School District reports 257 students were eligible to receive services funded by the federal McKinney-Vento Act because they were homeless. In addition, providers who work with homeless youth report the majority have experienced significant trauma due to physical or sexual abuse, and/or have aged out of the foster care system or have run away from dangerous situations. As a coping mechanism, many of these youth abuse substances and can develop serious addictions. In January 2017, the HUD awarded the Seattle-King County Continuum of Care \$5.4 million for Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. These funds will support a wide range of housing programs to help prevent youth homelessness.

### Gaps Include

- Prevention, early detection and treatment of youth mental health problems, including depression, suicide ideation and anxiety as well as substance abuse.
- Supportive services and programs for all diverse youth include those with disabilities, from other cultures and ethnicities, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning youth.

- Emergency shelter and transitional living programs for homeless youth, including older youth up to age 24.
- Mentor programs, quality after-school programs and other opportunities for positive interaction with adults in the community.

### Implications for Action

- Access to supports for school-aged children and youth to ensure their health and well-being is critical to ensure that they are prepared for success in whatever they do in life. Though the unemployment rate is down, many families still struggle to provide the basics for their children. Lack of resources can put children and youth at risk for poor outcomes, and eventually take an economic toll on the community. Efforts such as Eastside Pathways provide an important framework by which to “mobilize the community to support every child, step by step, from cradle to career”.
- With the growing diversity in Bellevue, there is a need for more culturally sensitive programs and activities for school-aged children and youth and their families who may be coping with adjusting to a new country and culture or to gender-based differences. Involving the families is needed to ensure school success.
- As families experience the lingering effects of the economic downturn, many children are still internalizing this stress, exhibiting problems in school, increased substance abuse, anxiety, suicide ideation and depression, as evidenced by comments from school staff, parents and mental health professionals. Evidence based and promising prevention oriented services, including those that promote health, such as recreation activities and mentoring, are needed to help avoid more serious problems later.
- There is a gap in the “safety net” for homeless youth and young adults, up to age 24. More housing with services and outreach

to this at-risk population is needed to help them move on to productive lives. Some have “aged out” of the foster care system; others are employed or going to school, but lack family or community support.

## Veterans

### Key Trends

- In 2016, there were approximately 112,556 veterans live in King County, about 10.6% decrease from 2010. About 100,834 are men and 11,722 are women. This decline is thought to be due to the large number of veterans aged 65 and older and less recruitment. Overall, the number of women in the military has increased, as has the proportion of veterans who are persons of color. It is estimated that almost 26,000 veterans live in East King County, 22% of the total in the county. In Bellevue, it is estimated that 6,649 people are veterans, a decrease from 2014.
- Consistent with national trends, the number of older veterans is increasing in the state and county. 74,000 veterans, living in King County are over the age of 55 with 30,700 between 55 and 64. In contrast, 9,200 veterans 18-34 years old making up 7.6% compared to 7.8% in 2013.
- Homelessness and lack of affordable housing are significant issues for many vets and their families, both nationally and locally. In the 2017 One Night Count of homeless people in King County about 11% (1,329) identified as veterans, 693 were unsheltered while 636 were sheltered in shelter or transitional housing.
- While vets from all periods of service have experienced a range of mental health issues from the trauma experienced in combat, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) have emerged as two signature injuries of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. PTSD is a severe reaction to war that includes hyper-alertness,

nightmares and depression. It may be triggered by reminders of combat, such as fireworks or television scenes of violence. National data indicates that nearly 20% of vets returning from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan reported a mental health issue such as PTSD or major depression. In King County, it is estimated that between 19,500 to 28,000 veterans from all war eras could be affected, and that as many as half of them will not seek treatment.

- Nationally, 20 veteran's commit suicides each day according to the VA estimate in 2014. Despite efforts by the Veterans Administration (VA) to increase access by veterans to mental health services and supports, suicides continue to increase. Local agencies also report an increase in veterans who struggle with substance abuse as well as mental health issues.
- The King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service was extended due to popular vote, and added services for seniors as an added focus. The Vets Levy programs provide a variety of services addressing the needs of veterans and their families, including affordable housing with support services, veteran and training programs, counseling and consultations for PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, Military Sexual Trauma, and Military Family Counseling. In 2016, 1,146 people in Bellevue received services.

### Gaps Include

- Employment services including job training, education and assistance with re-entry into the job market.
- Mental health services including substance abuse treatment tailored to meet the needs of returning veterans with specific disorders, such as PTSD and physical issues such as TBI; support services for their spouses and children.

- Affordable housing especially for homeless veterans and transportation for veterans to be able to access health and human services.
- Support services for woman veterans who have been sexually traumatized as well as general health care services specific to their needs.
- Supportive services for families of veterans to help with their transition to civilian life.
- Coordination of services including better ways of getting out information about eligibility about vets benefits and other services for vets and their families.
- Services for aging veterans (long term care) and their caregivers.

