

# STEPPING UP

**Monterey County**

Presented by:

**Roxanne V. Wilson, County Homeless Services Director**

**Melanie Rhodes, LMFT, LPCC, Behavioral Health Bureau Chief**

**Wil Sims, Probation Division Manager, Adult Division**

**Charles Da Silva, Director of Programs, Monterey County Sheriff's Office**

**Michelle C. Wouden, Chief Deputy Public Defender**

**Matthew L'Heureux, Assistant District Attorney**

**Lee Berry, Management Analyst, Superior Court**

**Jack Murphy, Military & Veteran Affairs Officer**



FACING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS IN JAILS AND  
COMMUNITIES WITH REAL SOLUTIONS

STEPPING UP MONTEREY COUNTY



### THE PROBLEM

- Nationwide, people with serious mental illnesses are admitted to jails approximately 2 million times per year.
- Almost three-quarters of these people also have substance use disorders.
- Once incarcerated, individuals with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail.
- Upon release, they are at higher risk of returning to incarceration than people without these illnesses.

### THE SOLUTION

The Stepping Up initiative encourages local stakeholders to reduce the prevalence of behavioral health needs in jail by impacting four key outcome measures:

- Reduce bookings;
- Reduce average length of stay;
- Increase connections to care and treatment; and
- Reduce recidivism.

583 COUNTIES ACROSS 45 STATES ARE STEPPING UP





... to reduce the number of people with mental illness in our jails...

**NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED,**

- 1) Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails; and
- 2) Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels; and
- 3) Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community; and
- 4) Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers; and
- 5) Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan; and
- 6) Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

**Adopted by Monterey County's Board of Supervisors April 2019**

Resolution No.: 19-124

# SYSTEM MAPPING PROJECT

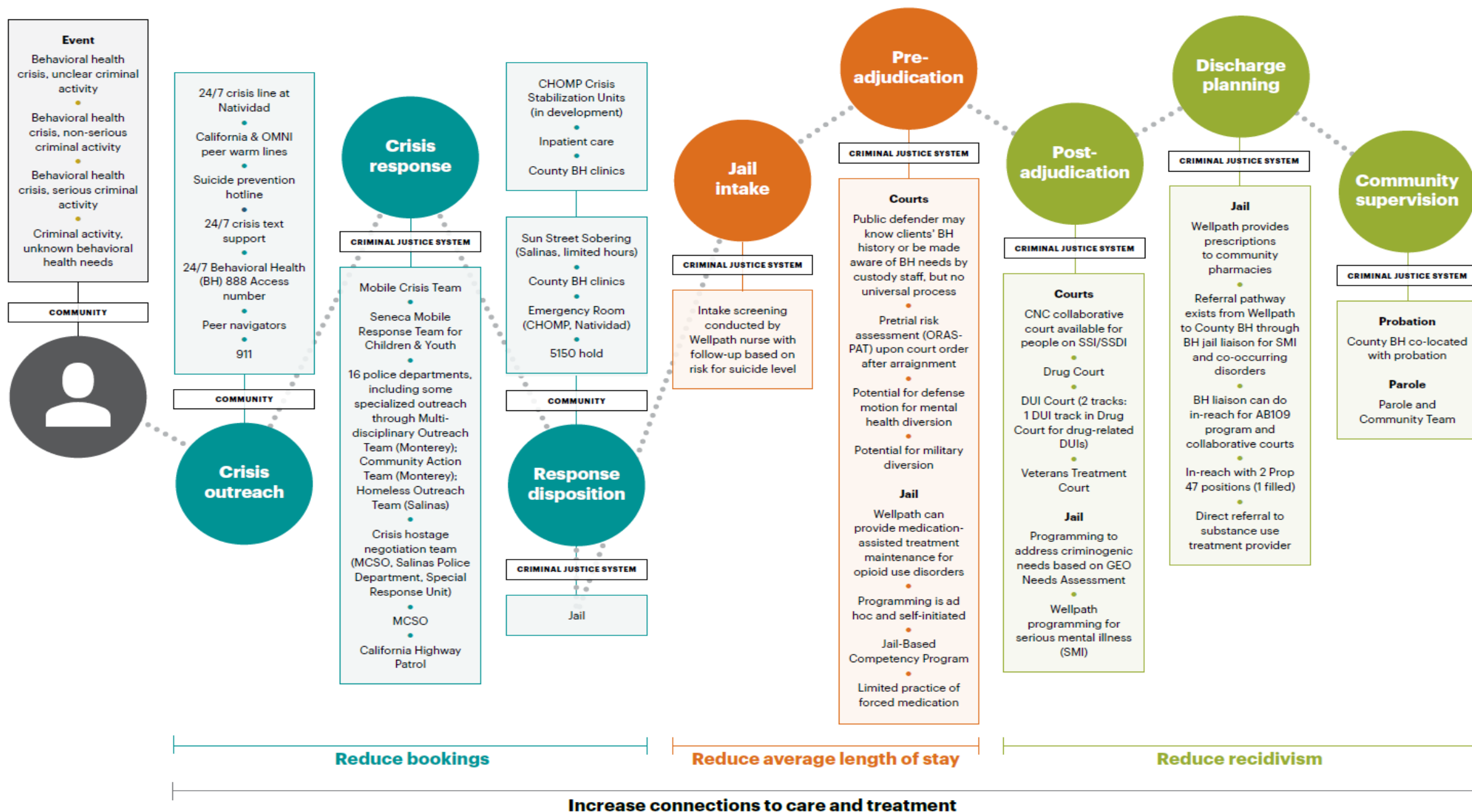
- Monterey County Behavioral Health (MCBH) contracted with The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center
- Co-led by MCBH, Monterey County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) and Probation
- Stepping Up Monterey System Mapping project kicked off in February 2020
- Temporarily put on hold due to COVID pandemic
- Project re-launched in January 2021

