

Law Enforcement–Mental Health Learning Sites

Jurisdictions across the country are exploring strategies to improve the outcomes of encounters between law enforcement and people who have mental illnesses. As a growing number of communities develop or enhance their comprehensive police-mental health collaboration (PMHC), many agencies are struggling with the planning process and how to tailor successful implementation strategies from other jurisdictions to address their own distinct problems and circumstances.

In an effort to expand the knowledge base for law enforcement agencies interested in starting or enhancing a PMHC, The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, with assistance from a team of national experts and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), selected ten law enforcement agencies to serve as national Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Sites. These learning sites represent a diverse cross-section of perspectives and program examples and are dedicated to helping other jurisdictions improve their responses to people who have mental illnesses. The original six learning sites, selected in 2010, are Houston (TX) Police Department, Los Angeles (CA) Police Department, Madison (WI) Police Department, Portland (ME) Police Department, Salt Lake City (UT) Police Department, and University of Florida Police Department. In 2017, due to the success of the program, four new sites were added, including Arlington (MA) Police Department, Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Counties (OH) Sheriffs’ Offices, Madison County (TN) Sheriff’s Office, and Tucson (AZ) Police Department.

Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Counties (OH) Sheriffs’ Offices

Total number of agency personnel: 172

Sworn: 172 **Civilian:** 0

Total population served: 86,000 people

Jurisdiction and state: Jackson County, Ohio

Program Highlights

- Composed of three sheriffs’ offices that came together to provide a regional response in rural Appalachia, alongside a mental health provider, for the purpose of becoming a PMHC learning site
- Offers Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to all law enforcement personnel
- Employs a Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) to provide tailored mental health and addiction treatment services, telemedicine, and on-call support for crisis situations in five adult correctional facilities
- Uses evidence-based practices, including:
 - Trauma-informed care and interventions
 - Substance addiction counseling
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy
 - Motivational interviewing

The Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Police-Mental Health Collaboration (PMHC) works to comprehensively address the needs of the three local criminal justice populations by offering pre-and post-release care to fill service gaps that exist in rural Appalachia. The collaboration has increased access to mental health and addiction treatment for a chronically underserved population in an area with high rates of poverty and unemployment, leading to substantially lowered rates of recidivism and a reduction in state psychiatric hospital admissions since people are able to be stabilized directly in the jail.

1974

Mobile Crisis Team is established through a partnership with Hopewell Health Centers (HHC)

2011

CIT training begins and partnership is formalized between HHC and local law enforcement

2015

Mental health counselors embedded in jails

2016

Telemedicine and on-site case managers are incorporated

Law Enforcement—Mental Health Learning Sites Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Counties (OH) Sheriffs' Offices

Mobile Crisis Team

Since 1974, Hopewell Health Centers (formerly Woodland Centers)—which has offices in each of the three counties and serves as the area's primary mental health partner—has operated an MCT to assist local jails and law enforcement agencies in responding to people who have behavioral health needs. If law enforcement or jail personnel encounter an individual displaying suicidal, homicidal, or psychotic behavior, he or she can call the 24/7 crisis line to request on-scene MCT services for emergency valuations.

Crisis Intervention Team Training

The formalized collaboration between HHC and local law enforcement agencies began in 2011 when CIT training was first offered to law enforcement, probation, and parole officers. Since then, basic and advanced training has been offered twice each year, with the goal of training every officer.

Case Management

In 2015, the collaborative was awarded state funding through the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to station a mental health counselor in the county jails to provide treatment and services. In 2016, this treatment initiative expanded to incorporate telemedicine through secure video conferencing and on-site case managers. Case managers refer people who are in jail to counselors who travel site-to-site, and also connect individuals exiting jails to HHC outpatient clinics located in each county for continuation of services and treatment. This collaboration uses an evidence-based tailored approach, including drug and alcohol counseling, psychiatry and psychotropic medication management, and tailored case management.

Collaborative Team Approach

The three sheriffs' offices, although separate jurisdictions, have come together as a regional collaboration alongside HHC to develop counseling services, in addition to the CIT, to more effectively help people with whom they come into direct contact. The Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services also meets with the PMHC's senior partners to discuss program achievements, service gaps, jail services, and ways to best allocate funds to ensure program needs can be met as efficiently as possible. They also discuss trends in mental health care to assist in further tailoring services to fit the unique needs of the community.

Data Collection

The collaboration is evaluated through quarterly outcome reports submitted to the Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. These governing authorities provide the program with specific goals related to treatment accessibility, including diagnostic assessment of people referred to services by the jail within 48 hours of the request and services provided for people 6 months after they have returned to the community. These outcome measures are used to help determine how effective the collaboration is in meeting its goals, which then drives treatment and programming developments and improvements. The Director of Forensics from HHC also collects data from clinical records, jail booking records, and court dockets to compile quarterly outcome reports to evaluate programmatic goals and discuss outcomes with law enforcement collaborating partners.

To learn more about Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Counties Sheriffs' Offices and its initiatives, please contact:

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To learn more about the Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Sites, please visit csgjusticecenter.org/law-enforcement/projects/mental-health-learning-sites/ or email the Law Enforcement Program team at le-mh-learningsites@csgjusticecenter.org.