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**Frustration, concerns as education on law delayed**

Many providers are still unaware of new law allowing parents to force teens into mental health treatment

By EMMY DINMAN  
 Staff Writer

OLYMPIA — In July of 2019, a new law came into effect that allowed parents to initiate mental health or substance abuse treatment for their children age 13-17 without their consent. House Bill 1874, or the Adolescent Behavioral Health Care Access Act, passed through the legislature in 2019. It gave a teen's legal guardian the right to request "Family-Initiated Treatment" for mental health or substance abuse disorders without the consent of the minor, whether for admission, evaluation or treatment for inpatient care or coun-

See LAW, A4

**Suspects reportedly scam change dispensing machine**

By EMMY DINMAN  
 Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Move over, quarter-on-a-string, and make way for \$5-dollar-bill-on-some-tape. Moses Lake police responded to the FAA Car Wash on Saturday for a report of two suspects attempting to trick the change dispensing machine by using a \$5 bill with tape on the end. The suspects reportedly inserted the change, and then recovered the bill by pulling it out by the attached tape. While police officials weren't immediately certain how many times the suspects managed to defeat the change machine, the suspects could have found easier and more honest ways to earn a handful of quarters, said Cpt. Mike Williams. "You're not talking about substantial amounts of money," Williams said wryly. The suspects were believed to be driving a dark blue Ford Fusion. The incident is under investigation.



Two U.S. Navy Reserve pilots climb into their EA-18G Growler airplane at the Grant County International Airport Monday afternoon after taking a break in between training flights. Charles H. Featherstone/Columbia Basin Herald

**ML Port mulls arrestor system at airport**

By CHARLES H. FEATHERSTONE  
 Staff Writer



An EA-18G Growler with the Electronic Attack Squadron 209 out of Whidbey Island prepares to leave the Grant County International Airport on Monday. Charles H. Featherstone/Columbia Basin Herald

MOSES LAKE — The Port of Moses Lake may have to install an arrestor system if it wants to host Air Force or Navy demonstration teams at future air shows. According to Moses Lake Air Show organizer Terry Quick, the Air Force requires that any aircraft with tailhooks be able to land at an airfield with an arrestor system within "80 nautical miles" (92 miles) and that the nearest airfield with an arrestor system is around "120 nautical miles" (138 miles) away. While tailhooks are commonly used on Navy and Marine Corps fighter jets to make carrier landing possible, most Air Force fighter jets have tailhooks as well in the event of an emergency. The tailhook is dropped to grab hold of a long steel cable stretched across a runway

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**Grant County unemployment rises in 2019**

**Manufacturing sector loses jobs**  
 By CHERYL SCHWEIZER  
 Staff Writer

data from the Washington State Employment Security Department, Grant County's average annual unemployment rate was 7.1 percent in 2019. "The average annual unemployment rate was 6.2 percent in 2018. The statewide average annual unemployment rate was 4.5 percent for 2019. The employment security department provided data for 2009 to 2019, and in that decade Grant

County's average unemployment was always higher than the statewide average. Preliminary data shows Grant County lost 160 jobs from 2018 to 2019, said Don Meseck, regional labor economist for WSESD. Normally the county would add jobs just with the increase in the labor force, Meseck said, but the job market shrank slightly instead. The manufacturing sector lost about 170 jobs, a 3.5

percent downturn, in 2019, according to employment security department data. Most of those jobs lost were in the nondurable goods sector, Meseck said, which in Grant County is composed mostly of food processing facilities. Nondurable goods accounts for most manufacturing jobs in Grant County, he said. "That's a more volatile

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# Nation

## Trump looks to 'shake up the Dems' with rally

Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Eager to put on a show of force in a general election battleground state, President Donald Trump tried to rattle Democrats on Monday with a rally in New Hampshire on the eve of the state's first-in-the-nation primaries.

Trump, on a high after his acquittal last week on impeachment charges, boasted about the nation's strong economy, tore into his possible general election foes and launched an assault on the Democrats who tried to remove him from office, calling the episode a "pathetic partisan crusade."

"Our good Republicans in the United States Senate voted to reject the outrageous partisan impeachment hoax and to issue a full, complete and absolute total acquittal," Trump told a crowd that roared and cheered throughout his speech. "And it wasn't even close."

Trump's rally comes a day before New Hampshire Democrats head to the polls following the disastrous Iowa caucuses that failed to produce a clear-cut winner to take Trump on in November. Trump mocked the lingering uncertainty over the outcome of the party's kickoff caucuses, where the results are still under dispute.

