

Martin County, Florida:

Taking Action for Change

Transforming Services for Persons with Mental Illness in Contact with the Criminal Justice System

Introduction

This report summarizes the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop held in Martin County, Florida on December 3 and December 4 2008. The workshop was facilitated by the Florida Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse (CJMHS) Technical Assistance Center at Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI), University of South Florida (USF). This report includes:

- ❖ A brief review of the origins and background for the workshop
- ❖ A summary of the information gathered at the workshop
- ❖ A cross-systems intercept map as developed by the group during the workshop
- ❖ An action planning matrix as developed by the group
- ❖ Observations, comments, and recommendations from the Florida CJMHS Technical Assistance Center to help Martin County achieve its goals

Recommendations contained in this report are based on information received prior to or during the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop.

Background

The Martin County Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse (CJMHS) Planning Council along with the full support of multiple local stakeholders requested that the Florida CJMHS Technical Assistance Center facilitate the Cross-Systems Sequential Intercept Model Mapping and Taking Action for Change in Martin County, Florida to provide assistance with:

- ❖ Creation of a map of the points of interface among all relevant systems
- ❖ Identification of resources, gaps, and barriers in the existing systems
- ❖ Development of a strategic action plan that would permit stakeholders to begin to address the criminal justice diversion and treatment needs of the target population

The participants in the workshop included 19 individuals representing multiple stakeholder systems, including mental health, substance abuse treatment, human services, corrections, advocates, family members, consumers, law enforcement, and the courts. A complete list of participants is available at the end of this document. The workshop was facilitated by John Petrila, Director of the Technical Assistance Center, Nicolette Springer, Project Manager for the Center, and Michele Saunders, Executive Director of Florida Partners in Crisis.

Objectives of the Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise

The Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise had three primary objectives:

1. The development of a comprehensive picture of how people with mental illness and co-occurring disorders move through the Martin County criminal justice system along five distinct intercept points: Law Enforcement and Emergency Services (Intercept 1), Initial Detention/Initial Court Hearings (Intercept 2), Jails and Courts (Intercept 3), Community Re-entry (Intercept 4), and Community Corrections/Community Support (Intercept 5).
2. The identification of gaps, resources, and opportunities at each intercept point for individuals in the target population.
3. The development of priority areas for activities designed to improve system and service level responses for individuals in the target population.

The Martin County Cross-Systems Map created during the workshop is on the last page of this document.

Resources, and Opportunities

While there are significant service gaps in Martin County, important strengths emerged during the Mapping workshop. These included but are not necessarily restricted to the following:

- ❖ The Chair of the County Commission attended the full session and has significant interest in these issues.
- ❖ The Sheriff's Department's jail detention administration was well represented at the mapping and expressed particular interest in reducing barriers to service for people with mental disorders who are or who might enter the criminal justice system.
- ❖ The County established one of the country's first drug courts. More recently the County established a mental health court, with support of the County Commission. While there have been issues in implementing the court, particularly in gaining access to services for defendants without a previous service history, the court provides a foundation for future improvements in addressing the needs of arrestees with mental illnesses.
- ❖ Most of the major stakeholders in the county were represented at the mapping workshop and discussion across systems was generally good.

Martin County Cross-Systems Map Narrative

The following information reflects the notes taken during the *Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise*. These notes include a description of the map at each intercept point in the Sequential System Map by the Martin County CJMHSA Planning Council participants. Gaps in service delivery and resource opportunities are identified at each intercept point. These notes may be used as a reference in reviewing the Martin County Cross-Systems Map and as a tool in developing a formal strategic plan and future Memorandum of Understanding among the CJMHSA Planning Council members and other community stakeholders.

Intercept I: Law Enforcement / Emergency Services

There are two emergency phone numbers that can be called to report a person in crisis in Martin County. A 211 number is available, and if a person calls that number, the operator will refer the person to the first three agencies that are displayed on a computerized list and that are relevant to the subject of the person's call.

A call to 911 may result in law enforcement being called to the scene. There are a number of law enforcement agencies in the County, including the Martin County Sheriff's Department, the Stuart police department, the Sewall police department, the Jupiter Island police department, and the Florida Highway Patrol.

If law enforcement determines that the person should be taken to a treatment facility rather than arrested and booked, several options are available. However, the availability of those options may be conditioned on one or more factors, including whether the person is insured, whether a bed is available, and whether the person appears so intoxicated that medical screening appears indicated before detoxification can occur.

