

11.1.19 DRAFT Report Out from Crisis Services Subcommittee: MH Working Group

The members of our subcommittee represent law enforcement, people with lived experience, and the provider community. Coming from these three very different communities we all were in **immediate agreement** that the crisis system in Maine today is not meeting the needs of our communities. It is not meeting the need of those with mental health challenges, it is not meeting the needs of law enforcement, and providers often feel that they are unable to provide the level of care needed (in a quick response time) due to lack of staffing and resources.

There are many concerns and issues that we all see on a regular basis.

Recommendations from our discussion:

Legislation (or could just be done by the DHHS with available funds):

1. That the Commissioner of Health and Human Services shall hire an independent crisis system consultant to work with an advisory group of interested parties to review the crisis response system in the State. This review should be completed within 6 months. The advisory group members must be selected to ensure geographic diversity and must include representatives of advocates for persons with mental illness and representatives of persons with lived experience of mental illness, providers of crisis services, hospitals, providers of residential and community-based behavioral health treatment and nursing care, jail administrators, the Maine Sheriffs' Association and police departments. They will take a system approach for solutions.
 - a. What is not working?
 - b. What are the unmet needs?
 - c. What is working?
 - d. Do we want a more therapeutic intervention?
 - e. Can we add in more peer supports?
 - f. Can we add in more telehealth for rural areas?
 - g. Can we add in more mobile crisis services?
 - h. Can we add in more CSU units and can police bring someone there at 2 am?

Short Term:

1. Information about what is available in the current system needs to be collected and disseminated to law enforcement and consumers.
 - a. How many CSUs are there and where?
 - b. How to activate a mobile unit? Where are they available?
 - c. Who is the local crisis service provider?
2. Suggestions to explore:
 - a. Can we think up ways to get information into the hands of the law enforcement that may show up at a crisis call such as medical alert wrist bracelets people could choose to wear with information such as "who to call in a crisis" or "how to help me feel safe"?
 - b. Should there be a separate system for youth and adults in crisis?