



Johnson County Government steps up

Johnson County was selected as one of seven counties in the nation as a Stepping Up Innovator County for its expertise in helping people in the criminal justice system who experience mental illness. As an Innovator County, Johnson County's data collection efforts will be highlighted as part of a new push from **Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails** to help counties consistently identify and collect data on this population.

Stepping Up was launched in May 2015 by The Council of State Governments Justice Center, the National Association of Counties and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation. Since that time, more than 425 counties — including Johnson County — in 43 states, representing 40 percent of the U.S. population, have committed to the Stepping Up goal.

What the Johnson County community is doing

Veterans Treatment Court

In January 2016, Johnson County District Court held the first Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) in the state of Kansas. Its mission — to identify veterans in the criminal justice system and, when eligible, to place them into treatment and court supervision as an alternative to incarceration. The program, offering both diversion and probation tracks, allows eligible



veterans to voluntarily participate in a 12- to 18-month program composed of court appearances, drug and alcohol testing, treatment, recovery support meetings and a mentorship program.

The treatment court is a collaboration between Johnson County's Sheriff's Office, Mental Health Center, District Court, Justice Information Management System and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Since its inception in 2016, VTC has graduated 13 participants.

Crisis Intervention Team

CIT is collaboration designed to improve the way law enforcement and community partners respond to people experiencing mental health crises. The county's CIT program is built on a strong partnership between law enforcement, mental health and the District Attorney's Office and individuals affected by mental illness. Johnson County's CIT council facilitates 40-hour training to equip officers through educational presentations, verbal de-escalation simulation and a panel of clients and family members who speak from their personal experiences. CIT training aims to enhance the officers' skills in responding safely and creatively to mental health calls, reduce repeat calls for service and unnecessary arrests by connecting individuals with mental health crisis to appropriate treatment and reduce the likelihood of needing to use physical force.

Mental Health First Aid

In 2018 (to date), staff have trained 252 officers from Overland Park and Johnson County Regional Police Academy. Last year, the Mental Health Center partnered to train 98 law enforcement officers from Gardner and Leawood police departments and the Johnson County Regional Police Academy.

Enhanced Data Sharing (MyRC)

My Resource Connection (MyRC) is a secure web resource developed to support Johnson County's client success. The web tool's primary focus is to provide human services professionals with information that increases their understanding of a client's needs and to foster collaboration across the county when they are serving the same individual or family. MyRC allows a service provider to obtain information about other county services a particular client is receiving, contact information of other professionals serving that client, information about other individuals residing in the

Across Johnson County Government, we're collaborating to reduce the number people who experience mental illness in our criminal justice system. We were one of the first four counties to begin this national Stepping Up effort.

1 in 5
people experience
mental illness
in the U.S.



Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to understand and support someone who may need help.

client's home, and potential services from community-based organizations that might be of benefit to the client.

Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS)

In 2016, Johnson County adopted an electronic version of the Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS) into the jail's booking process to capture baseline information. The BJMHS is a validated mental health screen developed by Policy Research Associates Inc. to help jurisdictions identify individuals who might be in need of mental health evaluation. It consists of eight questions and takes about three to five minutes to complete. It does not require the person conducting the assessment to be a mental health professional. Johnson County Mental Health Center is notified of individuals who would benefit from further evaluation. Currently, JCMHC contacts each individual within 72 hours of release to offer a free, brief assessment in an effort to connect them to appropriate services and to decrease the odds of returning to jail.

Corrections/Mental Health Center Partnership

The Mental Health Center and Department of Corrections have partnered on adolescent drug and alcohol treatment services. In 2017, the Adolescent Center for Treatment program — which has provided substance use disorder treatment to teens for more than 25 years — moved to the Youth and Family Services Center in Olathe. The collaboration increased capacity at the treatment center, reduced the waiting list for services and ensured long-term viability of the county's adolescent treatment services.

Mental Health Co-Responder Program

The Johnson County Co-Responder program is a collaborative effort between Johnson County Mental Health Center and local police departments and EMS Services, by embedding a clinician in the respective department. The co-responder goes on calls for services with first responders when mental illness is identified as a factor in a call. Individuals who experience mental illness are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. This innovative program effectively provides follow up and engagement with people to get them into local services and prevent them from being incarcerated, ending up in emergency rooms or potentially involved in continued police interactions. Currently, the county has seven co-responders, representing 11 police jurisdictions and 14 different cities, plus emergency medical services. The program won a NACo Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties.

Justice Information Management System

The county's Justice Information Management System (JIMS) is a fully integrated records management system. It collects information about individuals from the point of booking to release from jail or termination from probation. JIMS allows county entities to cross-reference about 28 years of jail data and 24 years of district court case information.



2011 Co-responder program inception with Olathe Police Department through a Bureau of Justice Assistance (U.S. Dept. of Justice) grant.

2013 First expansion with Overland Park Police Department (OPPD) through the BJA expansion grant.

July 2016 Shawnee and Lenexa police departments have the first shared co-responder.

Nov 2016 Emergency Medical Services start piloting the co-responder program.

April 2017 Northeast JoCo cities share one co-responder — includes 10 cities and seven police departments among these jurisdictions:

- Leawood
- Prairie Village
- Merriam
- Mission
- Mission Hills
- Fairway
- Roeland Park
- Westwood
- Westwood Hills
- Mission Woods

July 2017 Olathe PD adds a second co-responder (part-time) with funding support from Olathe Health Systems.

Jan 2018 Shawnee full-time co-responder position starts. By Feb. 1, 2018, Shawnee and Lenexa each have a full-time position.

May 2018 Olathe PD changed from a part-time position to full-time; now has two full-time co-responders.

Summer 2018 Overland Park PD will add a second full-time co-responder.