The Overland Park Police Department’s Mental Health Co-Responder Project

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The initiative

- Identify calls for service where mental health (MH) might be a relevant factor
- Dispatch mental health co-responder with police on MH calls
- Prevent those with MH issues from penetrating CJ system any more than necessary, when possible
  - MH co-responder offers expert assessment to police/scene
  - Offering referral to subject
  - Follow-up when necessary
Assessing effectiveness of co-responder initiative
Two-prong evaluation approach

- **Police officer survey**; same questions asked before co-responder came on board & approximately 1 year post
  - Demographics; administrative
  - Views re: MH system
  - Views re: competencies dealing with calls where MH issues may be a factor

- **Outcomes pre- & post-co-responder**
  - Hard outcomes studied for the year prior to co-responder
  - Same outcomes studied for 1st year of co-responder
Officer survey – to allow for anonymous reporting, results were compared in the aggregate

- **Age**
  - Pre = 37.6 yrs.
  - Post = 36.6 yrs.

- **Sex**
  - Male
    - Pre = 87.6%
    - Post = 80.0%
  - Female
    - Pre = 12.4%
    - Post = 20.0%

- **Education**
  - H.S./some coll.
    - Pre = 33.9%
    - Post = 33.7%
  - Bach./Grad.
    - Pre = 66.1%
    - Post = 66.3%
### Officer survey

#### Rank*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrol</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Years exp. OPPD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.8 yrs.</td>
<td>9.8 yrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Years total L.E.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.4 yrs.</td>
<td>11.2 yrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Shift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midnights</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days &amp; Evenings</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Officer survey

- CIT trained
  - Post = 45%

- CIT trained by shift
  - Days
    - Post = 65%
  - Evenings
    - Post = 30%
  - Midnights
    - Post = 23%
How well prepared are you to deal with situations involving mental health issues? (% Very well prepared) *

Percent

- Pre: 22
- Post: 35
- Raw change: 13
- Subst. chng.: 59

Legend:
- Pre
- Post
- Raw change
- Subst. chng.
How well prepared are other officers to deal with mental health issues? (% Very well prepared) n.s.

Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Raw change</th>
<th>Subst. chng.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Pre
- Post
- Raw change
- Subst. chng.
How effective is the Department in dealing with mental health issues? (% Moderate or Very effective)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Raw change</th>
<th>Subst. chng.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percent**

- Pre
- Post
- Raw change
- Subst. chng.
How effective is the Department in keeping people with mental health issues out of jail? (% Mod./Very) **

Percent

Pre Post Raw change Subst. chng.

43 62 19 44

Pre Post Raw change Subst. chng.
How effective is the Department in minimizing time spent on mental health issues? (% Mod./Very) **

![Bar chart showing the percentage of time spent on mental health issues before and after intervention. The chart indicates a substantial change of 150%.]

Pre | Post | Raw change | Subst. chng.
--- | --- | --- | ---
10 | 25 | 15 | Actual Substantive Change = 150%
How effective is the Department in maintaining community safety? (% Mod./Very) **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Raw change</th>
<th>Subst. chng.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How big a problem are mental health issues for the department? (% Mod./Very big) n.s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Raw change</th>
<th>Subst. chng.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Red: Pre
- Red: Post
- Blue: Raw change
- Green: Subst. chng.
Average # of contacts with people dealing with mental health issues in last month? **

- Pre = 6.2/month
- Post = 8.7/month

Difference likely due to heightened awareness since co-responder
How helpful is the mental health system in assisting with mental health issues? (% Mod./Very) ***

Pre | Post | Raw change | Subst. chng.
--- | --- | --- | ---
29 | 52 | 23 | 79

Percent
How helpful is the emergency room in assisting with mental health issues? (% Mod./Very) **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Raw change</th>
<th>Subst. chng.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>106%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Substantive Change = 106%
Post-survey respondents were asked “How helpful is the co-responder in dealing with mental health issues?” 79% responded moderately or very helpful.
Comparing hard outcomes for the year prior to co-responder, to first year of co-responder service

