

Sumter 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 Sumter County, Florida on February 20, 2009 with a follow meeting held on April 23, 2009. 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
- ❖ Observations, comments, and recommendations from the Florida CJMHS Technical Assistance Center to help Sumter 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 Sumter 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 Sumter 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 to promote progress in addressing the criminal justice diversion and treatment needs of the target population

The participants in the workshop included 18 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. John Petrila, J.D., LL.M. and Nicolette Springer, M.S. both from FMHI facilitated the workshop sessions. The follow up meeting on April 23rd was also facilitated by Nicolette Springer.

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 flow through the Sumter 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 Sumter County Cross-Systems Map created during the workshop is on the last page of this document.

Sumter 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 Sumter 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 Sumter 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

A person in need can enter into the system in two ways, through volunteer admission or through contact with law enforcement and/or emergency services. Voluntary mental health and substance abuse screening and assessment can take place at Lifestream and the detoxification facility is located at the Leesburg Medical Center. Alternatively, the person in need or a third party may contact 911. The call for service will be dispatched to one of six law enforcement agencies based on local: Sumter County Sheriff (162), Bushnell Police (16), Webster Police (7), Centerhill Police (8), Coleman Police (2), or Wildwood Police (22). The number in parentheses reflects the number of sworn officers in each department for a total of 217 officers. The 217 includes correctional and reserve officers. In addition to contact initiated through 911, law enforcement may also encounter persons in need while on patrol.

When law enforcement arrives, several scenarios may play out. An individual requiring immediate medical attention will be transported via ambulance to Leesburg Medical Center. Upon medical clearance, if the individual needs further mental health assessment either for a mental illness or a co-occurring disorder, they may be transported to Lifestream, a public Baker Act receiving facility. If no additional assessment is required then law enforcement will transport the individual to Sumter County jail. There is no Marchman Act facility in Sumter County however Lifestream does have fifteen (15) detox beds, seven (7) of which are state funded.

➤ Gaps Identified during February Meeting

- No mobile crisis team for adults.
- Unsure about Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training.
- No Marchmen Act facility.
- Limited of resources for Substance Abuse.
- Lacking an Addictions Receiving Facility (ARF).

➤ Priorities Identified during April follow up Meeting

- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training – although Lifestream does not charge for CIT training it would require that an officer be off the job for a consecutive 40 hours. The group was unsure how feasible this would be especially for the smaller departments. However, the group determined that CIT training is a priority and began to brainstorm their options.
 - Judge Morley invited Jon Cherry of Lifestream to attend the next meeting of the Dependency Court Improvement Project on May 15th to promote CIT training.
 - Jeff Feller suggested the development of a CIT like trained “team” as an alternative to full CIT training similar to Marion county. Jon Cherry agreed to explore this option.
- Addressing Limited Resources – Jon Cherry pointed out that Sumter receives one of the lowest level of state funds in the circuit. He suggested that Sumter county gather information and data that could be utilized to appeal for more resources.
 - It was suggested that properly identifying those served would be a good start to accomplishing this goal.
 - FMHI agreed to assistant with implementing a Mental Health and Substance Abuse Screen in the Jail in order to quantitative those in need of services in the criminal justice system.

Intercept II: Initial Detention / Initial Detention and Court Appearance

During the booking process into Sumter County jai, all arrestees are asked questions pertaining to their mental health (including suicide) and substance use history. If they reply yes to any of the prompts they are scheduled to see a medical professional within the jail. Suicidal arrestees are isolated immediately and check on every fifteen minutes

or if possible observed continuously by staff. All other individuals are seen within about 10 days and no later than 14 days. The medical staff in the jail includes:

- 1 general physician (twice a week)
- 1 psychiatrist (once a week and on call)
- 1 physician's assistant (40 hours a week)
- 3 licensed practical nurse (3 day a week rotation)
- 1 registered nurse (40 hours a week)
- 1 medical clerk (40 hours a week)

It is noteworthy to mention that the psychiatrist that serves the jail also serves Lifestream and Langley. Jail administration estimates that about 10 to 15 percent of inmates are provided psychotropic medications. There are currently no formulary restrictions, doctors are allowed to prescribe at their own discretion. For medical reasons, the jail does not accept a person with a blood alcohol level greater than 0.3; those individuals are sent to Leesburg for clearance and then potentially to Lifestream or back to the jail.

