Mental Health Jail Diversion

34th Annual Texas Council Conference

Wayne Young, MBA, LPC, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

The Honorable Kim Ogg, JD
Harris County District Attorney
80% of the people we serve have household incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Level.
We have 2,400 team members who provide care in 74 locations throughout Harris County.

30% of our services are delivered where people live, work or go to school.
Harris Center Continuum of Care for Justice-Involved Persons

- Crisis Call Diversion Program
- Competency and Sanity Evaluations
- Tele-CIRT Pilot Program with Sheriff’s Office
- Rehab Clinician - care coordination for The Harris Center’s current patients
- Forensic Single Portal - transition services for those returning from state hospital
- Judge Ed Emmett Mental Health Diversion Center
- Joint Processing Center Diversion Desk
- Mental Health Jail Diversion Program Post-Booking Services and Re-entry
- Homeless Outreach Team - collaboration with HPD
- Texas Opioid Response Peer Services
- Jail-based Clinical Mental Health and IDD Services – Funded under the Jail Contract
- Peer Re-entry Services
- Forensic Assertive Community Treatment
- Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT)
- Mobile Crisis Team - coordination with HPD
- New START re-entry services
- Array of outpatient and residential mental health services
- Dual Diagnosis Residential Program - partnership with Probation
- Reintegration Court re-entry services
- Mental Health Jail Diversion Program Community-based Services & Supports
- Integrated care – partnership with Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Judge Ed Emmett Mental Health Diversion Center
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Last year we served just over 25,000 people in our forensic division.
“The Harris County District Attorney’s Office is dedicated to making our community safer through evidence-based prosecution and equal justice for all. This means guaranteeing a fair process to obtain a just result for the victim, the accused and the community in every case.”
District Attorney’s Diversion Programs

- Misdemeanor Marijuana Jail Diversion Program (MMDP)
- Responsive Interventions for Change: Controlled Substance Intervention
- STAR Drug Court
- Mental Health Court
- Driving While License Invalid or Suspended Intervention
- DWI Pretrial Intervention
- Retail Theft Pretrial Intervention
- Project 180 – Prostitution Diversion
- Clean and Green Diversion Program
- Veteran’s Court
- FIRST
- Mental Health Diversion Center
The Neuropsychiatric Center was the current diversion location for anyone with acute mental health issues, but the sub-acute, non-emergency mental health population had few diversion options.

Of 4,585 defendants booked into Harris County Jail in 2016 for trespassing charges, 3,886 (85%) of cases were identified as having a mental health or homelessness issue.

- 596 were repeat defendants

On average, nearly 3,000 inmates are in the Harris County Jail are on psychotropic medications every day.
Why a Diversion Center?

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• In 12 months, 170 cases involved a Class B trespassing charge were defendant was deemed incompetent and legally unable to proceed to trial – resulting in a total of 11,785 days in jail
Collaborative Partners

- The Harris Center for Mental Health & IDD
- Harris County Judge’s Office
- Harris County Sheriff’s Office
- Harris County District Attorney’s Office
- Houston Police Department
- Harris Health
- Harris County Housing Authority
- Harris County Commissioners Court
- Harris County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Resources

SB 292
  • Harris County Judge’s Office - $5,000,000

HB 13
  • Harris County Sheriff’s Office - $2,500,000

In-Kind Match
  • Harris County Sheriff’s Office
  • Harris County District Attorney’s Office
  • Houston Police Department
  • Harris County Housing Authority
  • The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD
Judge Ed Emmett Mental Health Diversion Center

• Pre-charge alternative for law enforcement to drop off people with mental illness picked up for low-level misdemeanors

• Opened September 4, 2018
Eligibility

- Offenders who commit low level, non-violent crimes
- Those who appear to have or have a history of mental illness
- Not in an acute crisis – does not meet criteria for Emergency Detention
- Voluntary
- Adult
Standardized intake flow for diversion arrivals includes:

• Peer Support (our goal is for this to be the first connection)
• Medical Assessment/Triage by RN
• Evaluation by Psychiatrist
• Evaluation by Internal Medicine physician
• Evaluation by Master’s Level Clinician
On Site Services

- Assessments
- Integrated treatment and care plans to assist in an individual’s stabilization
- Medication management
- On site primary care
- On site psychiatric care
- Psychosocial programming
- Substance use disorder interventions
- Rehabilitation services
- Respite beds
- Peer support
- Extensive discharge planning to coordinate access to housing, social services and treatment post discharge, utilizing case managers and peer support
Judge Ed Emmett Mental Health Diversion Center