## Stepping Up Monterey County System Mapping Project





### Fig. 2. Monterey County System Map



## FINDINGS, JUNE 2021



Cross-system coordination is ad-hoc and occurs primarily on a case-by-case basis; individuals often “fall through the cracks” during transitions, such as following emergency room discharge and release from jail.



People with firsthand experience of the criminal justice and behavioral health systems and their families often find current policies, processes, and eligibility criteria difficult to understand and navigate.



Some focus group members expressed concern about whether community-based treatment and supports are available on an equitable basis—in particular, whether people of color are more likely to be taken to secure settings (such as the jail) than White people.

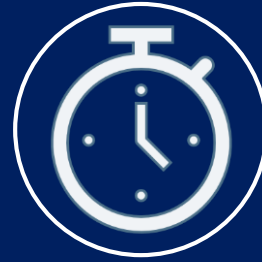
# RECOMMENDATIONS, JUNE 2021



Improve cross-  
system  
collaboration



Reduce jail  
bookings for  
people with  
behavioral  
health needs



Reduce average  
length of stay  
in jail



Increase  
connections to  
treatment and  
reduce  
recidivism





# GOAL 1: IMPROVE CROSS-SYSTEMS COLLABORATION

- **Stepping Up Steering Committee**

- Launched by Behavioral Health in March 2022
  - Includes representation from Health, MCBH, MCSO, Probation, District Attorney (DA), Public Defender, Superior Court, and Military and Veteran Affairs Office (MVAO)
- Transitioned to Homelessness Strategies and Initiatives (HSI) Division of CAO office in February 2023 with funding support from the Department of State Hospitals



# GOAL 1: IMPROVE CROSS-SYSTEMS COLLABORATION

- **Cal AIM Justice Involved Reentry Initiative**

- In 2023, California became the first state in the nation approved to offer a targeted set of Medicaid services to youth and eligible adults in state prisons, county jails, and youth correctional facilities for up to 90 days prior to release
- DHCS implemented a phased approach for the state prison system and county correctional facilities (inclusive of county jails and youth correctional facilities) to go live in several readiness-based cohorts over a two-year period (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2026)
  - MCBH went live with the Behavioral Health Linkages requirement October 1, 2024
  - MCSO has opened the Reentry Resource Center and is already working with the first cohort of incarcerated persons receiving pre-release services to connect them to health, behavioral health, employment, housing and other services.
- Support from the JI Initiative spurred an ongoing cooperative process among MCBH, DSS, MCSO, Probation, Natividad and CCAH to