Within 24 hours of arrive at the jail, all defendants appear before a judge via video for their initial court hearing. At this time, the Public Defender does not appear with the defendant at first appearance; however they are transitioning to do so by the end of the year. Jail administration and the Public Defender have strong communication and will generally notify the Public Defender of any potential mental health and/or substance abuse problems.

➤ Gaps Identified during February Meeting

- Psychiatrist only once a week in jail therefore if mental health or substance abuse is identified at booking, an individual may wait up to two weeks before seeing a professional. Consequently, many bond out before being seen.
- No specific mental health, substance use or suicide screen conducted, only general medical screen conducted.
- No Pretrial Services.
- Need "diversion program" for people with mental illness.
- Although strong communication between jail and Public Defender, there is no formal process to identify mental illness and/or substance abuse issues.

➤ Priorities Identified during April follow up Meeting

- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Screen in Jail – FMHI will coordinate with county to assist with the implementation of evidence based screening instruments at booking.
- Limited Access to Psychiatrist – limited access to mental health professional and many offenders bond out before having being seen.
 - Jon Cherry suggested their may be a possibility of additional mental health personal but based on funding circumstances.
 - Nathan from Langely suggested the group explore the possibility that social work counselor from Langley be utilized.
- Formalize Communication Between Public Defender and Jail – the public defender express that unless offender is acutely mentally ill he is not notified

by jail. Therefore, those with minor ailments, who could benefit from services, often are overlooked and “fall through the cracks.”

- It was suggested that once the screens are implemented that the jail use that data to inform the public defender of potential needs.
- There was some concern raised about this suggestion. The group agreed to consult John Petrila at FMHI for legal advise on this matter.

Intercept III: Jails / Courts

Defendants are filtered into one of three court options: County court (misdemeanor), circuit court (felony) or drug court. There is no mental health court at either the misdemeanor or felony levels. In county court in the docket will be tagged if mental health concerns are raised. The public defender, state attorney and judge will work together to make services a condition of probation for all adjudicated defendants. If the defendant is found incompetent to stand trial, then he or she is released into community without services. If found competent then usually sentenced to probation with court ordered treatment. Violations of probation usually result in jail time. Conversion among attendees revealed that treatment is standard court order for mental health and/or substance abuse defendants however more likely for substance abuse clients then those with a mental health illness.

Felony defendants in Circuit court follow a similar path to County court defendants however if a defendant is found to be incompetent to stand trial about 90% are transferred to a state hospital via DCF. Once competency is reestablished the defendant is returned to the jail and court; usually within 30 days of release from hospital. The remaining 10% are placed under community supervision by DCF.

Felony Drug Court in Sumter county has been operating fro about one year. They have had one graduate and five defendants default. Those who do not successfully complete the program are sentence to prison. Only non-violent defendants with substance abuse problems are eligible to partake no mental health or co-occurring clients.

Defendants who are found not guilty or have had charges dropped are released into the community with no services.

- Gaps Identified during February Meeting
 - No access to diversion court for mental health or co-occurring clients.
 - Lack of services for misdemeanor defendants who are incompetent to stand.
 - No Drug Court for misdemeanant defendants.
 - More In-jail treatment and services are needed:
 - Substance abuse service in jail are limited. AA only meets once a week and NA on occasion. Lifestream offers a prevention program but no treatment.
 - Limited access to mental health professionals of all levels.
 - Services that are available are usually limited to acute ill and not broader group of those who may need services.

- Priorities Identified during April follow up Meeting
 - Explore expanding in-jail treatment and service.
 - Explore possibility of diversion programs.

Intercept IV: Re-Entry

Individuals who are sentenced to more than one year of incarceration are transferred to State Prison. Those serving less than one year are housed in Sumter County Jail. The Sumter County jail has a capacity of 173. The population on February 20th was 280. According to jail administration they average about 100 over capacity. The average length of stay is 60 days and cost \$54.00 per inmate per day. The jail is currently undergoing a 22 million dollar expansion project that will include a 24 bed mental health unit including a location for detoxification. However, there are no funds to staff the upcoming mental health pod. During the April meeting, it was mentioned that Lifestream and the jail were in conversation regarding staffing issues.