Aftercare Services (Post-Release Services)

• Intensive Community Based Case Management
• Medication management
• Psychiatry
• Psychosocial programming
• Respite beds
• Crisis Housing Supports
• Detox/Residential Substance Use Disorder Services
• Peer support
• Permanent Supportive Housing
Houston Police Department Training Video
Demographics

Jail Diversion YTD Through May 2019

1 ADMIT, 80%
2 ADMITS, 12%
3 ADMITS, 4%
4 ADMITS, 1.4%
5 ADMITS, 0.4%
6 ADMITS, 0.6%
8 ADMITS, 0.2%
9 ADMITS, 0.1%
11 ADMITS, 0.1%
13 ADMITS, 0.2%
14 ADMITS, 0.1%

- Female, 21%
- Male, 79%
- Unknown, 28%
- Homeless, 58%
- Housed, 14%
Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative is a collaborative effort between the Houston Police Department and THE HARRIS CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND IDD. CCSI is a program designed to identify, engage, and provide services to individuals who have been diagnosed with a serious and persistent mental illness, and have frequent encounters with the Houston Police Department either through their own initiative or by family and/collateral contacts.

Available Services
- Outreach and Engagement
- Intensive Case Management
- Mental Health First Aid for client, family, & other support systems
- Linkage to secure, stable housing
- Linkage to primary healthcare
- Linkage to outpatient psychiatric care and supportive service
- Linkage with substance abuse treatment
- Empowering client to assume responsibility for mental health compliance
- Crisis Intervention

We expanded our existing CCSI program to engage the “familiar faces” who have frequent visits to the Diversion Center with limited impact.
Evolution of Diversion Criteria

**Initial Focus (SEP 2018)**
- Offenders who arrested for trespassing

**Expanded Focus: Misdemeanor Marijuana Diversion Program (FEB 2019)**
- Referring those who have a mental health issue and are failing to meet requirements over to Diversion Program (but not actual center) for community based engagement

**Expanded Charges (May 2019)**
- Offenders who commit low-level (Misdemeanor), non-violent crimes
- No threat to public safety
- Law enforcement and prosecutors shall review offenders for diversion on a case-by-case basis
Offenses *not eligible* for Diversion

- DWI
- Weapons offenses (i.e., UCW, Discharging a Firearm, Deadly Conduct)
- Assault
- Domestic Violence offenses (i.e. Assault-Family Member, Terroristic Threat on Family Member, Violation of Protective Order)
- Terroristic Threat
- Burglary of a Motor Vehicle
- Any offense where public safety could be compromised

**Special Note:** No open warrants or detainers
Diversion eligibility criteria may include other non-violent, misdemeanor charges that do not create a public safety threat:

- **Criminal Mischief** - Defendant kicked metro bus door and broke glass - $500 damage
- **Theft <$750** - Defendant stole coffee pot while trespassing at urgent care clinic
- **Obstruct Highway/Passageway** - Defendant standing in roadway begging for money
- **Failure to Identify** - Defendant identifies himself to officer as Jesus Christ
- **Indecent Exposure** - Defendant urinating in public
- **Interfere with Public Duties** - Defendant approach officer on unrelated traffic stop and refused to leave
- **False Report** - Defendant calls 911 repeatedly to report someone is zapping her brain
- **Drug Possession** - Variety of offenses - Defendant has Xanax in his pocket when detained for trespassing at gas station
Communication – Expansion of Charges

Very public discussion and announcements regarding the expansion of charges to address questions and build support.
Immediate Impact (Sep 18 – May 19)

1308 Diversions

11 Minutes Average drop off time

55 Hours Average length of stay

22 Days Longest stay is 22 Days

Sep 2018 – May 2019
Early Outcomes

0 New Jail Bookings
67% had no new jail bookings after 1st diversion

25% Participants
have received outpatient and/or residential services after release (70% if agreed to wrap-around services)

15% Booking Reduction
Compared to own baseline

Projected Year 1 Savings = $ 9.5M
Projected Year 2 Savings = $ 11.7M
## Law Enforcement Agency Drop Offs

**Sep 2018 – May 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency/Precept</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baytown PD</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constable Precinct 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metro Transit Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellaire PD</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCC PD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasadena PD</td>
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<td>Constable Precinct 1</td>
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<td>HCSO</td>
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<td>Jersey Village PD</td>
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<td>UT PD at Houston</td>
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<td>Constable Precinct 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katy PD</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
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</table>
## Impact of Criteria Change