"Does anyone know who won Iowa?" he asked the crowd. "I don't know."

Before leaving Washington, Trump said he had planned the rally to rattle Democrats and demonstrate his strength in the state before the primary vote.

"Want to shake up the



Yuri Gripas/THS

U.S. President Donald Trump offers a thumbs up to the media on the South Lawn of the White House before departing for a campaign rally in Manchester, N.H. on Monday.

Dems a little bit - they have a really boring deal going on," Trump tweeted. "Still waiting for the Iowa results, votes were fried. Big crowds in Manchester!"

It's a tried-and-tested tactic for Trump: Scheduling counter-programming to divert attention from Democratic debates and other major moments, keeping him in the spotlight and building supporters' enthusiasm in the months before Election Day.

At the same time, Trump continued to celebrate the Senate's acquittal decision, lacing into House Speaker Nancy Pelosi for her performance during his State of the Union address last week.

"I had somebody behind me who was mumbling terribly,

mumbling, mumbling," Trump complained, calling it "very distracting, very distracting." He did not make mention of how, at the address' conclusion, Pelosi tore up her copy of the speech.

Trump's remarks prompted the crowd to break into the same "Lock her up!" chant that his supporters directed at Hillary Clinton four years ago.

It wasn't the only return feature from his 2016 rallies. In a nod to the longtime supporters who have returned to his rallies again, Trump returned to one of his greatest, if rarest hits, delivering a spoken-word performance of "The Smiles," a dark 1970s song he has used as an allegory to warn of what he sees as the dangers of illegal immigrants

and refugees allowed into the United States.

Though it isn't presenting the same show of force as last week, when dozens of Trump's surrogates flooded Iowa, the Trump campaign made its presence known in New Hampshire. In addition to Vice President Mike Pence and Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter and senior adviser, Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Rand Paul, House Republican Whip Steve Scalise and New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu were set to campaign on his behalf Tuesday.

The marquee event was held in front of a sold-out crowd of thousands at a downtown Manchester arena, and Trump made sure viewers at home knew it.

"We have more in this arena and outside of this arena than all of the other candidates, meaning the Democrats, put together and multiplied times five," he boasted.

Images of bundled-up supporters camped outside the SNHU Arena also broke through the news coverage of the Democratic primary. As Air Force One touched down in New Hampshire, a stream of TrumpWorld luminaries — including Vice President Mike Pence and first son Donald Trump Jr. — preceded the president to the stage.

A frequent topic from the stage: broadsides against the impeachment that imperiled Trump's presidency.

"Justice was served, our Constitution was defended and President Trump was acquitted forever!" Pence told the roaring crowd.

## Sanders tops Democratic field in national poll after Iowa

TNS

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Bernie Sanders is leading the Democratic field in a national poll taken after the Iowa caucuses.

The Quinnipiac University poll showed the Vermont senator with 25% support, topping the survey for the first time. He was followed by former Vice President Joe Biden at 17% and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg at 15%.

Biden dropped dramatically since the previous Quinnipiac poll on Jan. 28, when he had 26% and the lead. In that poll, Sanders was second with 21% and Bloomberg had 8%. (Bloomberg is the founder and majority owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent company of Bloomberg News.)

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren came in fourth in the February poll with 14%, followed by former South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg at 10% and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar at 4%. No other candidate had more than 2%.

Buttigieg emerged from the Feb. 3 Iowa caucuses with the most delegates, followed closely by Sanders and Warren. Biden came in fourth.

Sanders is also leading in New Hampshire polls ahead of the state's primary on Tuesday.

Quinnipiac analyst Tim Malloy said Biden's slide in the poll appears to be correlated with a similar slide in a poll question on electability.

"Clearly Biden's fourth-place finish in Iowa has hurt the perception of what was his biggest strength — electability," he said.

## LAW

from A1

selling for outpatient care.

It also meant that providers could, at their discretion, give certain information to the parents about their children. This included a diagnosis, treatment plans, recommended medications and their potential risks or benefits, and coaching on parenting strategies tailored to the child's needs.

Youths older than 13 still have rights to their medical records, and providers would have to disclose to the adolescent that they intended to provide information to their parents. Those teenagers would have the right to object to that disclosure, but a provider could overrule that objection.

