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Introduction

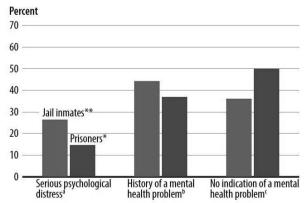
The Stepping Up Initiative

is a national initiative to reduce the criminalization of the mentally ill.

Nationwide 4% of Americans experience a serious mental illness, with over one-third experiencing challenges getting timely and effective treatment services. The average delay between symptom onset and getting help is eleven years. The ripple effects of untreated mental illness are profound. Left untreated people with mental illness can have difficulty managing their perceptions, emotions, and behaviors. ¹

Too often, this can result in actions that lead to law enforcement interventions and arrest. Nationally, people with mental illnesses account for 14% of state prison inmates and 26% of those in jail. The same study found that 33% of prisoners and 44% of jail inmates had been told by a mental health professional that they had a mental disorder. ²

Mental health status of prisoners and jail inmates, by type of mental health indicator, 2011–2012



The economic cost of this is staggering – at an average price of \$100,000 for each person incarcerated we simply cannot afford it. That is why the White House Council on Economic

Advisors in 2018, determined that the most effective way to lower costs to our communities is by investing in treatment programming. Mental health programming is estimated to reduce recidivism by 21% and treatments for substance use disorders reduces recidivism by 17%.

As a result, jurisdictions across the country are adopting the protocols of the **Stepping Up Initiative** as a way to measure and track progress in building access to treatment programs and lowering criminal justice system involvement for those with mental illnesses.

El Dorado County's Strategic Plan: Public Safety Objective

El Dorado County is a place of safe, healthy and vibrant communities; where residents, businesses and visitors can count on public agencies and community partners to look after and protect their safety and well-being.

The El Dorado County Strategic Plan, adopted in 2019, affirms and highlights the public interest in working collectively to address the needs of the mentally ill and prevent justice involvement: ⁴

- Provide support for the mentally ill, homeless, and those with substance use disorders where public safety issues are present.
- Achieve better outcomes for children, young adults and families in the areas of mental illness and substance abuse prevention.
- Approach large, complex system-wide matters as one organization – Departments will collaborate on projects and efforts that have cross-departmental impacts.

EDC's Stepping Up Initiative Planning Objective: Create A New Way of Doing Business.

With funding from the US Department of Justice, El Dorado County launched a coordinated planning effort between justice and mental health partners to develop agreements on how to identify, engage, and treat those with mental illness with the aim of reducing justice system contact.

This multi-year effort was conceived in two phases. During the first phase stakeholders convened to discuss the scope of the problem, prioritize objectives, brainstorm solutions, and develop uniform indicators to measure and track results. The completion of the first phase is marked by the development of this Strategic Plan document which describes the project priorities and next steps for implementation.

The second phase of the project will launch in January 2021 and is best described as the time to put words into action. During this period workgroup members will be tasked with following through on commitments made to allocate new resources, train staff in new approaches, and share information in order to enhance and speed-up service coordination.

Meanwhile, County Information Systems will build a repository for selected performance measures. Stakeholders will review these measures on a quarterly basis as a means to determine:

(1) if commitments have been implemented, and (2) if the new practices are making a difference. Through this continued review of the data partners will be able to determine if trends are being reversed and goals are being met.



The Stepping Up Partnership

The Stepping Up Initiative Partnerships is a justice and mental health collaboration comprised of the core agencies that address mental health services and the criminal justice system. Additional partners include community stakeholders representing the needs of the mentally ill and their families.

- El Dorado County Probation
- El Dorado County Sheriff
- El Dorado County Behavioral Health Dept.
- El Dorado County District Attorney
- El Dorado County Public Defender
- El Dorado County Counsel
- El Dorado County Administrator's Office
- Placerville Police Department
- Superior Court of El Dorado
- Behavioral Health Commission
- NAMI of El Dorado County

2. Mission & Vision

MISSION

The Stepping Up Partnership offers resources, leadership, and strategic directions to improve access to services, promote recovery, and reduce justice involvement of the mentally ill in El Dorado County.