### Charges Diverted in May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class A</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class B</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Criminal Trespass</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Other</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Criminal Mischief</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Indecent Exposure</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Resisting</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Shoplifting</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Possession Substance</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Theft</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Theft of Service</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Failure to ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Urinating in Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class C</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Average Diversions

| Sep-Apr | 136 |
| May | 220 |
Primary Objective:
Identify and coordinate transition of those with low level misdemeanors to Diversion Center when appropriate
Joint Processing Center Diversion Desk

- Screening and assessments to facilitate identification of potential diversion candidates
- Review history to facilitate identification of potential diversion candidates
- Answer and respond to questions/requests via Diversion Hotline
Diversion Desk Activity

Screenings: 29
  Sent to Diversion Center: 9
  Diversion Declined by DA: 19
  Other: 1

Total Diversion Hotline Calls: 401
  Information Inquiries: 60
  Client Inquiries: 328
  Other: 13
Oversight Committee

Began as weekly, transitioned to every other week, and now moved to monthly

Organizations represented on the committee:

• The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD
• Harris County District Attorney’s Office
• Harris County Sheriff’s Office
• Harris County Budget Office
• Harris County Public Defender’s Office
• Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Department
• Houston Police Department
The Diversion Center has both the larger data committee and the data research subcommittee

The Data Committee worked to ensure the data collection efforts from Law Enforcement and the Diversion Center capture the front end data necessary to understand the flow of justice-involved individuals into and through the Diversion Center

The Data Research Subcommittee has been working to develop the overarching goals and specific measures to determine the effectiveness of the Diversion Center
The Data Committee proposed the following two overarching research questions:

• How does the implementation of the Diversion Center impact Harris County’s footprint for individuals with mental health issues who have engaged in low-level misdemeanor behavior?

• Does the Diversion Center improve the lives of those individuals who are diverted to the center?
Program Goals/Outcomes

• Reduce the number of individuals with mental health issues engaged with law enforcement on low-level misdemeanant charges

• Reduce the number of individuals with mental health issues in jail on low-level misdemeanant charges

• Reduce the number of individuals with mental health issues in NPC/Psych emergency on low-level misdemeanant charges

• Improve the lives of clients through engagement, assessment, and treatment services.

• Assess and link individuals to necessary programs based on a comprehensive assessment.

• Improve the mental health stability of the individual and reduce the number of psychiatric emergency visits.

• Improve the overall well-being of individuals in the long-term program.

• Improve the daily living skills of clients served

• Improve (or maintain, if stable) the individual’s housing situation

• Maintain positive satisfaction scores

• Ensure positive stakeholder satisfaction with consistent positive ratings.
State Reported Measures

- Total number unduplicated individuals assessed per month.
- Total number unduplicated individuals served per month.
- Number of clients who voluntarily admit to Diversion Center for treatment or social services.
- Number of clients linked to outpatient services.
- Percentage of clients who voluntarily admit to Diversion Center who leave AMA within 6 hours.
- Percentage of clients linked to outpatient services.
- Percentage of clients receiving services who have reduced recidivism of target events.
- Percentage of clients scoring 3 or less in at least one specified domain with score of 4 or higher on all specified domains at follow-up.
Meet Stephen
Impact

3.22.19

Hey! Erin and Michaela.

Again, I would like to say how much I appreciate you and the others for all the hard work you do. You make sure that the clients feel cared for and safe. You all have a heart for helping others and you all do a great job. Thank you!

Y'all have changed my life for the good. I would not be who I am today without a family like the one I have here at the Harris Center.

Forever grateful,

[Handwritten signature]

Hi Erin!)

The Harris Center staff is very helpful and those clients that really need help. I have benefited from all my I.D. needs and housing papers in just 14 days. I could not have accomplished any of the things without the people there. The staff and clients were extra friendly and made me feel at home.

Hello and good bye

I would like to say thank you for the wonderful treatment that I received in here. It was so effective and very strong.

I have been working hard on my treatment. The people there were wonderful, and the treatment was so good and great. My experience in this was not so good for my nerves, but I have found a pretty good treatment in Virginia.

I am the best!

Thank you all.

Good bless you all!

I want to thank you for allowing me to go to Super Cuts today. It was special for me to get a haircut today. I appreciate it. I feel like a girl today having been pampered and driven to the salon.

It turned my day around as far as self-confidence goes. Thank you kindly.