## GOAL 2: REDUCE JAIL BOOKINGS

- The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Academy, coordinated by MCBH, for law enforcement countywide continues
- Training for Attorneys, Court and other first responder partners and stakeholder partners is routinely provided by MCBH
- MCBH staff participate on Monterey PD's Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT)
- 24/7 Mobile Crisis response countywide, including better integration with 9-1-1 and the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- BH Mobile Crisis and Crisis Negotiation Teams available for co-response with LE partners
- CHOMP established Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) services for youth and adults on the Peninsula
- MCBH in partnership with Seneca established a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and Crisis Residential Program for children/youth (ages 6-17)
- Sobering Center, operated by Sun Street Centers, now open 24/7
  - MCSO exploring development of additional sobering center opportunities
- Cite and release for nonviolent misdemeanors / some felony charges



# JAIL

- Courts play a role in reducing both bookings and length of time in jail for persons with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) and/or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) through early intervention to settle cases before an individual spends time in jail.
- Court Programs include:
  - Collaborative Court Programs (Mental Health, Drug, DUI, and Veterans Treatment Court, Military Diversion)
  - Mental Health and Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) Diversion
  - 11395 (new prop 36)
- For SMI / SUD persons who are incarcerated, a jail-based milestone program allows participants to earn up to 6 weeks time off their sentences



# GOAL 3: REDUCE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN JAIL

- More individuals are being released on Personal Recognizance bonds; expedited access to diversion and specialty courts
- Pretrial Release & Supervision
  - Provides structured community monitoring as an alternative to custody.
  - As appropriate, connects clients to community-based services such as housing, treatment, and social services prior to case resolution.
  - Utilizes violation severity matrix and the graduated sanction responses in a proportional and least restrictive manner to avoid incarceration
  - Emphasizes rehabilitation over punitive sanctions.
  - Strengthens trauma-informed first approaches in supervision practices.





## GOAL 4: INCREASE CONNECTIONS TO TREATMENT AND REDUCE RECIDIVISM

- Probation applies Risk-Need-Responsivity principles to supervision plans. In many instances, alternative sanctions may be issued instead of a return to jail order
- Probation runs the Home Confinement Program which keeps people out of jail and allows them to receive supportive services.
- Probation participates in JI Initiative coordinated reentry planning:
  - integrates health, employment, and housing in case planning.
  - ensures warm handoffs from custody to community services, reducing recidivism.



## GOAL 4: INCREASE CONNECTIONS TO TREATMENT AND REDUCE RECIDIVISM

- Law enforcement uses tools at its disposal to reduce bookings and re-bookings into jail, such as the cite and release program, the early intervention court and the work alternative program
- Routine screening and assessment to identify persons with SMI and/or SUD occurs in the correctional facilities (youth and adult CFs)
- Medication-assisted treat program (MAT) offered in the jail (suboxone medication for opioid withdrawal plus counseling and other therapeutic interventions and classes)
- The County Jail refers Incarcerated Persons in need of specialty mental health services and, on a case-by-case basis, individuals who have been in the MAT program while incarcerated to MCBH
- Jail Reentry/Resource Center: Went 'live' October 1, 2025)
  - Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports (CS) will be provided for both in and out-of-custody individuals as part of the CalAIM Justice Involved Reentry Initiative
  - Collaboration between MCBH, Probation and MCSO to facilitate "warm hand-off" to behavioral health services post-release
  - Resource Center serves as a 'one-stop shop' for connection to health, housing, and social services for individuals pending release as well as formerly incarcerated individuals

## GOAL 4: INCREASE CONNECTIONS TO TREATMENT AND REDUCE RECIDIVISM

- Courts can mandate treatment for individuals with SMI through Collaborative Court resources such as Behavioral Health, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Sun Street, and other community partners
- MVAO actively participates in Veterans Treatment Court and responds to referrals from MCSO, District Attorney, Public Defender, and Probation to connect veterans to healthcare and benefits
- Wellness Navigators embedded in MCBH clinics and SUD navigators in hospitals
- Prop 47 grants
  - MCBH for Cohorts I-III
  - Public Defender for Cohort IV



# STEPPING UP

**Monterey County**

Presented by:

**Roxanne V. Wilson, County Homeless Services Director**

**Melanie Rhodes, LMFT, LPCC, Behavioral Health Bureau Chief**

**Wil Sims, Probation Division Manager, Adult Division**

**Charles Da Silva, Director of Programs, Monterey County Sheriff's Office**

**Michelle C. Wouden, Chief Deputy Public Defender**

**Matthew L'Heureux, Assistant District Attorney**

**Lee Berry, Management Analyst, Superior Court**

**Jack Murphy, Military & Veteran Affairs Officer**



Justice  
Center