VISION

Individuals with behavioral health concerns are met by the justice system with dignity and compassion, linked to advocacy and supports, and provided timely and effective treatment.

VALUES

- · Advocacy on behalf of the people of El Dorado County.
- · Commitment to create positive change within our justice system.
- · Compassion for the lives of people affected by mental health challenges.
- Resolve to act, learn, and grow in response to the needs expressed by our community.

Our Goals

1

Reduce the number of people with mental illnesses booked into jail.

Law enforcement officers have adequate training to identify mental health concerns and the resources and supports necessary to engage people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Courts and criminal justice partners are mindful of treatment progress and can work with clinical treatment teams to avert technical violations which may result in returns to custody.

3

Reduce recidivism for people with mental illness.

Individuals identified as having a mental health disorder while in custody are referred to an outpatient clinical team for care coordination and reentry planning at least 30-days prior to release.

Joint case management team meetings are convened between clinical partners working on recovery and justice partners monitoring activities and behaviors to coordinate responses that facilitate recovery and rehabilitation.

2

Reduce the average length of stay in jail for people with mental illness.

Eligible Individuals with mental illness are offered diversion programs and/or supervised probation with terms and conditions for treatment participation as alternatives to lengthy terms in custody.

Sobriety is not a pre-condition for entry into community mental health treatment or diversion programs.

4

Increase connections to treatment.

Individuals with mental illnesses who touch the justice system are identified early and referred to treatment.

Clinical interventions include treatment options for individuals with co-occurring disorders and early / emerging behavioral health concerns.

Interventions are trauma informed and responsive to individualized needs.

3. Key Findings



Jail Bookings

The Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS) is a validated screening tool used widely by jails and prisons throughout the country.

Nearly every individual booked* into either of the County's two local jails are screened for mental health concerns using this tool.

Of those booked into custody, 29% show indications of a mental health concern.

Results of the screenings are shared with a clinical team who conduct a more full clinical assessment of behavioral health needs.

 For those booked with a 24/hour stay. This excludes those booked and released with a citation.

Length of Stay

People who screen positive on the BJMHS tend to have longer stays in custody.

About 16 days on average,
 compared to 14 days for those without mental health findings.

Percent of people with a positive mental health screen in El Dorado Jails.

29%

El Dorado County

2019 Jail Booking Data

- High proportion of inmates have a mental health concern.
- Over one-third of bookings (38%) are for violations, warrants, or court commitments.
- Nearly a quarter of all bookings are alcohol related underscoring the need to more broadly address substance use disorders.

1 in 4

Bookings are Alcohol Related



5,7242019

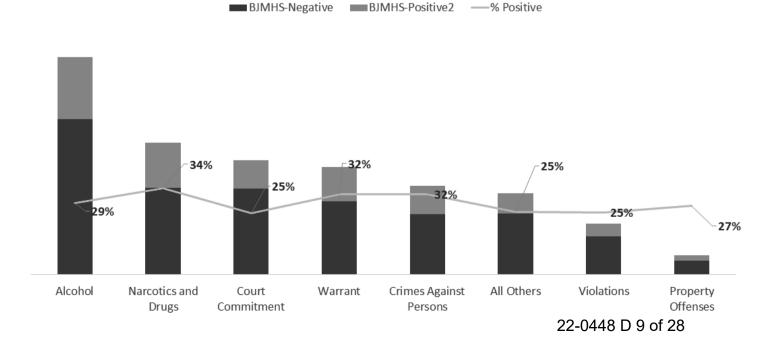
Bookings

29%
Positive

Screen

66%
Bookings for
Misdemeanor
Offense

2019 Misdemeanor Bookings by BJMHS Screening Result



Recidivism

34% of those booked for a technical violation had a positive mental health screen.

There were an average of seven prior jail admissions for people identified with mental health concerns compared to three priors for everyone else.

Average number of prior jail bookings for inmates with mental health concerns.

7

Recidivism is defined both as:
(1) the commitment of a new crime or (2) any return to custody for technical violations, such as failure to appear or to otherwise follow the terms and conditions of their release.