For Ephrata mom Penny Quist, whose teenager's mental health issues had become severe enough to require an inpatient long-term mental health bed, the change in law was a godsend. For starters, it allowed her to overrule any objections her child might have to treatment, but perhaps more important, it meant she was being taught by providers how to best help her son.

"It's saving my child's life, it's saving my family's life," Quist said. "You can't treat the individual without training the family."

Yet, despite the substantial improvement that Quist and other advocates believed HB 1874 to be, its passage presented a quandary on either side to turn to the courts to involuntarily confine the child or else lose control of the child's treatment.

Various attempts to mitigate what were characterized as unintended effects of the

parents trying to stay abreast of the state's changing mental health system. Through that, she said she has heard from a number of parents of teenagers turned away by providers, including Grant Integrated Services, claiming they couldn't admit a child older than 13 without the child's consent, despite the legal change.

Grant Integrated Services did not respond to a request for comment.

The Washington Health Care Authority, or HCA, was tasked last year with educating providers about their rights under the new law, and the legislature funded a full-time staff member to oversee the rollout of that outreach. To date, parents and providers say they've seen little from the agency to provide information about their rights under HB 1874.

"They have not published anything that describes the new law," said Peggy Dolane, who has two adult children with mental health needs and who led the charge to get HB 1874 passed.

### A long time coming

For decades, families had little recourse if their teenage children refused treatment.

In 1985, the state passed a law allowing children age 13-17 to access mental health services without parental consent. But the law would soon also be construed in the reverse: If a 13-year-old refused treatment, a parent or guardian either had to turn to the courts to involuntarily confine the child or else lose control of the child's treatment.

Various attempts to mitigate what were characterized as unintended effects of the

law came and went in years that followed, including as provisions to the 1995 Becca Bill, but were struck down in court, were vetoed or died in committee.

In 1998, a new system called "Parent-Initiated Treatment," a precursor to "Family-Initiated Treatment," was established, allowing parents to bring their teenage children for behavioral health evaluations and treatment. But "the provider community failed to respond with enthusiasm," wrote state Senate Committee Services staff counsel in 2018, and between the bill's passage and 2011, only two children were placed in treatment under the new law.

Though further bills would be enacted that would eventually increase the number of children admitted to mental health services under Parent-Initiated Treatment, many providers raised concerns about potential liability.

For some, the distinction between Parent-Initiated Treatment and court-ordered involuntary treatment was not clear enough. Others were also concerned about providing the child's medical information to parents, possibly in violation of federal privacy laws.

The new law was supposed to ease the concerns of providers when it passed in 2019, said Diana Cockrell, section manager of Child Youth and Family Behavioral Health & Adult Substance Use Treatment Services, which is part of the Washington Health Care Authority.

Given providers' concerns in years past regarding liability and unclear legal language for the now-defunct Parent-Initiated Treatment system, the HCA is waiting to see if the legislature will make any more changes to the new

system before informing providers.

Providers can still decline Family-Initiated Treatment, Cockrell said, and clear and concise guidance from the state could make the difference for providers in making that decision.

For instance, HB 2883, currently under consideration, would extend Family-Initiated Treatment to residential treatment centers, and could substantially change the information the HCA would need to give to providers, Cockrell said.

Telling providers about one new set of rules, only to turn around a year later and inform them about a new set of changes, could create additional confusion and discourage providers from taking part in Family-Initiated Treatment, Cockrell added.

"We didn't want providers to feel burned by this," Cockrell said.

### A long way to go

But HB 2883 is likely not to be the only tweak made to Family-Initiated Treatment, said Dolane, who noted that changes to intensive outpatient services would likely be up for consideration in 2021. Instead of waiting for all of those tweaks to take place, Dolane said she'd prefer that the state found a sequential approach to informing providers about changes as they cropped up.

"It's taking the system a long time to get their head around it," Dolane said.

Meanwhile, Quist said, children turned away by providers who haven't been educated about Family-Initiated Treatment are put at risk.

"Every time they delay any of this education, we

aren't just waiting to get the information out there, we are losing children's lives," Quist said.

"I haven't heard of a horrific example yet," Dolane said, "but it's still challenging to get information, because families get so isolated when they're in the middle of their crisis."

Despite the challenges, there have been some attempts to fill the information vacuum, both among advocates and state institutions, Dolane noted.

"There's some really good things happening," Dolane said. "I'm doing my best to get the word out, and parents are getting the word out, and there is the beauty of Facebook."

She also pointed to Family Youth System Partner Round Tables, or FYSPT, established in recent years as a part of the settlement of a 2009 lawsuit against the state, as a particularly bright spot in what can otherwise be an opaque system.

