

## INTRODUCTION

How law enforcement agencies approach calls for service involving violent individuals, suicidal persons, and suspicious persons has changed. In recent years, police departments across the nation are being criticized for how they treat the mentally ill in and out of the custodial environment. Much debate has been made about whether law enforcement agencies bare any responsibility for the force used against the mentally ill who react abnormally toward police and the public. Critics question whether policies should incorporate an assessment for mental illness prior to taking lawful action and address the high number of prisoners diagnosed with a mental health disorder. Such was the case with the recent use of force incident involving Ezell Ford and the Los Angeles Police Department (“Ezell Ford: The mentally ill black man killed by the LAPD two days after Michael Brown’s death” 2014). How are law enforcement’s efforts to address mental illness changing the path to incarceration? What steps are law enforcement agencies taking to address the needs of the mentally ill? What are some of the challenges to responding to calls for service involving the mentally ill? What responsibilities do law enforcement agencies have to insure the mentally ill are getting the treatment they need?

## Findings

According to Watson, psychiatrist of Jane Addams College of Social Work and Angel, lead psychiatrist of the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research at Rutgers State University of New Jersey, law enforcement has always played a pivotal role in addressing problems involving the mentally ill, especially in poor communities. Research has concluded that, “on average, 10% of [law enforcement] contacts with the public involve persons with mental illness.” However, this is not to suggest the likelihood of developing a mental health disorder is related to living in a poor community. While it may appear that a majority of mentally ill persons come from a low social class, these individuals end up in poor communities after a series of occupational failures due to their developing mental illness which lead to a downward spiral toward unskilled jobs. The series of events that lead to the downward spiral

adopting out twins who already came from broken homes. Children were more likely to be paired with families of similar income status. It wasn't until scientist realized that the eating habits in the new homes were similar to the homes the child came from that they abandoned the idea of genetic predisposition and began to look at the environment as a cause. But let's suppose scientist at the time proved their initial hereditary theory and the pellagra epidemic continued to grow. Pallagra would still be a problem today while scientists continue to focus on the environmental trigger versus looking at the diet of those suffering from the condition.

In an effort to prepare law enforcement for encounters with the o gpcvnc{ km.c i gpekgu'ctg'tgswtkpi "qhLegtu'vq'wpfgt i q'eq o r t g j gpukxg" training. Clinical Coordinator of Behavioral Health at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, Jeanine Loucks, discusses the training of law enforcement as it relates to mental illness. Loucks, who spends time outside of the hospital teaching law enforcement across the country about how to effectively interact with people dealing with o gpcvnc{ kmnpguu. " rqukvu" o cp{ "nc y" gphqteg o gpv" qhLegtu" tgegkxg" dcuke" training on how to deal with the mentally ill during their time in the academy. The program she has developed provides law enforcement with additional training about psychological disorders and how they affect individuals. She stresses that, interventions, awareness of services, and effective communication skills with members of the eq o o wplv{ "ch lkevgf" ykvj" o gpcvnc{ kmnpguu" ku" etkvecn" vq" c" uweeguuhwn" outcome.

Ncy" gphqteg o gpv" qhLegtu" t gurqpug" uj qwnf" uvkm" dg" vcevkecn" kp" pcvwtg" Wrqp" tgegkxkpi" vjg" ecnm. "qhLegtu" uj qwnf" t g x k g y" v j g" information that is already known in an attempt to understand what type of emergency they are responding to and take into consideration whether or not the call involves someone who is potentially experiencing a mental health crisis. Witness accounts like, "person is acting bizarre", "disturbing party is nude in street", or "a homeless person" could yield clues about what is happening. Dispatchers and supervisors can help in the pre-planning phase by insuring that at ngcu v y y q' qhLegtu" ctg" cuuki pgf" vq" vjg" ecnm" P q v" qpn{ " f q g u" kv" g p u w t g" greater strength in the event the encounter becomes physical, but v y q" qhLegtu" r t q x k f g" i t g c v g t" q r v k p u" c p f" c n v g t p c v g" x k y r q k p u" h q t" deescalating the crisis.

Responding to calls related to mental health crisis occurring in a residence can prove to be especially complicated. It is likely the qhLegt"cuuki pgf"vq"vjg"ecnm"jcu"pgxgt"dggp"kp"vjg"jq o g"cpf"ku"wp c y ctg" kh" y g c r q p u" c t g" c x k n c d n g" c p f" c e e g u u k d n g" R t k t" v q" v j g" q h L e g t u" c t t k x c n." 9-1-1 dispatchers can assist by getting as much information from the ecnmgt"cdqw"vjg"kp"fkxkfwcn"cu"rquukdng"Rtkqt"vq"qhLegtu"cr r t q j e j k p i" v j g" t g u k f g p e g. " q h L e g t u" u j q w n f" c v w g o r v" v q" e q p v c e v" v j g" k p h q t o c p v" v q" ascertain what behaviors the disturbing party is exhibiting and what may be triggering them. Assess the person before approaching. Does the disturbing party appear homeless, talking to themselves (reacting vq"cp"kpvtgpcn"uvk o wnk+. "qt" L z c v g f" q p" c p q v j g t" r g t u q p" q t" q d l g e v A" C t g" they malodorous, tangential when they speak, or lacking a sense of moral conduct like exposing their sex organs without appearing to be concerned about privacy? Sometimes a quick assessment can v g n n" q h L e g t u" y j c v" c f f k v k p c n" t g u q w t e g u" v j g" { " o c { " p g g f" v q" d t k p i" v j g" situation to a safe conclusion.