Data shows that people with mental illnesses who are arrested in El Dorado County are having a hard time stabilizing once returned to the community.

They are more likely to have multiple prior bookings and are more likely to be returned for a technical violation than those without indications of a mental illness, according to data shared by the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office.

Access to Treatment

Any contact by people with mental illnesses with our criminal justice system must be understood as an opportunity to identify and engage someone in crisis with treatment. This includes but is not limited to: referrals by law enforcement, jails, the courts, and probation.

In El Dorado County there are some coordinated efforts between criminal justice and mental health systems of care, but all partners indicated much more is needed.

Some law enforcement officers have undertaken a special 40-hour training in how to respond to people with mental illnesses and special teams have been established for post-release supervision and monitoring. But overall, case loads for specialty mental health justice programs were low at the start of the Stepping Up planning process. At its start in 2019, only two clients were engaged by the County's Behavioral Health Court.

57% of deputy sheriffs have completed the advanced course in Mental Health Crisis Intervention Training.

Four probation officers (12%) have received advanced training in supervising adults with serious mental illnesses.

Number of clients in the Behavioral Health Court at the start of the planning process.

2

4. Local Assets

Asset Mapping

Challenges

Asset mapping examines the extent to which existing programs and services fulfill the mission and vision of the initiative.

The Stepping Up Partnership examined the assets and resources that exists at five different "intercept points" or areas in which the criminal justice system can "intercept" or touch upon someone with serious mental illnesses. Intercept points are:

- Prevention / early intervention
- Initial law enforcement contact
- Booking and arraignment
- Jail and court proceedings
- Custody and reentry
- Community supervision

Assets are described on pages 13-15.

Promising programs are underutilized and too often rely on founding champions to sustain efforts. Program coordination relies too heavily on personal relationships. More routine protocols are needed to foster and sustain interagency collaboration.

"The biggest challenge is really the underutilization of promising programs due to lack of coordination or crossagency marketing. We just assume it doesn't exist for our clients."

Developing a Stratgy / pathway

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Sequential Intercept

Mapping Workshop January 22, 2020

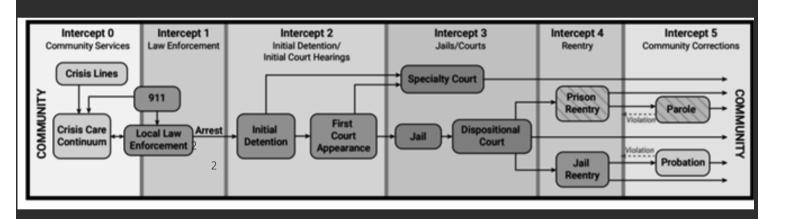




Sequential Intercept Model

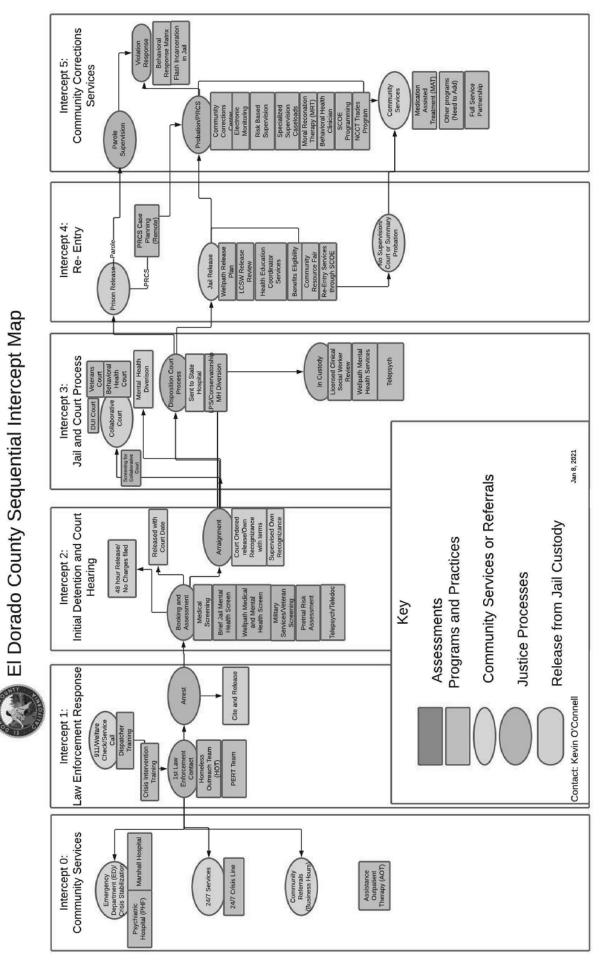
The Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) was introduced with the goal of helping communities understand and improve the interactions between criminal justice systems and people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders.⁵