### Implications for Action

- As a result of a focused countywide effort over the past ten years, human service agencies have begun to better track veterans' usage of their services with improved intake processes. This needs to continue and further be refined so data is available to show the real needs of veterans, especially among the population of homeless veterans who are very challenging to track. In addition, ongoing training for community providers on Veterans Culture and Veterans services are needed to create a more seamless system with "no wrong door" to meet veterans' needs, especially for those veterans who are not eligible for VA services due to their less than honorable discharge status. The Veterans and Human Services Levy funding provides many of these trainings through the Veterans Training Support Center which can be accessed at <http://veteranstrainingsupportcenter.org/>
- Ongoing partnerships between federal, state, and county programs for veterans and human service agencies are needed to ensure that veterans are aware of the benefits to which they are entitled, get help in accessing these benefits when they are eligible, and are assisted in a coordinated, seamless manner.

- In addition to awareness of benefits, city governments could create internships for veterans and help link them to professional networks and businesses to encourage them to hire veterans, and have veterans more access to living wage jobs. Cities could also assist veterans' transition to civilian life by helping them learn about services and resources in East King County.

## Bellevue Adult Misdemeanant Probation

### Key Trends

- The adult offender population impacts all levels of government and communities in multiple ways. There is no organized advocacy working to sustain the public's attention on the needs of this unique population. Identifying this diverse group as a special population with specific needs is a first step in formulating a collaborative plan to work along the entire human services continuum to collectively work toward the shared goal of reducing recidivism.
- Defendants who are guilty of misdemeanor offenses committed in Bellevue are supervised by Bellevue Probation. Typical offenses include: driving under the influence, domestic violence assault, theft, possession of stolen property, driving with a suspended license and various felonies amended to misdemeanors.
- Bellevue Probation is part of the larger regional criminal justice system that deals with adult misdemeanor offenses. Other system components include Bellevue Police, Bellevue Prosecutor, King County District Court and King County and regional jail providers. Probation represents the ideal place along the continuum where real, meaningful interventions can occur to effectively change the lives of the defendants.
- Bellevue provides adult misdemeanor probation services for approximately 1,000 individuals per year with an average daily

population of about 500 supervision cases and 300 administrative cases.

- In April 2012, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) completed a study on “Return on Investment: Evidence-Based Options to Improve Statewide Outcomes”. In that study, supervision with Risk, Need and Responsivity (RNR) Principles showed \$18,386 in crime victim savings, \$5,817 in tax payer savings or a combined net benefit of \$20,660 per offender. This same study also showed cognitive-behavioral therapies provided a 6.9% reduction or a combined net benefit of \$9,283 and Intensive Probation Supervision coupled with treatment related programs showed a net benefit of \$7,295 per offender.
- Some of the issues that the Bellevue adult probation misdemeanor offenders experienced in early life (Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs) have contributed to their interaction with the criminal justice system. Mental health issues are increasingly common in the offender population.
- Bellevue Probation adheres to a best practices mandate to assist individuals in meeting the conditions set by the court. Some examples of intervention strategies utilized include: using an empirically validated assessment tool; License Support Program helping an individual who has lost driving privileges; co-location of a Sound Mental Health forensic staff to aid with mental health services; Stipulated Order of Continuance Program to divert first time domestic violence offenders to probation; the Electronic Home Detention Program providing a cost effective alternative to jail; Work Crew to provide community service.
- Implementing a collective impact approach to services is a key element and vision to support and treat adult misdemeanor offenders. The City of Bellevue supports many human services organizations that provide general services but none targeted for the criminal offender. Bellevue Probation staff meets

regularly with criminal justice partners, service providers and the Probation Advisory Board on issues to address and progress made but does not always result in a common agenda. To affect a meaningful reduction in recidivism requires elevating the needs of this special population to develop additional, effective and collaborative interventions.

### Gaps Include

- Funding for entry level programs for domestic violence, mental health, anger management and chemical dependency treatment.
- Lack of appropriate evaluations.
- Cognitive restructuring programs.
- Parenting programs.
- Educational/vocational programs and job searches.
- Re-licensing assistance.
- Funds for basic needs like housing.
- Interpreters to address the increasing linguistic diversity in Bellevue.
- Collective impact interventions to develop effective and collaborative interventions.

### Implications for Action

- While Bellevue Probation has incorporated many best practices into its program, resources are limited and access for these and other human services is an ongoing issue. Regularly, offenders have a demonstrated need for one or more services (for example, substance abuse treatment, housing, transportation) but find they have just enough income to be ineligible for public funding yet unable to pay for these services and still meet their family’s basic needs.
- Increased access to subsidized health and human services are key to preventing recidivism and increasing the offenders’ chance of successful re-entry into society.
- With the growing ethnic diversity in Bellevue, it is not unexpected that the

offender population is also becoming more diverse. Staff report that about 10% of their clients use English as a second language. The need for interpreters is increasing.

- Funding for entry level programs is lacking for domestic violence, mental health and chemical dependency treatments.