Kv"ku" k o r q t v e p v" h q t" q h L e g t u" v q" j c x g" c" r n c p" Q p g" u v t e v i { " v q" t g f w e l p i" the likelihood of confusion and deescalating the disturbing party is vq"cuuki p"ppg"qhLegt"vq"fq"cnm"qh"vjg"vcnmkpi"vq"vjg"fkuvwtkpi"rctv{0" V j g" q v j g t" q h L e g t u" u j q w n f" t g o c k p" s w k g v" c u" v j g k t" w p k h q t o g f" r t g u g p e g" is already speaking volumes. Everyone involved should also understand that resolving the crisis is a team effort. No independent cevqk"ujqwnf"dg"vcmgp"ykvjqwv"vjg"mpqyngfig"qh"gxgt{"qhLegt"involved in the investigation. Also, try to avoid direct eye contact for long periods of time as it might be perceived as a challenge for the individual experiencing the mental health crisis. But, at the same time, be aware of the individual's movements.

Most mental health professionals and law enforcement executives agree that a vast majority of homeless, especially those in large urban areas, face mental health disorders. In situations where the person jcxkpi" c" o gpcvnc{ jgcnvj" etkuku" cr rgctu" vq" dg" j q o g n g u u. " q h L e g t u" u j q w n f" be aware, if not expect, the person to have some type of weapon. A homeless person who is mentally ill is three times more likely to be a victim of a crime than any ordinary citizen. According to Katherine B. O'Keefe, author of "Protecting the Homeless Under Vulnerable Victim Sentencing Guidelines: An Alternative in hate crime laws.", the homeless are more likely to feel like they are being treated as second-class citizens. They are avoided on the street, exploited in social media videos, and victims of extreme violence.

An example of such violence occurred in July 2015. New Ogzkeq" J whLpi vq p" Rquw" Tgrqtvtg. " Okejcg n" OeNcw i j n k p. " v q n f" v j g" uvqt{ " qh" c" j q o g n g u u" o c p" y j q" j c f" L t g y q t m f u" v j t q y p" c v" j k o" c u" j g" slept. The homeless man nearly died from his injuries. Surveillance video lead to the capture of the suspects who committed the violent act and subsequent interview revealed the husband and wife couple "were just playing around." In the same report Michael mentions that two other homeless people in Albuquerque had been subject to extreme violence within close time periods. One homeless man was brutally beaten by teens and had cinder blocks thrown at him in July while another had been intentionally ran over by a motorist in June. Typically weapons carries by homeless people are used for self-protection. It is important to note that crime is higher among the general population, or those perceived as "normal", than among the mentally ill community.

There are a wide variety of mental health disorders law gphqteg o gpv" qhLegtu" o c { " u g g" f w t k p i" e c n m" y j g t g" c" o g p c v n" j g c n v j" crisis is taking place. The most common is depression. Some of the u { o r v q o u" q h L e g t" o c { " n q q m" h q t" c t g" u c f p g u u. " f g r t g u u g f. " q t" k t t k v c d n g" mood. The informant may express that the person showing signs of depression has had a loss of appetite, overreacts to small problems, jcu"pq"dggp"unggrkpi."jcu"fkhlEwv{ "eqpegpvtevkpi."i ckpgf"qt"nquu"cu"uki plkecpv" c o q w p v" q h" y g k i. j. " q t" g z r t g u u g u" u w k e k f c n" k f g c v k q p u" k p" v j g u g" situations, the potential for a suicide by cop scenario is the highest. The person who is depressed may feel hopeless and have a desire to end their life in a way that requires the least amount of effort and culpability on their part.

Another mental health disorder commonly seen by law

of individuals known to have bipolar disorder are also known to abuse drugs and alcohol. They tend to self-medicate and their mood is often triggered by substance abuse. The key to treating bipolar

by the mental health community. Included in a footnote of the article, "The Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department established this mental health emergency response model that couples intense etkuku kpvgtxgpkqp vtckpki hqt qhLegtu ykvj c rctvgtujkr dgvyggp law enforcement agencies, mental health providers, advocates, and individuals who are mentally ill." The footnote also adds "many law enforcement agencies throughout the country have adopted this model."