The SIM is used to identify existing community resources and help plan for additional resources for people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders at each phase of interaction with the justice system.



The SIM can help community leaders and program staff work jointly to divert more individuals with mental illnesses and substance use disorders away from the justice system and into treatment.

The system map on the following page shows how different systems in El Dorado County overlap and flow to and from one another. Local assets, along with stakeholder suggestions and priorities to make them stronger, are described on pages 13–16.



STATUS MAKE IT STRONGER **ASSETS** El Dorado's Mental Programs operate as a Entry into care for those with Health Crisis Continuum partnership between emerging mental illnesses is Behavioral Health and includes: 24/7 crisis complicated. More access lines, crisis stabilization local hospital points are needed for those who are experiencing and emergency emergency psychiatric hospital. departments. escalating symptoms without a diagnosis. Fl Dorado Sheriff and POST Certified 40- Municipal police departments **Probation Department** may have more financial Hour Crisis Intervention have committed to constraints with rolling out new Training courses are training all officers over trainings. Incorporate training available for all law the next 1-2 years. costs for local police officers in enforcement officers. future grant applications. The PERT team is a · Update consent for information Psychiatric Emergency partnership between sharing so 911 dispatch has Response Team (PERT) Behavioral Health and El background on addresses / assigns a mental health Dorado County Sheriff. people with behavioral health clinician to co-respond concerns and can deploy with law enforcement during mental health appropriate response. related calls. 90% of all inmates are Administration of the Custody should consider screened within 24 hours. additional protocols to flag Brief Jail Mental Health inmates with positive Screens (BJMHS) is Some inmates are booked assessments so that counts routine protocol at can be more accurate (based and released prior to both jails. on full assessments, not brief screening.

screenings).

ASSETS	STATUS	MAKE IT STRONGER	
A Collaborative Behavioral Health Court is administered through the Superior Court	Court will consider community programming in lieu of jail time for eligible offenders on guilty plea. Dedicated judge, deputy district attorney, public defender, and probation officers ensures consistent approach to diversion.	 Formalize practices by documenting procedures. Use a joint Behavioral Health / Probation coordinated assessment and case management approach to guide terms and conditions, assess progress, and address technical violations. 	Intercept: 3
In-custody treatment and programming.	Inmates diagnosed with mental health and/or substance use disorders receive specialized program interventions.	 In-custody programming should occur in conjunction with a coordinated reentry plan with linkage to a community mental health program on release from custody. 	ü
Community Mental Health Services.	Clinical interventions with a range of specialty care options are available by appointment to meet individual wellness and treatment needs.	 Develop information sharing protocols with Wellpath. Work with Sheriff's Office on a custody in-reach program for reentry transition planning. Strengthen engagement of those reluctant for services. 	Intercept: 4
Dedicated Probation Officers.	Probationers with mental illnesses are assigned to officers with advanced training who promote rehabilitation in consultation with Behavioral Health.	 Standardize the release of information between Probation and Behavioral Health for more timely and coordinated case management activities. 	Intercept: 5

Community Priorities



1. Strengthening Communication and Coordination

Standardize the use of Release of Information / Consent forms across the system.

Establish a protocol-driven, not relationship based approach to coordination.



2. Strengthen Criminal Justice System's Linkages to Treatment

Formalize the communication and referral processes for custody reentry.