The round tables bring parents, youth, service providers and other parties together to collaboratively address issues in the state mental health system writ large or in individual cases.

"If people want to get involved, FYSPT is where they can go to get involved in their community," Dolane said.

The next meeting of the North Central Regional FYSPT, which serves four counties, including Grant County, will be held Feb. 20 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Parkway Medical Group, 615 S. Division St., Suite A, in Moses Lake.

Emry Dinman can be reached via email at edinman@columbiabasinherald.com.

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Moses Lake girls prepare for regional game against Decatur



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# Columbia Basin Herald LOCAL NEWS

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## Work in progress

Cheryl Schweizer/Columbia Basin Herald

A basketball court and soccer field were removed to make room for the new gym at Moses Lake Christian Academy. Construction begins this week.

### Moses Lake Christian Academy gym construction begins

Foundation work starts today

By CHERYL SCHWEIZER  
Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Foundation work has begun on the new gym for the Moses Lake Christian Academy, at 1475 E. Nelson Road.

Ground preparation began Monday, said Fred Meise, who is on the committee overseeing the project, with excavation starting Wednesday morning.

Enough money has been raised to build the foundation and raise the

building's exterior, he said. Academy officials purchased the steel building for the gym about three years ago.

"We're moving forward. It's an exciting day," Meise said. The cost of the building, which will be 11,360 square feet, is estimated at \$1.5 million to completion, what Meise called "turkey." Academy officials have been working on the project since 2015, Meise said. To date the committee has raised more than \$500,000, he added.

Completing the foundation and raising the building is the first phase of the project, he said. The second phase will include finishing the interior. The new gym will have bleacher

seating for about 500 people, locker rooms and a concession stand. Academy officials are raising money for the gym floor, bleachers, locker room and concession equipment, he said.

The academy has the use of a gym, but not on the MLCA campus. The site for the new gym is next to the existing elementary school, which required removing the MLCA soccer field and an outdoor basketball court.

A fundraiser will be held for the gym project during the annual MLCA crab feed scheduled for March 21, Meise said.

Cheryl Schweizer can be reached via email at education@columbiabasinherald.com.

## Center moves forward

After hesitation, Moses Lake progresses with Larson Rec Center

By EMMY DINMAN  
Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — After initial hesitation, the Moses Lake City Council unanimously voted Tuesday to move forward with the 30,000-square-foot recreation center. Deputy Mayor Daryl Jackson was absent.

The council at a Feb. 10 meeting had tabled a decision to amend a contract for the firm designing the proposed 30,000-square-foot Larson Rec Center after a council member expressed concerns about the project's costs.

The amendment would have increased the maximum amount allocated for The Driftmier Architects' design fee from \$451,249 to \$821,602. The increase reflects the increased size of the project, which was first proposed in 2018 to be 14,000 square feet and was later more than doubled to 30,000 square feet.

The council voted to amend The Driftmier Architects' contract Tuesday, the final vote necessary before the project can continue and be brought to bid. Only with bids in hand can the council make a final vote to begin construction.

The proposed recreation center, in the 600 block of Yakima Avenue, would add a number of features to the community, including multi-use indoor space that could be used as basketball, volleyball and pickleball courts. It would also add bathrooms and changing rooms to accommodate the nearby ice rink, which council members hope will allow local

See CENTER, A3

### After concerns, Grant Integrated Services to update policies

By EMMY DINMAN  
Staff Writer

Grant Integrated Services says it's on the cusp of bringing its policies into compliance with a law passed almost a year ago allowing parents to initiate mental health or substance abuse treatment for their children age 13 to 17.

The largest behavioral health provider in Grant

County, GIS hopes to have the new law added to official policy within the next several weeks, Director Dell Anderson said in an interview.

The move comes shortly after a Feb. 10 Columbia Basin Herald report on the lack of education to mental health providers from state agencies on the new law, and the resulting difficulties some parents

reported when attempting to access their rights through GIS.

House Bill 1874, or the Adolescent Behavioral Health Care Access Act, came into effect last July. It gave a teen's legal guardian the right to request "Family-Initiated Treatment" for mental health or substance abuse disorders without the consent of the minor, whether for admission,

evaluation or treatment for inpatient care or counseling for outpatient care, if it is deemed medically necessary.

