



December 14, 2020

Contact: Tiffany Devon, DWIHN
tdevon@dwihn.org 313-570-9382

Information EMBARGOED Until News Conference

Landmark partnership to help Detroit police, homeless outreach workers better support citizens experiencing mental health challenges

- **Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network (DWIHN) providing Detroit police officers & 911 call takers crisis intervention team training**
- **DWIHN also providing embedded behavioral health staff at 911 call center and in police and homelessness community response**
- **New co-response model will create more positive outcomes and offer those in distress connections to support services**

Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network (DWIHN) in partnership with the Detroit Police Department (DPD) and the City of Detroit's Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) announced today a groundbreaking new partnership that will bring additional behavioral health support to police officers, 911 call takers and homeless outreach workers when they encounter citizens experiencing mental health challenges.

The partnership, announced today by DWIHN President & CEO Willie Brooks, Police Chief James Craig and Mayor Mike Duggan, will help identify individuals with mental health needs so the agencies can provide an appropriate co-response and connect these individuals with support services.

The collaboration between the organizations through this Behavioral Health Pilot Program will improve police and community relationships along with addressing the mental health needs of the people in the City of Detroit. The pilot partnership goals include:

- Pilot a 911 mental health crisis call diversion and response staff
- Increase police officer access to mental health supports
- Develop adequate places to house individuals in need of crisis services
- Evaluate and expand Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training of police officers and 911 staff

"These efforts should reduce overall incarceration and hospitalization costs and provide better treatment options to the people we serve. Jail diversion and homeless outreach lead to connections to treatment. This pilot is more than just training, it is a culture and community shift that bridges the gap between the law enforcement and behavioral health sectors." DWIHN President and CEO, Willie E. Brooks, Jr.

"This is the kind of program that has been badly needed and talked about for years but never implemented by anyone until now," according to Mayor Michael Duggan. "I'm so proud of the work that has been put into this from DWIHN, DPD and our HRD. Because of the lack of institutional mental health support, police officers have been put into the

position of being mental health responders. Now, thanks to this partnership, they will have better training and the embedded support of behavioral health specialists for the safety of our officers and the public."

Three-Pronged Approach

The new partnership has three major components designed to support police officers and housing department employees in the areas they are most likely to encounter someone experiencing mental health challenges: At the 911 Call Center, during a police response and when working with an individual experiencing homelessness. The City and DWIHN have partnered to develop partnerships in each of those areas:

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Co-Response

DPD and DWIHN have established a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) co-response partnership, which currently operates in downtown Detroit. This team of behavioral health specialists from DWIHN's providers and CIT-trained DPD officers patrols hot-spot locations, provides outreach services to those experiencing mental health and/or substance use issues and helps connect individuals to supportive services in addition to co-responding to police runs with a mental health nexus. The CIT's co-response services will expand to the 9th Precinct in January 2021.

"We understand that interactions with people with mental illness is a regular occurrence in our city," said Detroit Police Chief James E. Craig. "We can only succeed in addressing this issue by working with organizations and leaders across our community. This is not a problem we can arrest our way out of, nor is jail the proper treatment facility for people suffering with mental illness. With the continued partnership with DWIHN and HRD, we can stay proactive in recognizing and responding effectively to individuals with mental illness."

911 Integrated Response

Beginning in January 2021, the 911 Integrated Response will have embedded DWIHN clinicians in Detroit's 911 Call Center. They will directly connect callers who are experiencing behavioral health emergencies to support services and assign calls for service to the CIT Co-response units when appropriate. When not responding to incoming crisis calls, the embedded clinicians will make follow-up calls to callers identified as high utilizers of 911 and connect them to mental health and other needed services. Trained call takers will also be able to better classify calls involving mental health crises and transfer them to DWIHN crisis lines as needed.

Detroit Homeless Outreach Team

The Detroit Homeless Outreach Team (DHOT) is a partnership between DWIHN, DPD, and HRD. This team will consist of a DWIHN behavioral health clinician and street outreach provider who will conduct preventative outreach to connect unsheltered residents with mental health services, coordinating with a DPD Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO) when needed. DHOT will provide individuals with wraparound housing including a transfer to permanent housing for those who qualify. The DHOT team will initially focus its work in DPD's Third Precinct beginning in 2021 given that both DPD and HRD identified this as an area of high need.

Extensive, ongoing training

Staff for each prong of the pilot project will be provided with requisite training conducted by DWIHN. Approximately 300 DPD officers are trained annually in Mental Health First Aid and QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)/suicide prevention. Additionally, 20% of DPD's responding officers will be certified in CIT skills, which is a 40-hour training that teaches a community-based approach to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Currently, DPD has over 50 officers trained in CIT. Another 90 911 call takers and dispatchers have received 16-hour CIT training. All of the pilot's participating behavioral health specialists, homeless advocates, 911 call-takers, and co-responding officers will be trained in CIT.



“NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) helped develop CIT with the Memphis Police Department and University of Memphis. CIT is the international Gold Standard of verbal de-escalation training and community partnerships when addressing persons experiencing a mental health crisis, ultimately getting them the help they need and reducing the number of contacts with law enforcement. Where used, CIT has significantly reduced officer and civilian injuries and saved lives, while saving money.” Executive Director, NAMI-Michigan, Kevin Fischer.

The overall goal of the Behavioral Health Co-Response Pilot is to improve Detroit’s response to individuals experiencing mental health challenges and/or homelessness, and connect them early on to supportive services. The pilot program’s three-pronged approach will consist of: CIT Co-Response, 911 Integrated Response, and DHOT.

Why is this necessary?

- *30% of people experiencing homelessness have been diagnosed with a behavioral health issue (NAMI)*
- *Approximately 35% of the inmates in the Wayne County Jail have a history of mental health illness (DWIHN)*
- *DPD responds to at least 20 mental health related 911 calls for service per day, 70% of which are categorized as violent.*
- *As of 11/22/2020, high utilizers of Detroit’s 911 call center have made more than 16,000 calls to 911, with the top caller calling over 4,000 times. (DPD)*

##