

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING SHB 2572 AND SSB 6419

Is it true that this legislation creates a new institution?

No. It proposes the replacement of several older buildings at Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center (RHC) with a single nursing facility.

Will people be forced to live there against their will?

No. People will continue to be asked every year if they would like to move into the community. This is a federal requirement that will not change.

Will people be stuck there forever?

Not if they chose to move into the community.

Doesn't this grow Residential Habilitation Centers (RHCs)?

No. This legislation does the opposite by downsizing RHCs and creating more funding and services in the community without risking the health and safety of a small number of people who currently wish to receive nursing services at Fircrest.

Why can't people in the current nursing home move to a vacant nursing home?

DSHS visited several vacant facilities in King and Pierce counties and found they would be too expensive to remodel.

Why can't people in the current nursing home at Fircrest be served by private nursing homes in the community?

DSHS met with a coalition of nursing home providers. Not a single one was interested in serving individuals with IDD who live in the nursing home at Fircrest.

Why are some disability organizations and leaders support building a replacement nursing home?

The reality of today's housing and staffing crisis makes it impossible to shut down an entire RHC and provide well trained, affordable community living

and nursing services in the Seattle area in any timely fashion. It does not mean that everyone who supports this legislation wants to institutionalize people with IDD.

What does this legislation do?

This legislation starts the work of moving people out of Intermediate Care Facilities and stops permanent placements without risking the health and safety of individuals who need nursing care and who choose that location. This is a huge achievement that was made possible through a mediated agreement that our state has been trying to reach for a very long time, dating back to the first DD Stakeholder workgroup more than 25 years ago. For the first time in the history of having state institutions for people with IDD in Washington state, permanent placements at RHCs will not be allowed. There will be more money for community-based services which will continue the hard work of thoughtfully moving people out of RHCs.