There are three classes in offered in the jail through Lifestream: Anger Management, Life Skills, and Prevention. There are currently no transitional services or reentry planning for inmates. If an inmates has a case manager he or she will receive assistance with benefit reinstatement but this accounts for a very small numbers of inmates. Jail administration and staff do not have the resources to assist with housing, support services, treatment or reestablishment of benefits. Florida Access kiosks are available in the county but attendees were unsure where those were located. The jail plans to have a kiosk installed at their facility but does know when this will occur.

- Gaps Identified during February Meeting
 - Limited case management
 - Lack of discharge planning
 - Limited access to jail programs
 - Staffing obstacles for new mental health pod scheduled to open in Summer 2009

➤ Priorities Identified during April follow up Meeting

- Case Management – only available to those you have a preexisting case manager
 - Explore additional case management options.
- Discharge Planning – currently there is no formal discharge plan for any inmates. Due to various legal factors it is often unknown in advance when inmates will be released. This makes it difficult to establish formal planning including setting doctor's appointment with Lifestream.
 - At the February meeting, Barbara Wheeler volunteered to compose a list of resources that could be given to inmates upon release. Jeff Feller offered to follow up with Barbara.
 - Advance notice of release when possible could assist in discharge planning and scheduling of needed doctor's appointments therefore the group decided to explore how to this information could be disseminated as soon as possible.
 - Additionally, discharge planning could increase the use of Lifestream's Sumter Clinic which is within walking distance of the jail.

Intercept V: Community Corrections / Community Support

After judicial disposition or upon release from incarceration, individuals may be placed under the supervision of a state or county probation or directly back into the community.

Individuals with documented mental illness are provided with a three day supply of medication and contact information for Lifestream when released from county jail into the community. No future appointment is made at that time and no list of resources is provided. Lifestream has a clinic within walking distance from the jail with psychiatric services available 4 days a week and other medical services available 5 days. The main Lifestream office is located about 20 miles from the jail. It can take as long as six weeks to get an appointment at the main office.

Sumter county does not have a public transportation system that would allow clients to easily access services. There is transportation available from jail by appointment only via a county transportation unit however it is only available Monday thru Friday, 9 to 5 and with 24 hours notice. On occasion, the jail administration will arrange for transportation. Those on Medicaid do have resources through DCF to receive transportation to services.

- Gaps Identified during February Meeting
 - Lengthy wait time for mental health appointment.
 - Lack of transportation options to receive services.
 - Limited assistance with reinstating benefits.
 - No peer involvement.
 - Lack of long term and residential treatment after discharge from jail.
 - Difficulty getting people with mental illness into long term treatment.
 - Affordable, supportive and stable housing.

- Priorities Identified during April follow up Meeting
 - Transportation – inmates have limited access to public transportation upon release.
 - Agreed to explore additional routes and services provided by Sumter Transit.
 - Reinstating Benefits – although there are state kiosks available within the county for benefit applications, it was unclear where actually these are located and how inmates could access them
 - Discussed possibility of SOAR training
 - Agreed to explore the possibility of having a kiosk in or near the jail.
 - List location of kiosks in the resource packet being developed by Barbara Wheeler.

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, Sumter County is much like most Florida counties and indeed like many jurisdictions in the United States. At the same time, Sumter County is very unique and has important strengths.

- ❖ First, the individuals who participated in this workshop represented all of the major stakeholders necessary to accomplish change in this area.
- ❖ Second, participants were enthusiastic and frank in their comments and observations. This spirit of collegiality and willingness to discuss limitations as well as strengths is an important part of being able to work across systems, as is necessary in improving the lives of people with mental disorders in or at risk for entering the criminal justice system.

As Sumter 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 that 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 Sumter 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 Sumter County for allowing the CJMHSA Technical Assistance Center to facilitate this workshop. In particular we would like to thank Jeff Feller for his work in handling the local arrangements. Finally, a great gratitude to all the local stakeholders who took the time to share their experiences throughout the three day visit. We look forward to continuing to work with Sumter 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