It also meant that providers could, at their discretion, give certain information to the parents about their kids during treatment. This includes a diagnosis, treatment plans, recom-



Emmy Dinman/Columbia Basin Herald

Grant Integrated Services is the largest behavioral health provider in Grant County.

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Volunteers make quilts for cancer patients. C1

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**Courthouse arrests**

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# State/Local

## GOP doubts effectiveness of proposed spending on homelessness

By CAMERON SHEPPARD  
WNPA News Service

OLYMPIA — Republican leaders in Washington state said they are not confident that spending on homelessness proposed by the Democrats will produce significant results.

On Monday, Democrats from the Washington House and Senate proposed separate supplemental operating budgets following a \$1.5 billion increase in expected revenue. Each proposal designated more than \$100 million to fund affordable and supportive housing with the intent to address homelessness.

The House budget proposal, put together by Rep. Timm Ormsby, D-Spokane, allotted more than \$230 million to reduce homelessness.

"I don't think it's the amount, it is how it's spent," said Sen. Mark Schoessler, R-Ritzville. "Just throwing money at it hasn't worked."

Schoessler said from what he has seen, he is not confident that either of the budget proposals would produce impactful results within the next year.

Rep. Drew Stokesbary, R-Auburn, and Sen. Randi Becker, R-Eatonville, agreed with Schoessler.

"Simply putting more money in the exact same things we have been putting money in for the last five years isn't sufficient," Stokesbary said.

According to Stokesbary, the approach that Seattle has taken to mitigate homelessness is "failed." Stokesbary said the governor seems to be supporting the same kind of housing investment approach that Seattle has pursued, which has only exacerbated the problem.

Becker said she was in favor of alternative solutions proposed by Sen. Hans Zeiger, R-Puyallup, which provide "ways forward," for homeless individuals.

Zeiger sponsored Senate Bill 5261, which would have created a pilot program to incentivize cities to hire homeless individuals for certain city projects. The bill had bipartisan support but never left committee during this session.

"We need to have the compassion to help people, but we also have to have the will to give people tough love," Stokesbary said.

## Bills aim to protect immigrants from warrantless arrests at courthouses

By LEONA VAUGHN  
WNPA News Service

OLYMPIA — Undocumented immigrants in Washington state would no longer need to fear arrest in certain circumstances under legislation currently being considered in Washington state.

House Bill 2567 and its companion, Senate Bill 622, would prohibit civil arrests without a court order or arrest warrant within one mile of a court facility. "For me, as a refugee, it took me a while to overcome my fear for police," said Rep. My-Linh Thai, D-Bellevue, the House bill's primary sponsor. "It took me a while to overcome my fear for the ... judicial system."

According to the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington, "over the past two years, there have been more than 200 documented civil arrests at courthouses in over 18 counties across the state."

The rise in immigration enforcement at Washington courthouses "has

a direct chilling effect on immigrant crime victims," said Alex Kory, a crime victims attorney with Northwest Justice Project.

"When victims are scared to seek protection, crimes go unchecked," Kory said.

At an earlier hearing, a man named Carlos shared his story about how he was arrested two years ago while renewing his license plates.

"A lot of folks are fearful of getting their families separated, like it happened to me," Carlos said through a translator. "My family ... are too afraid to go to court. They have to choose between addressing their court issues or being arrested by immigration."

Opponents pushed back, citing the constraints the proposed law would put on judicial officers and law enforcement.

"We think that the definition of civil arrest does, in fact, impede our ability to enforce simple things like traffic laws," said James McMahan, policy

director for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

"The intent of this bill, as I understand it, is to make sure that people feel safe when they go to court," said Rep. Morgan Irwin, R-Enumclaw, who spoke in opposition to the proposal at an earlier debate. "It seeks to do that by making a one-mile radius surround every courthouse in the state of Washington and that doesn't make sense to me."

The bill would only apply to arrests made for the violation of civil law and "excludes arrest for alleged criminal law violations, or arrest for contempt of court," according to the substitute Senate bill report.

HB 2567 was passed by the House on Monday, Feb. 17, with 55 yeas and 43 nays. It was heard by the Senate Law and Justice Committee on Tuesday, Feb. 25, and it is scheduled for an executive session, which is when committee members vote whether to move it forward, on Thursday, Feb. 27.

## WSU Spokane plans to expand Native American health resources

TNS

SPOKANE — WSU Health Sciences Spokane plans to expand its support for Native American students, faculty members and prospective students with a \$250,000 grant from the Empire Health Foundation.