Law Enforcement agencies like the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Los Angeles Police Department have guvcdnkujgf vgcou vjcv eqodkpg rqnkqg qhLegtu cfxqecygu cpi licensed clinicians from the Department of Mental Health. Examples include the Mental Evaluation Team (MET), Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams (PMRT), and System-wide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART). They vary by name, but nationally they are all most commonly called Crisis Intervention Teams or "CIT". For example, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Mental Evaluation Team responds to incidents where regular patrol deputies jcxg kfgpvkLgf c rgtuqp vq dg c fcpigt vq vjg uognxgu fcpigt vq others, or gravely disable. The specially trained deputy sheriff along with a clinician from the Department of Mental Health conduct an assessment of the subject and determine whether they need to be placed on a 72 hour hold in a psychiatric facility based on the criteria given. Rather than arrest the subject for a minor infraction or misdemeanor offense, the mental health specialist may also escort the subject to a mental health facility, outpatient psychological services, homeless shelter, or return them to the care of a provider. The team also specializes in deescalating potentially violent encounters and vgpukqp dgvyggp wpkhqt rqnkqg qhLegtu cpi rgtuqpuz gzrgtkgpekpi c ogpvcn jgcnvj etkuku Rcvtn qhLegtu ecm wrqp vjg cuukvpep qh these types of teams to reduce the risk of using physical force or intermediate weapons to gain compliance or, worse, deadly force.

States like Florida, Alaska, and Indiana are using Mental Health Courts in an effort to couple judicial supervision with community mental health treatment. The courts also link other support services such as housing placement and substance abuse treatment in an effort to reduce criminal activity and elevate the quality of life of its participants. A group of administrators from the Administration of Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research discuss the nomenclature of Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT), the purpose of CIT, expected outcomes, and changes in how the ogpvcn {knn kpvgtcev ykvj EKV/vtckpgf qhLegtu Vjg uvwf {hqewugf qp ugnh/ghLece {cpf uqekcn fkuvcpekpi dgvyggp vjg ogpvcn {knn cpf nc y enforcement. Law enforcement's interactions with four major groups were included in the study. The groups included those suffering from depression, cocaine dependence, schizophrenia, and alcohol dependence. What the study found was that individuals in these four groups were more likely to reduce social distance. The study cuuq tngxngcf vjcv y jkng hwtvjtg tguqctej kp qhLegt/ngxgn qweq o gu may need to be conducted, members of the four groups were more likely to interact with emergency services when they needed help versus allowing their behavior to evolve to criminal misconduct and subsequent incarceration.

Below is a sample comparison of states that fund Crisis Intervention Teams and Mental Health Courts and how much of the state is served by the teams and the courts (Figure 1).

The data comes from statistics gathered between the years of 2005 and 2013 and derive from two sources. The Treatment Advocacy Center advocates for the restoration of psychiatric treatment centers in the United States. The organization focuses on making recommendations for policy makers that steer the mentally ill away from jail and prisons and into mental health treatment facilities. Mental Illness Policy Org was founded by DJ Jaffe, former board member of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). It should be noted that the graph presents the most recent data available. Much 717 Lampkin • Lessons Learn by Peace Officers

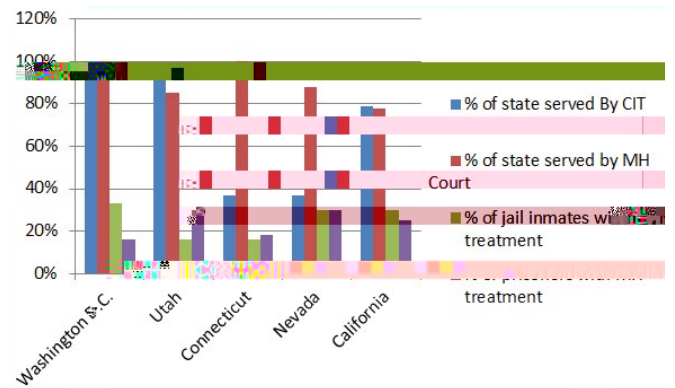


Figure 1.

of the topic has never been explored in depth. It is important to take into account the information's historical relevance when examining vjg Lpfpki u0 Etkuku kpvgtxgpkqp Vgcou cpi Ogpvcn Jgcnvj Eqwvtu ctg fairly new. It is also important to take into account inconsistencies in law enforcement research and reporting requirements. Law enforcement agencies voluntarily provide certain statistics to federal agencies. Despite short term research, preliminary results suggest that the use of CIT and Mental Health Courts, proportionately, vary from state to state. However, the data does support the idea that law enforcement agencies efforts to invest in and expand Crisis Intervention Teams are a priority. The interdisciplinary approach enables law enforcement agencies to divert low level offenders facing mental illness away from the jail and prison system and into community-based treatment facilities.

## CONCLUSION

It is clear encounters with the mentally ill are unavoidable. Proper training is imperative to insuring a successful outcome. Through collaborative partnerships with advocates in the mental health community, comprehensive training, and knowledge-based Lgnf cuuguu o gpvu nc y gphqteg o gpv c i gpekcu cetqu vjg Wpkvgf Uvcvgu can quell concerns over how law enforcement approaches incidents involving the mentally ill and reduce the number of encounters resolved by use of physical or deadly force.

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