



## **The Windsor Police Department and CHR Mobile Response Crisis Team:**

### **A Hybrid Collaborative Approach**

*Karen Hanley, LCSW /Clinical Program Director  
CHR Mobile Crisis Response Team, Windsor, CT*

In utilizing a Specialized Police Response approach, many are familiar with the typical three models: Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT): a voluntary cadre of officers trained to identify signs and symptoms of mental illness, de-escalate the situation and link the person in crisis to mental health treatment. Co-responder Teams: specially trained officer pairs with a mental health professional to respond to the scene of a crisis involving mental illness. Follow-up Teams: specially trained officers work closely with mental health partners to identify people who repeatedly come to the attention of police and develop customized solutions. These models typically require additional funding for the mental health professional to be assigned specifically to a police department. In CT, the state funded and operated mobile crisis response teams have been funded by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (DMHAS) to embed a clinician with the local police department(s).

As a private, nonprofit lead mental health agency (LMHA), CHR does not receive state funding to support an embedded clinician. As a result of our monthly CIT meetings beginning in July 2008, the collaborative relationship between WPD and CHR/MCRT afforded the opportunity to develop a hybrid quasi co-responder model without funding such a position. As part of the CIT program at WPD, officers prior to responding to a call or an officer on-scene may contact CHR/MCRT and request a clinician to participate in a crisis call. Within the past six months, officers involved in EDP calls who assisted in securing transportation of an individual to a local police department are directed to contact CHR's Assessment Center and provide information to the CHR/MCRT team so that advocacy and follow-up could occur.

When an officer responds to the scene of an EDP call, and the client is transported to the hospital via ambulance on a Police Emergency Evaluation Request (PEER) form, the officers are instructed to contact and provide to CHR/MCRT: the name of the individual, crisis event, location of the admitting hospital Emergency Department. The CHR/MCRT clinician then determines if the individual is known to CHR mental health services and will consult with the receiving Emergency Department and provide appropriate clinical information and information provided by the responding officer. The CHR/MCRT clinician advocates for the appropriate level of care and guides the disposition working with

the Emergency Department crisis team to determine the best level of care for the client. The disposition of the Emergency Department assessment is then relayed to the appropriate CHR clinical team for follow-up and the referring officer is alerted that the client was taken into care.

The Windsor Police Department has been utilizing the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model of policing from 2005 to present. In 2008, the WPD and CHR Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) began monthly CIT meetings. In these monthly meetings, CHR/MCRT and WPD reviews all Police Emergency Evaluation Request (PEER) forms, addresses to which the police respond frequently for reports of an emotionally disturbed person and problem solving to address those persons who come to the attention of police frequently. As a result of this collaboration, WPD and CHR/MCRT developed a proactive outreach program to a statewide residential agency that serves individuals with developmental and mental health issues. The agency had directed staff to utilize 911/police to manage their residential clients resulting in a significant number of calls requiring a police response. As a result of the outreach visits to the residences with WPD and CHR/MCRT, a greater understanding of the roles of police, mobile crisis and the residential staff was established. Following the meetings and changes in staffing in one residence, there has been a reduction in the number of 911 calls for assistance.

A PowerPoint presentation describing this partnership process, titled "Forging Partnerships" is available for programs wishing to expand their unfunded CIT programs.



CIT--Forging Partnerships.zip