Build out the Pre-Trial Diversion and Collaborative Court Model.



3. Expand Treatment Opportunities under Mental Health Services Act funding (MHSA / Prop. 63) Expand behavioral health treatment programs for justice involved individuals at all intercept points and train justice partners on how to refer clients into services.

Use real-time data to monitor the impact of treatment on meeting the core goals of the Stepping Up Initiative.

Implementation Update (Dec. 2020)

I. Cross-Agency Communication and Coordination

Goal: Improve dispatch capacity to notify officers of a potential mental health crisis. Consumers and their family members can choose to opt-into the County's EMS "flag" system which will notify police that the residence includes a person who may require a special response. Form will be printed and available in County mental health clinics

Goal: Improve court's capacity to receive information about diversion clients' progress in mandated treatment programs. Public Defender is responsible for discussing defense options with their clients. Clients that choose to participate in diversion court are given a consent form by their attorney that allows mental health clinicians and case managers to keep the court updated on their progress in meeting treatment goals.

II. Justice System Linkages to Treatment

Goal: Increase partnership between law enforcement and mental health. Law enforcement / mental health partnerships continue to strengthen. On the West Slope, Sheriff Deputies work in partnership with a dedicated mental health clinician using a co-responder model. In South Lake Tahoe, police officers can contact the local on-call clinician for mobile response or telephone consultation depending on need and availability. The South Lake Tahoe program is in development, and more funding is sought to strengthen services.

Goal: Increase use of diversionary court proceedings for people with serious mental illness. A misdemeanor mental health diversion court is now operating. Referrals are made by the Public Defender to County Mental Health for an initial assessment of behavioral health needs. If deemed eligible (based on a multitude of factors) cases are transferred to the diversion court. Within four months of launch, twelve participants were enrolled.

III. Expand Treatment Opportunities

Goal: Increase access to treatment for justice involved individuals displaying signs and symptoms associated with emerging mental illnesses, including substance use paired with trauma exposure. As of December 2020, the Forensic Access and Engagement Program has two full-time staff members with an additional hire pending. Case enrollment has begun with full launch anticipated in 2021, as planned.

Goal: Increase access to treatment for justice involved individuals with serious mental illnesses. As of December 2020, the Justice Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program has four full time staff split evenly between the South Lake Tahoe and West Slope regions of El Dorado County. Referrals are being received from the new mental health diversion programs, as described above, with two clients currently engaged into the dedicated FSP treatment team and more assessments pending.

5. Next Steps



Step-by-Step Implementation Guide

- 1. Complete ongoing work to implement new programs
- Update partnership agreements and contracts to include referral protocols.
- Update job duties with clear guidance on when and how to share information between mental health and justice partners.
- Use performance and outcome measures to document impact.
- 2. Sustain the Stepping Up Partnership Model
- Confirm continuance of the workgroup and accountability structure with the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP).
- Schedule the Stepping Up Workgroup Meetings for 2021.
- Identify and pursue additional grant funding opportunities.
- 3. Build out the Data Dashboard
- Identify measures that will be monitored on a regular basis.
- Review measures and use findings to improve programs.
- Share updates on progress with community stakeholders and partners.

1. Complete ongoing work to implement for new programs

Over the past year, and through the course of the Stepping Up discussions, County Agencies came together and made agreements to start or expand programs to better intercept and re-direct individuals with mental health concerns into treatment, including:

PERT: An expanded Psychiatric Emergency Response Team, now operating in the South Lake Tahoe area through a mobile crisis response unit.

Pre-trial diversion: A specialty court program for diverting misdemeanor, non-violent offenders with mental illnesses to treatment services instead of time in custody for harm committed.

Forensic Outreach: A case management program for justice-involved individuals reluctant to engage in treatment services. Focus is on engaging those with emerging or moderate behavioral health concerns, including substance use disorders.

Justice FSP: An intensive clinical treatment program for individuals with the highest severity of untreated mental illnesses and concurrent justice involvement. Focus is on providing a coordinated approach to recovery and rehabilitation.

