

NEWS

Behavioral Health to offer first transitional home in Sequim

By [Matthew Nash](#) • October 23, 2024 1:30 am



Photo courtesy Peninsula Behavioral Health Wendy Sisk, CEO for Peninsula Behavioral Health, and Clallam County commissioner Randy Johnson ready to cut a ribbon with the Sequim - Dungeness Valley Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 16 for PBH's first transitional house in Sequim. County funds helped pay for the refurbished home for five adults.

Officials with Peninsula Behavioral Health (PBH) are readying to open the doors to its first transitional house in Sequim this November for five adults.

Staff and community members celebrated the future opening with a Sequim - Dungeness Valley Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting on Oct. 16 in the refurbished space.

"The more we can do to support people to get people into housing, the more likely they are to be independent," said Wendy Sisk, CEO for PBH, in an interview.

"Housing is healthcare."

As of last week, three of the five spaces have been reserved for individuals who do not have housing, or have been couch surfing, Sisk said.

In some cases for the agency's transitional housing, individuals were living with family members who have aged out of the ability to provide support, she said.

The Sequim house, formerly PBH's Sequim office, will provide transitional supportive living for five adults who have higher needs for support with independent living, said development director Tracy Sheldon via email.

The home was funded with \$250,000 from Clallam County per Substitute House Bill 4106 that allows jurisdictions to impose a local state-shared sales and use tax for affordable/supportive housing projects.

Sequim's home is the agency's fourth Transitional Supportive Home, and its house and property is owned by PBH.



Once open, it'll bring space up to 17 rooms for transitional housing through the agency along with 35-40 spaces in its long-term apartments.

Apartments have a waitlist of more than 150 people, Sisk said, while transitional housing placement is based on recommendations through clinical teams.

Transitional housing's tenure is by definition for no more than two years, she said.

This new home is the only planned house in Sequim, she said, as they have a 36-unit permanent apartment housing project being built in Port Angeles that will take at least a year to complete.

"We don't expect a lot more action while we're working through building that complex," Sisk said.

In the house

At the transitional homes, Sheldon said PBH staff are onsite most of the day.

Clients' daily living will include working with case managers and peers' support to make a plan to brush their teeth, do laundry and dishes, take cooking classes, and much more.

"We also are working to make sure residents are supporting one another and being good neighbors," Sisk said.

"We very rarely have complaints from neighbors because staff are in there most days, if not all days.

ne goal is to get them to be independent."

One of the benefits of a transitional house is that it helps clients with rental and credit history, so that they can be in a better position to apply and be successful when permanent housing does come up, Sisk said.

According to PBH staff, there are no specific requirements for income or homeless status to live in the agency's transitional houses.

Tenants pay monthly rent and the homes are available exclusively for PBH clients on a month-to-month lease term, Sheldon wrote.

Sisk said how clients pay rent varies, but many receive disability payments due to mental illness.

"If someone doesn't have income we will provide them assistance while we help them get into supportive programs," she said.

Clients have serious mental illnesses, such as severe depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and other psychotic illnesses, staff report.

"They're more likely to be a victim of a crime than to commit one," Sisk said.

"They're not going to ruin our neighborhoods.

"There's a lot of fear about mental illness, but it's not contagious. They're reasonable and valuable people in our community."

For more about Peninsula Behavioral Health, visit peninsulabehavioral.org. With questions, call (360) 457-0431.



Photo courtesy Peninsula Behavioral Health/ Peninsula Behavioral Health's former Sequim office was refurbished to provide transitional supportive living for five adults who have higher needs for support with independent living, said development director Tracy Sheldon. It'll open sometime in November.



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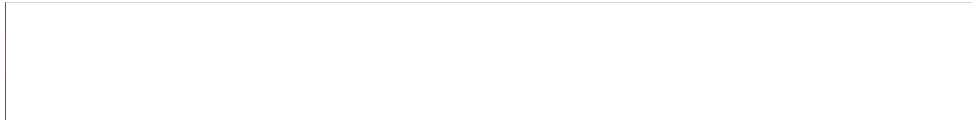


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Law enforcement agencies offer prescription drug take back day Oct. 26

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