Martin County does not have a state designated Baker Act receiving facility. As a result, the closest receiving facility is Port St. Lucie Hospital, in St. Lucie County. This facility is private, and generally will not take uninsured individuals. In some circumstances, law enforcement may transport the person to Martin Memorial emergency room for a medical emergency; from that point, if the person requires a Baker Act assessment, Martin Memorial will arrange for transportation to either New Horizon or Port St. Lucie Hospital depending on insurance status. New Horizon, is the community mental health center located in Port St. Lucie providing services to Martin County and it is a Baker Act receiving facility. In addition, if a person is brought to New Horizon for detoxification, New Horizon may require that the person first be medically screened by Martin Memorial if the person's condition appears to make detoxification dangerous.

Children are transported to either Indian River Hospital, Behavioral Health Center or to Columbia Hospital in West Palm Beach.

On the first day of the workshop, it was reported by a number of participants that individuals could be transported to 2 or sometimes 3 different facilities before an assessment occurred. On the second day it was reported that this problem had largely been ameliorated by actions taken by the Sheriff's department in which officers

ascertained in advance whether Port St. Lucie would accept the person if the person was transported there. However, it appears that further clarification of what patterns of transportation actually do occur would be useful to county decision makers. It is also worth noting that mental health professionals initiate approximately 75% of Baker Act assessments in Martin County, in contrast to a state average of approximately 45-50%. This may be an artifact of the way services are organized in and around Martin County and may be worth further examination.

➤ Identified Gaps – Law Enforcement / Emergency Services (Intercept 1)

- The lack of a receiving facility in Martin County has a significant impact on the manner in which people with mental illnesses who might be subject to the criminal justice system are transported.
- Access to emergency assessment and stabilization services appears to be problematic in at least some cases.
- There is very limited mobile crisis capacity in the County.
- The Marchman Act (civil commitment for people with substance abuse disorders) is considered difficult to use.
- CIT training has been made available but in a comparatively limited way.
- The manner in which transportation between the various treatment providers is financed seemed at least somewhat unclear to many participants.

Intercept II: Initial Detention / Initial Detention and Court Appearance

Martin County screens all individuals at the time of booking. Issues screened include mental health and medical issues, including potential suicidality. Screening is conducted by a deputy. If a person responds affirmatively to any question involving mental health, a nurse is available under contract to do a more thorough screen. Five beds in the jail are reserved for medical and/or mental health issues. A person who is potentially suicidal will be placed on one-on-one watch.

The jail contracts for health care services with Armor. Jail representatives reported good satisfaction with the services received under this contract.

There are no formal diversion programs available pre-or post-booking. Like many counties of its size and resources, Martin County does not have a pre-trial services program.

➤ Identified Gaps – Initial Detention and Court Appearance (Intercept 2)

- There is no formal pre-trial service program in the county or formal diversion programs permitting diversion prior to initial appearance

- While information regarding a person's mental health status reportedly may be made available to the court on some occasions, there is no formal way to share such information, and the jail does not have access to information indicating that an arrestee has been treated for mental illness or substance abuse in the past.

Intercept III: Jails / Courts

Martin County has a well-established drug court, as well as juvenile drug court and a dependency drug court. Martin County has a mental health court as well, with approximately 30 people in its caseload. However, participants agreed that the mental health court had not been as successful as hoped for, primarily because people who entered the court without a prior service provider had great difficulty in getting access to services.

Other than these specialty courts, Martin County does not have any formal programs designed to facilitate access to treatment through resolution of the person's criminal charges. Access to treatment generally is reported as difficult in the county, with waiting periods of several months. The lack of ready access to treatment has resulted in frustration among mental health court officials and also may make establishment of formal diversion programs problematic.

There is also little use of community competency restoration programs in the County.

➤ Identified Gaps – Jails and Courts (Intercept 3)

- No diversion program
- No intercept at point of plea for people with minor offenses and mental illness
- It is difficult to gain access to treatment for some mental health court clients, resulting in frustration for the court and counsel this in turn undermines effectiveness and enthusiasm for the court
- No case management for people with mental illnesses who are court involved and in general services simply do not exist for people in the court system, particularly if they entered court without pre-existing services
- Medication management is missing and the biggest gap for mental health court clients; lack of housing is also an issue
- One comment suggested that at least some people returned as competent to proceed after hospitalization as incompetent and may wait longer than desired for their case to come to resolution

Intercept IV: Re-Entry

There are a number of jail based treatment programs, including a faith based program and a secular program. AA is available as is some counseling. There is no formal re-entry program that involves access to treatment. However, there is an in jail faith based substance abuse program, Dunkin, that will provide aftercare services and the Reentry Program that provides counseling and life skills to jail inmates will provide some linkage

to outside services, but no follow up. Individuals leaving the jail are given program information. An individual who has been on medication in the jail will be given enough medication that the amount provided in jail on the most recent prescription and the amount made available on release adds up to thirty days.

There is no program in the jail for starting an application process to determine eligibility for benefits, such as Medicaid.