- Pre-co-responder data gathered retrospectively
- Calls for service during the year before co-responder initiation were selected (calls that met certain criteria)
- Several variables examined:
  - Whether arrest was a potentiality (for statistical control)
  - Substance use/involvement
  - If person was brought to detox
  - If the emergency room was avoided
  - If the person was referred to the emergency room
  - If the person was arrested
Characteristics of the dataset

- N = 513 MH calls for service identified during pre-co-responder year
- N = 773 MH calls for service recorded during co-responders first year of service
  - **Percentages** will be compared as opposed to raw numbers, along with significance testing
- Date of call for service captured
- Case/event number recorded allowing for verification
Did substances appear to be involved?

The difference between pre- and post-percentages was statistically significant $p < .001$. 

Percent

Pre-CR  20.3
Post-CR  41.4
Was person brought to detox?

The difference approached but did not meet statistical significance at $p < .05$; $p = .09$
Was person *involuntarily* brought to detox?

The difference was statistically significant at $p < .01$. 

![Graph showing the difference in percent between Pre-CR and Post-CR with a statistically significant p-value at p < .01.](image-url)
Was the person referred to the E.R.?

The difference was statistically significant at $p < .001$
Was the person arrested?

The difference was statistically significant at p < .001
Predicting the likelihood of ER referral post-co-responder initiation

- Mental health-related calls for service **15 to 16 times less likely** to result in ER referral post-co-responder (no statistical controls)

- **15.4 to 16.4 times less likely** to result in ER referral, while controlling for whether or not arrest was deemed a possibility

- **26 to 26.8 times less likely** to result in ER referral, while controlling for whether or not substances were involved

- **26 to 26.9 times less likely** to result in ER referral, while controlling for **both** arrest possibility and substance involvement

- Initiation of the co-responder resulted in large reduction in **actual** ER referrals, as well as the statistical probability of ER referral while controlling for potentially important mitigating factors.
Predicting the **likelihood of arrest** post-co-responder initiation

- Mental health-related calls for service **4 to 5 times less likely** to result in arrest post-co-responder (no statistical controls)

- **1.8 to 2.8 times less likely** to result in arrest, while controlling for whether or not arrest was deemed a possibility

- **4.3 to 5.3 times less likely** to result in arrest, while controlling for whether or not substances were involved

- **2.9 to 3.9 times less likely** to result in arrest, while controlling for **both** arrest possibility and substance involvement

- Initiation of the co-responder resulted in large reduction in **actual** arrest, as well as the statistical probability of arrest while controlling for potentially important mitigating factors.
Predicting the likelihood of ER referral and/or arrest post-co-responder initiation

- Mental health-related calls for service 13 to 14 times less likely to result in ER and/or arrest post-co-responder (no statistical controls)

- 12.5 to 13.5 times less likely to result in ER and/or arrest, while controlling for whether or not arrest was deemed a possibility

- 21.2 to 22.3 times less likely to result in ER and/or arrest, while controlling for whether or not substances were involved

- 22.2 to 23.5 times less likely to result in ER and/or arrest, while controlling for both arrest possibility and substance involvement

- Initiation of the co-responder resulted in large reduction in composite outcome, as well as the statistical probability of composite outcome while controlling for potentially important mitigating factors.
Summary re: overall effects since co-responder initiation

- Officer views impacted +
- Officer self-reported competencies impacted +
- More awareness re: the issues +
- More confidence as well +
- Likelihood of ER transfer impacted –
- Likelihood of arrest impacted –
- Results became stronger/more pronounced when controlling for sub. use and arrest potential
Additional research

- Another wave of officer survey?
  - See if effects hold
  - Ask additional questions

- Continue to track hard outcomes

- Initiate same research model in other locales as support for best practices in MH issues continues