The grant will help create the Center for Native American Health, develop programs to prepare students to apply for further education in the health sciences and create an interprofessional curriculum designed to integrate indigenous-based cultural traditions and history, with medicine.

Naomi Bender, director of the Native American Health Sciences program, said the center will be a separate building on the WSU Spokane campus and will be home to several programs for Native American students, researchers and prospective students.

The center will have study areas, a computer lab, a kitchen to prepare traditional meals and a gathering place. There will also be a spiritually-based healing space for students and staff to use, Bender said.

The grant funds will also help start a mentoring program for pre-health sciences students at WSU in Pullman, Eastern Washington University, Spokane Community College

and North Idaho College, among other institutions.

WSU Health Sciences has connections to local tribes including the Spokane, Kalispel, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Coeur d'Alene tribes. The mentoring program would help students see first-hand what working in different health care settings is like as well as help them potentially apply for a health science program.

The center will serve as a place for application workshops, support for current students as well as a hub for research based in tribal areas. Bender said the grant funds

will help support a faculty member, who will lead the mentoring program as well as develop the interprofessional curriculum.

The curriculum would also explore plant and herbal based medicines, the history of colonization and the epidemics, what health trends exist and how Indian Health Service has changed over time, Bender said. Ideally, a student who finishes the curriculum could receive an interprofessional certification simultaneously with their other courses, and the training would be for not just medical school students but for all students on campus.

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A rendering of the proposed Larson Recreation Center.

Courtesy photo

## CENTER

from A1

hockey programs to expand.

Workout spaces were also proposed, though that particular feature came under question Tuesday night, after Mitch Molitor, a hotel and gym owner, questioned whether

the city should provide service that could compete with local gyms. Several council members later echoed Molitor's concerns. Tuesday's vote, however,

only solidified the architectural contract and the proposed 30,000-square-foot floor plan, what that space gets used for in the future will be the subject of future debate.

## GIS

from A1

mended medications and their potential risks or benefits, and coaching on parenting strategies tailored to the child's needs.

GIS is by no means the only service provider still catching up with the new law, and the Washington State Health Care Authority, which was tasked in mid-2019 with educating providers, has still not published guidance on the subject.

In an interview, HCA officials said they had wanted to see if the legislature would make any more changes to the new system before informing providers, concerned that providing conflicting information would only add to confusion. The new law allows providers to participate in Family Initiated Treatment but does not force them to, and HCA officials said they believed that clear guidance from the state would make it more likely that providers would take part.

But delays in rolling out the new law and bringing up-to-date information to providers have taken a toll.

Moses Lake mother Adina Jones, who has a daughter suffering from mental health issues and has threatened suicide, said she has had requests for information be rejected by GIS staff, seemingly due to a misunderstanding of the new law.

Slow implementation of the new law has also resulted in some parents, believing they finally had the right to force a resistant child into treatment, not being able to initiate treatment for their children, said Penny Quist, an Ephrata parent and youth mental health advocate.

Without guidance from state agencies, management with GIS was slow to realize the practical effects of the new law, at

first believing the current policies would not need to be substantially changed, Anderson said.

It was only as questions and concerns were raised that administrators realized the scope of changes and began to act, he said.

"Though a policy hasn't yet been put into writing, Anderson said that staff had been directed to operate under the provisions of the new law. He acknowledges, however, that communicating this to staff can be improved including with a written policy.

Anderson notes that not every circumstance of a parent not getting the outcome they expected is a result of GIS' failure to align itself with the new law. Within the provisions of Family Initiated Treatment, there are still several circumstances in which a teen is turned away, particularly if a

medical provider or crisis team determines treatment is medically unnecessary.

But to the extent that legitimate cases of Family Initiated Treatment are being denied, Anderson asks parents to let him know.

"I wasn't aware of people being turned away," Anderson said. "We do have a complaint process, and I would just ask that if anyone in the community has had a negative experience with staff, I

would just ask that they reach out to me or submit a complaint."

Anderson became GIS' interim executive director in October, several months after the law was already in effect. He took the helm of the organization on a permanent basis in January.

Acknowledging that GIS has had difficulties with client satisfaction and compliance in the past, Anderson said his primary responsibility is to update the organiza-

tion's policies, improve the way services are provided, and bring back the community's trust.

"I really want to change the way the community views Grant Integrated Services. I really do," Anderson said. "We owe it to this community to provide services in a way that reduces barriers to treatment, that people feel like they can trust their community behavioral health provider. It's going to take time."

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