➤ **Identified Gaps – Re-entry (Intercept 4)**

- The difficulty in gaining access to treatment, noted earlier, is an issue on release from jail as well.
- A lack of housing is an issue, as is the lack of adequate case management
- There is no current capacity to begin assessing a person's eligibility for benefits while the person is in jail.

Intercept V: Community Corrections / Community Support

County probation is provided by a private provider, under contract with the county. According to participants in the mapping, the primary role of this provider is to collect fees owed by probationers. Therefore, it is unrealistic to assume that this provider will be available for more treatment-management functions, as is the case in some other jurisdictions.

There is a not-for-profit probation agency, with a primary responsibility of overseeing those placed on probation after a DUI conviction.

As with those leaving jail, those re-entering the community from prison have difficulty in gaining access to services, and there is no formal re-entry program operating in the County.

➤ **Identified Gaps - Community Corrections / Community Support (Intercept 5)**

- There is little treatment currently available for individuals re-entering the community.
- Available housing continues to be a problem.
- There is no formal strategy for using probation as a tool to gain treatment access.

The Martin County Action Plan

In a county with scarce resources, where planning across systems is in a comparatively early stage, it is often useful to begin by identifying a number of issues on which incremental, low-cost change might be accomplished. After the system mapping was completed, participants identified six issues to discuss in more detail the second day of the workshop. These included

- Further discussion of the manner in which people in crisis were transported to the various area providers, to determine whether steps could be taken to ease any problems identified.
- Further discussion of the lack of mobile crisis capacity, to determine whether even limited capacity could be created.
- The lack of adequate case management, treatment services and housing as it affects access by people with mental illnesses in or at risk for entering the criminal justice system.
- Whether the county should consider a formal diversion program for people charged with low-level offenses.
- Whether some capacity could be created for determining eligibility for benefits.
- Identification of “heavy users” in the system, through local and state data sources.

In the discussion that followed identification of these issues, the group modified this list in a number of ways.

First, after the Sheriff’s representative provided new information about the manner in which transportation issues had been addressed in the past year, it appeared to the group that problems discussed the previous day had been ameliorated. Therefore, as reflected in the Plan provided below, it was agreed that as an initial step a detailed explanation of the way in which people in crisis are currently transported would be prepared and circulated.

Second, after discussion, the group agreed that it was premature to take further steps toward the creation of a formal diversion program at this point. In part, this resulted from recognition that officials in the criminal justice system had too little information about the characteristics of the population that might be diverted under such a program. As a result the group agreed that an analysis of “heavy users” of criminal justice and treatment services should be conducted before more discussion of a diversion program.

Third, the group agreed that given that further budget cuts are expected, it is unrealistic to assume that there will be resources available to conduct a major new treatment initiative. The group decided instead to focus attention on unmet need among people enrolled in the mental health court, since difficulties in accessing treatment were creating questions about the continued viability of the court. There was a consensus that the court can play a valuable role in the county, but that it was a priority to address treatment access questions that have emerged during the court’s operation.

Given this discussion, participants agreed that the following steps will be taken as the next phase of planning.

- A full description of the various ways people in crisis are transported by police and contracted for transportation services will be prepared.

- The current state of mobile crisis services will be the focus of additional discussion to determine whether those services are appropriately targeted and whether over time additional capacity could or should be created.
- The county will work with the Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Technical Assistance Center at the Florida Mental Health Institute to conduct a “heavy user” analysis for Martin County.
- Unmet treatment needs of individuals in mental health court will be analyzed, and the cost of meeting those needs identified. After those steps occur, there will be discussions over how those needs might be financed.

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Priority Area 1: Describing the county transportation system				
Objective		Action Step	Who	When
1.1	Create a detailed description of the county transportation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the decision rules used by law enforcement in deciding where to transport a person who may require crisis assessment and/or treatment ▪ Identify the decision rules used by treatment providers such as New Horizon and others in deciding whether a person should be transported to another treatment provider ▪ Identify costs associated with transportation 	Sheriff representative Provider representatives County officials	This should be completed within a month

Priority Area 2: Further discussion of mobile crisis capacity				
Objective		Action Step	Who	When
2.1	Assess the current state of mobile crisis services in Martin County and future need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assure that all parties understand the current state of mobile crisis services within the county ▪ Determine whether mobile crisis is appropriately focuses ▪ Determine whether additional mobile crisis capacity should be created when resources allow 	New Horizon Sheriff's department County	2 months from adoption of this Report

