



## \$612 million new forensic hospital unjustified by Washington's own analysis

The Washington State legislature is currently considering a \$612 million capital project for a 350-bed forensic hospital, but the State’s own analysis does not justify this costly addition of 350 beds.

The recently published “State Hospital Bed Need Report” explicitly warns that its conclusions “should be understood to have a wide confidence margin” because DSHS did not include an analysis of how *Trueblood* diversion programs might reduce the need for inpatient beds. The *Trueblood* settlement agreement establishes diversion programs across the state, most of which just began operating in 2020; programs in King County will begin in 2022. There is no rational basis to make a massive investment in the forensic hospital when we have not considered the impact of the multi-region diversion programs whose sole purpose is to reduce the need for forensic hospital beds.

Additionally, the State’s current analysis does not accurately reflect bed need. According to the Bed Need Report, Western State Hospital (WSH) currently has a capacity of 414 forensic beds including the beds at the Maple Lane and Yakima residential treatment facilities (RTFs). The report projects that WSH will need a total of 598 forensic beds at WSH in 2027. This requires an increase in capacity of 184 beds—far less than the 350 beds in the proposed \$612 million forensic hospital.

Finally, the report does not include the impact that currently planned projects will have on the need for additional forensic beds. Upon completion, the planned projects listed below reduce the number of additional forensic beds needed at WSH from 184 to 75. The *Trueblood* diversion programs can likely address this need, which eliminates the demand for 75 additional inpatient beds.

Planned Forensic Bed Project	# of Forensic Beds	Projected Completion Date
Closure of Yakima and Maple Lane RTFs <sup>i</sup>	(54)	December 2021 July 2024
Opening of wards E3 & E4 at WSH <sup>ii</sup>	40	February 2021
Opening of wards F9 & F10 at WSH <sup>iii</sup>	58	February 2022
Opening of Columbia Cottage at Maple Lane <sup>iv</sup>	30	September 2023
Clear FRA backlog and discharge eligible NGRI patients <sup>v</sup>	35	Summer 2021

Total forensic beds gained by September 2023:

109

Remaining forensic beds necessary to meet projected forensic bed need in 2027:

75

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<sup>i</sup> *Trueblood* Settlement Agreement, available at: <https://www.disabilityrightswa.org/cases/trueblood/>

<sup>ii</sup> *Id.*

<sup>iii</sup> DSHS 2021--23 Regular Budget Session, Policy Level - CP - WSH: Forensic Ward Expansion, available at: [DP-PL-CP-WSH Forensic Ward Expansion.pdf](#). These wards are already under construction and are expected to open in February 2022.

<sup>iv</sup> 2021-2031 DSHS Capital Budget Plan, September 14, 2020, 1154, available at: [DSHS 2021-31 Capital Budget Request \(wa.gov\)](#). If included in final 2021-2023 capital budget, this project will result in renovations to a cottage at Maple Lane for use by NGRI patients.

<sup>v</sup> DSHS PPT, "Forensic Evaluators in WA, Problems and Solutions," January 2020. A copy of this PPT is on file at Disability Rights Washington. The DSHS data in this PPT shows that it is very far behind in providing Forensic Risk Assessments to NGRI patients. Their own estimations are that, if they catch up on these FRAs, many NGRI patients would be discharged from WSH resulting in about 35 open forensic beds that could be used for restoration patients.



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