



Executive Summary

Pre-Booking, Crisis Intervention Center Report

March 16, 2020

Jails have become de facto mental health treatment facilities for people with behavioral health disorders. In fact, the three biggest mental health facilities in America are jails. In light of recent trends in Ohio and across the country to try to find ways to prevent those with behavioral health disorders from entering the criminal justice system because of un- or under-treated conditions, The Center for Community Solutions explored what a pre-booking crisis intervention center would look like in Cuyahoga County. This research resulted in several recommendations including:

- A successful diversion program requires a physical facility with a 24-hour a day drop-off site and have sober and addiction treatment services available.
- Crisis center should have an open-door policy for anyone in or out of the criminal justice system.
- Every law enforcement agency in the county should have at least one Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained officer, and agencies should permanently add a social worker or case worker to crisis intervention response teams.
- Every jail in Cuyahoga County must use the same full and evidence-based mental health screening.
- Jails, providers and health plans should improve coordination and data sharing to ensure people who need treatment get it in the community once a crisis is stabilized. This can also allow agencies to pay additional attention to high users of multiple systems.
- In the short-term, there will be cost shifting between systems as the center is established and the community diverts people into more appropriate settings. This will mean significant justice system processing cost savings, but costs will increase for health and social support services as more people are stabilized and recidivism is reduced.
- Address social risk factors, like housing, food insecurity and access to adequate transit for people in crisis beyond the medical or clinical issues.

Moving Cuyahoga County toward the creation of a pre-booking crisis intervention center, will bring a much needed, coordinated resource to the county. While the county has many of the resources someone with a behavioral health disorder would need, they are not always fully coordinated. There are many factors laid out in this report to consider as Cuyahoga County embarks on this worthy endeavor.