Priority Area 3: “Heavy user” analysis				
Objective		Action Step	WHO	WHEN
3.1	Identify the core group of individuals who use a disproportionate share of criminal justice and treatment resources in Martin County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion between the County and the Technical Assistance Center regarding the conduct of such an analysis 	County TA Center, including John Petrila and FMHI data analyst	Before end of 2008
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct the analysis using state archival data sets 	TA Center in consultation with county officials	Four-six weeks after adoption of this Report by the County planning group
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a workgroup to discuss implications of analysis for criminal justice and treatment providers 	County officials Law enforcement Treatment providers TA Center	On-going, after preparation of the analysis
Priority Area 4: Analyze unmet treatment needs of mental health court clients				
Objective		Action Step	Who	When
4.1	Identify the treatment needs and costs of meeting the needs of individuals in the mental health court who are currently experiencing difficulty in gaining access to treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate each client currently enrolled in the mental health court to determine whether treatment is being provided Determine on an individual basis what treatment needs are currently unmet 	To be determined	To be determined
4.2	Determine whether financial resources to create additional capacity for mental health court clients can be identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the appropriateness and feasibility of using or expanding existing fees that are currently charged in the court system 	State attorney Public defender County	

Conclusions and Recommendations: Summary

A process such as the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop can result in the acknowledgment of a somewhat daunting list of service gaps. In this respect, Martin County like many Florida counties and indeed like many jurisdictions in the United States. At the same time, Martin County has important strengths.

- ❖ First, the individuals who participated in this workshop represented all of the major stakeholders necessary to accomplish change in this area and the planning meetings that have occurred over the last few months have opened up communications across agency boundaries. This is a pre-requisite for system planning and change.
- ❖ Second, the discussion and comments during the day and a half were open and not defensive, but rather were focused on identifying problems and solutions.
- ❖ Third, the active involvement of local law enforcement, the courts, the public defender and state attorney, as well as the county commission, creates a political foundation for change that is very well-developed and provides the basis for incremental change, over time.

As Martin County moves forward in addressing the issues identified during this process, there are three issues in particular that may be of particular importance.

- ❖ First, the planning process over time needs to identify the specific points in the process where intervention is possible and might have the biggest impact. It is impossible within existing resources to resolve every problem identified in a planning process, but it is possible to identify the potential points where an intervention might make the most difference.
- ❖ Second, it is worth inventorying the data that are currently available in making this judgment and identifying what types of data could be useful but either are not collected or not retained in an accessible data base. The USF-FMHI CJMHS Technical Assistance Center can assist in this task.
- ❖ Third, it is critical that the planning process not lose the momentum created to date. Planning meetings involving all relevant stakeholders should be conducted on a regular basis and assigned priority by stakeholders. In addition, there are a number of resources available to Martin County to accomplish some of the tasks identified during the workshop as next steps. Those resources should be utilized whenever possible to expand the capacity of the planning group.

In closing, we would like to thank Martin County for allowing the CJMHS Technical Assistance Center to facilitate this workshop. In particular we would like to thank Sharon Stratford for her work in handling the logistics for the mapping session. We look forward to continuing to work with Martin County.

Resources

Website Resources and Partners	
Florida Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Technical Assistance Center	www.floridatac.org
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute Department of Mental Health Law and Policy	http://mhlp.fmhi.usf.edu
Florida Partners in Crisis	http://www.flpic.org
Justice Center	www.justicecenter.csg.org
Policy Research Associates	www.prainc.com
National GAINS Center/ TAPA Center for Jail Diversion	www.gainscenter.samhsa.gov

Other Web Resources	
Center for Mental Health Services	www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention	www.prevention.samhsa.gov
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment	www.csat.samhsa.gov
Council of State Governments Consensus Project	www.consensusproject.org
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill	www.nami.org
National Center on Cultural Competence	www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	www.health.org
National Criminal Justice Reference Service	www.ncjrs.org
National Institute of Corrections	www.nicic.org
National Institute on Drug Abuse	www.nida.nih.gov
Office of Justice Programs	www.ojp.usdoj.gov
Partners for Recovery	www.partnersforrecovery.samhsa.gov
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	www.samhsa.gov

Participant List

<u>Name, First</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Donna	Hosan	SSN/Martin County School
Mari	Traun	19 th Court
Michelle	Derrick	Public Defender
Lisa	Fontain	Public Defender
Kathy	Alonzo	Public Defender
Steve	Chase	MCSO
Tom	Bakkedah	SAO
Pam	Baker	NAMI
Anita	Cocoves	Martin County BCC
Cheryl	Bass	Martin County BCC CSD
Diane	O'Neal	Court Administration
Jack	Miller	Magellan Health
Louise	Hubbard	Treasure Coast Homeless
Susan	Valliere	Martin County Commission
Diane	White	MCHHS
Wendy	Parent	Court Administration
Gloria	Friedman	County Community Services
Bryan	Irvine	MCSO Chaplain
Uslager	Patricia	MCSO
Michele	Saunders	Florida Partners in Crisis
Nicolette	Springer	FMHI
John	Petrila	FMHI
Sharon	Stratford	Martin County