

For immediate release

Providence and Fairfax file letter of intent for 85-bed freestanding psychiatric hospital in Thurston County

Providence St. Peter Hospital and Fairfax Behavioral Health are in consideration of developing an 85-bed freestanding psychiatric hospital in Thurston County. We submitted a joint letter of intent with the Department of Health on Friday, April 22, opening the door for the parties to file a certificate of need application toward the end of May.

Behavioral health services are regularly identified as a significant need in the region. However, the capacity to care for patients has not kept pace with demand, and the overall need is projected to increase for the foreseeable future.

- About 67,000 adults in Thurston County have a mental health condition.
- 82 percent of the homeless population surveyed in Olympia report having a persistent mental health condition. The average length of time these individuals have lived in Thurston County is 15 years.
- The ratio of population to mental health providers in Thurston County is 520:1, compared to 380:1 in Washington.
- More than 10 percent of the patients who come to the Providence St. Peter Hospital Emergency Department need behavioral health services (approximately 22 each day).

Providence identified the opportunity to greatly improve and expand access to behavioral health services in Southwest Washington by partnering with Fairfax Behavioral Health. Providence has already established partnerships with Fairfax in Everett and in Spokane.

“This free-standing hospital will allow us to grow the existing services that Providence already provides and fill a gap in the community,” says Medrice Coluccio, chief executive for Providence in Southwest Washington.

Fairfax’s history spans 85 years and shares Providence’s commitment to the poor and vulnerable. This partnership aligns with Providence’s core strategy of “creating healthier communities, together,” which calls for identifying like-minded partners to meet the needs of the community.

Providence St. Peter Hospital Crisis Services Department (located in the St. Peter Hospital Emergency Center) is the only one of its kind in the five-county service area of Thurston, Lewis, Mason, Grays Harbor and Pacific counties. It is regularly at capacity, and unable to accept additional patients from Thurston County and beyond.

“The addition of a freestanding psychiatric hospital will be particularly crucial in assisting the surrounding rural communities that do not have the necessary staff or facilities to treat and care for this patient population,” added Coluccio.

By partnering with Fairfax, Providence can expand access and develop services to meet the behavioral health needs of the community. The new hospital will be well connected with the providers and services available at Providence clinics and hospitals in Thurston, Lewis, Grays Harbor and Mason counties, creating a seamless care experience for patients.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for our two organizations to bring the full scope of our expertise and resources to address an identified need in southwest Washington,” says Ron Escarda, Fairfax Behavioral Health chief executive officer. “Fairfax is excited about having the opportunity to utilize its knowledge and expertise in the provision of behavioral health services to the Thurston County community, and working in partnership with Providence St. Peter Hospital to serve these patients and their families.”

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Providence Health & Services in Southwest Washington touches more lives in Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor and Pacific counties than any other health care provider. It is made up of:

- **Providence St. Peter Hospital** is a 390-bed, not-for-profit regional teaching hospital founded by the Sisters of Providence in 1887 with Magnet® recognition. The Magnet Recognition Program® recognizes the top health care organizations in the nation for providing nursing excellence. Only two other hospitals in Washington have garnered this honor. Providence St. Peter was one of just 24 hospitals in the United States (out of 4,600) to be named a top performer by U.S. News and World Report. It ranked No. 2 in Washington. Located in Olympia, the hospital offers comprehensive medical, surgical and behavioral health services to residents of Southwest Washington. St. Peter is a regional leader in cardiology, oncology, orthopedics and neurosciences. The Joint Commission has designated the hospital a Stroke Center of Excellence since 2007.
- **Providence Centralia Hospital** is a 128-bed, not-for-profit community-based hospital. The services the hospital provides make it the heart of medical care in Lewis County. Providence Centralia has state-of-the-art services such as MRI, 64-slice CT scans and digital mammography. Providence Centralia earned top national quality recognition by the Joint Commission three of the last four years.
- **Providence Medical Group** operates 27 clinics in 33 locations, with more than 200 specialized providers in Lewis, Thurston, Mason and Grays Harbor counties. The group provides primary and specialty care. All 10 primary care clinics are level-3 accredited by the NCQA. Clinics include family medicine, internal medicine, cardiology, neurosurgery, oncology, diabetes care, general surgery, endocrinology, obstetrics/gynecology, infectious disease services, psychiatry, psychiatry and urology.

Fairfax Behavioral Health has served the behavioral health needs of the Pacific Northwest for 85 years. Fairfax has a long standing commitment for meeting the community’s needs by providing the best and most compassionate patient centered care. It operates facilities in Kirkland, Everett and Monroe Washington with a total of 221 psychiatric and substance abuse beds making Fairfax the largest provider of inpatient psychiatric services in the Pacific Northwest. Providing the full continuum of care, Fairfax treats adolescents, adults and older adults with psychiatric and/or substance use disorders in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Fairfax supports recovery through its commitment to the provision of a supportive environment and an ongoing plan for long-term sobriety and improved mental health. Fairfax is dedicated to educating the public on the value of identifying and treating behavioral illnesses, addictions and their impact on people’s lives. Visit www.fairfaxbehavioralhealth.com to learn more.