While major strides have been made over the past six months to hire and train staff, major tasks still remain, including solidifying referral pathways, coordination of effort, and joint reporting of impact.

Next Steps:

Update partnership agreements and contracts to include referral protocols. Monthly or quarterly performance reports from Wellpath to El Dorado County should include a count and demographic breakdown of those identified with mental illnesses in custody and referred for services.

Update job duties with clear guidance on when and how to share information between mental health and justice partners. Work with County Counsel to update unit specific protocols pertaining to the sharing of information for the purposes of improved case management and coordination of care. Develop written protocols, necessary consent forms and documentation, and provide training to key staff on program protocols and compliance measures.

Use performance and outcome measures to document impact. Each program partner should be documenting the number and demographics of people served, the type and amount of services provided, and any observable changes or outcomes the occurred as a result of participation in programming. Existing data systems may be useful for this task.

2. Sustain the Stepping Up Partnership Model

The Stepping Up Partnership serves as a neutral and voluntary convening of key partners to review and discuss joint programming in order to meet the Stepping Up Initiative Goals. Its success is based on holding a safe space for department leaders and project managers to brainstorm innovative ideas and out of the box concepts without fear of reprisals. However public accountability is critical. The current format of a quasi-independent workgroup with bi-annual reporting to the County's Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) should be maintained in order to sustain this balance.

The Stepping Up Partnership is responsible for developing key ideas and strategic directions, making recommendations on how to secure additional resources, and crafting policies and protocols to turn ideas into action. The CCP serves as a forum for public accountability and is responsible for reviewing and approving Strategic Plans and Progress Reports on a regular basis to ensure that the activities and direction of the Stepping-up partnership continue to meet the overall objectives of the County.

It is further recommended that the Stepping Up Partnership make an annual presentation to the Behavioral Health Commission.

Next Steps:

Confirm Continuance of the Workgroup and Accountability Structure with the CCP. Submit Strategic Plan and proposed meeting and reporting schedule to the CCP for consideration by March 2021.

Schedule the Stepping Up Workgroup Meetings for 2021. The partnership should agree to a rotating responsibility for developing the meeting agenda and leading the discussion. logistics of convening the meeting, maintaining a record of participation, and following up on tasks and activities will be sustained through 2021 by a dedicated facilitator, via the JMHCP grant. Starting in 2022, dedicated funds will need to be identified to maintain the role of a facilitator and/or part-time program coordinator. Moving forward there is some interest in this remaining the task of a neutral third party - not a Department employee - with funds for the work pooled from multiple agencies.

Identify and pursue additional grant funding opportunities. Use workgroup meetings to identify grant opportunities and prioritize needs to meet overall program objectives. While program staffing is important, partners also recognized and highlighted the need more training in evidence-based practices, a uniform method of tracking progress, better communication protocols, and a standard consent form that can "follow" clients between and across services. Make sure all grant applications also address long-term organizational capacity needs.

3. Build-out the Data Dashboard

A new joint partner data dashboard, which collates de-identified data from Custody, Behavioral Health, and Probation is in development with final completion slated for the end of 2021.

The dashboard can track the aggregate experiences of different types of people who were booked into custody, participated in treatment services, or received rehabilitative programming.

The dashboard <u>does not</u> include any confidential or personally identifying information.

Over the next year, Stepping Up partners should:

- Practice using the data dashboard as a means to generate discussion and inform decisions.
- Advocate for and enable the sustained use of the dashboard by
 - a. committing to share data uploads on a regular basis, and
 - b. advocating for dedicated resources to maintain dashboard in the future.
- Continue to provide input and make updates to the dashboard on a regular basis so that it continues to meet the needs of El Dorado County.

Next Steps:

Identify Measures that will be monitored on a regular basis. Select and track different kinds of indicators. Process measures help to determine if things happened the way they were intended to happen. Counts of the number of people who participated in an activity and how much service they received will give information about how much service occurred. Outcome measures are the true measure of impact. These are typically measured in terms of whether core measures of success increased or decreased over time.

Suggested measures are included on the following pages. The partnership group is also encouraged to develop program level benchmarks of success that can be shared out on a regular basis.

Review Measures and Use Findings to Improve Program. Ongoing, the partnership should regularly review select measures. Use the data to identify what is working and what areas may need to be adjusted to better meet program expectations.

Share Updates on Progress with Community.

Provide written reports and presentations to the Community Corrections Partnership, Behavioral Health Commission, and other key stakeholders including program staff, community members, and the consumers and family members impacted by mental illness.

STRATEGIES	DETAILS	PROCESS MEASURE
Trainings for law enforcement in mental health	Law enforcement agencies will adopt 40-hour crisis intervention curricula.	70% of personnel complete 40-hour training.
Mental Health Screenings at Booking	El Dorado County's custody division will screen all inmates at booking.	 Maintain 90% of inmates screened with BJMHS at booking.
Care coordination across jail and community behavioral health care partners	Behavioral Health and Wellpath will share information about diagnosis, medications, etc.	 75% of positive BJMHS are assessed within three business days. 50% of positive assessments are reported to Behavioral Health before release.
Diversion programming as an alternative to incarceration	Pre-trial and post-conviction mental health dockets are available.	 Case load capacity of 10+ active clients is met within one year for each docket.
New mental health programming addresses co-occurring treatment needs and coordinates with justice partners	Behavioral Health will maintain dedicated treatment teams to work with justice involved clients.	75% of referrals are from law enforcement, courts and probation.
Monitor client participation and assure fidelity to evidence-based practice standards. Leverage supervision tools to measure and track change.	Partners will meet regularly to case manage shared clients and review practice for effectiveness.	 100% of eligible mental health diversion clients are assigned to needed clinical services and supports. Client success incorporates best practice recommendations such as harm reduction.
Measure core objectives	Leadership team will meet quarterly to review shared metrics of success	Client data from Sheriff, Probation, and Behavioral Health is matched and aggregated for analysis.

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	OBJECTIVE
Reduce Bookings	Law enforcement deflects people from arrest and booking when observed actions have a nexus to a behavioral health concern and person is not deemed a public safety risk.	# of PERT requests and responses. # of violations of probation booked for those with positive screen.	The proportion of those being booked into custody with a positive mental health screen is declining.
Reduce Length of Stay	Courts / Prosecution divert people with mental illness from custody for certain eligible offenses.	# and % of clients completing pretrial mental health diversion. # and % of clients completing mental health court. # of Justice FSP clients and % accepted.	The average length of stay in custody is declining for those with a positive mental health screen.
Reduce Recidivism	Probation coordinates case planning with clinicians and offers cognitive behavioral interventions and rehabilitative services.	# and % of those with positive screenings engaged in a collaborative case plan. Dosage (amount and frequency) of cognitive behavioral interventions. # of Forensic Access and Engagement clients and % accepted.	The average number of returns to custody is decreasing for inmates with a positive mental health screen.
Increase Treatment	Behavioral Health enrolls justice involved clients into clinical treatment programs as appropriate for their diagnosis and level of treatment need.	Outpatient and crisis mental health utilization for clients of select programs. Outpatient, intensive outpatient, and residential substance use disorder program utilization. No show rate for scheduled appointments.	Clients are successfully participating in specialty justice / behavioral health programs. PERT Forensic Access and Engagement Justice FSP

End Notes

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- 5. Munetz, M. R., & Griffin, P. A. (2006). Use of the sequential intercept model as an approach to decriminalization of people with serious mental illness. Psychiatric Services, 57(4), 544-549.

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- Steve Clavere, Behavioral Health Commission
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- Joe Wren, Placerville Police
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- Michael McCoy, District Attorney's Office
- Teri Monterosso, Public Defender
- Terrell Green, Sheriff's Office
- Matt Foxworthy, Sheriff's Office

Finally, a heartfelt thank you is given to all the NAMI members who provided letters of support and offered public testimony on the need for better justice and mental health collaborations. This Strategic Plan is dedicated to you, your families, and everyone living with mental illness.





El Dorado County Stepping Up Initiative

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