

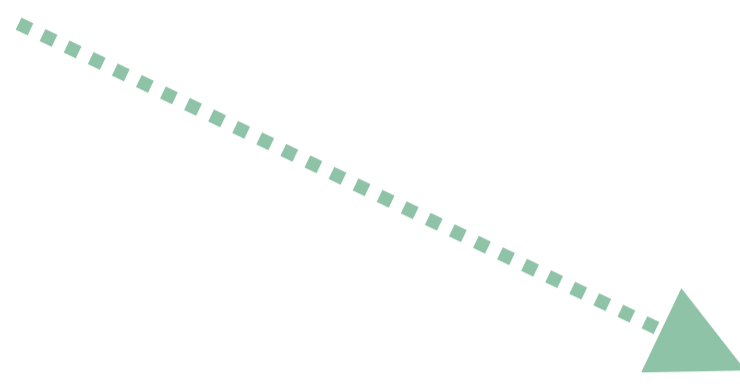
The Need for Change

Responding to Mental Health Calls For Service



Current Situation

Law enforcement is tasked with being the primary responders to calls involving persons experiencing mental health issues. Most often, these calls come in the form of welfare checks and are rarely criminal. The vast majority of these calls are resolved peacefully, but occasionally they result in trauma and sometimes tragedy.



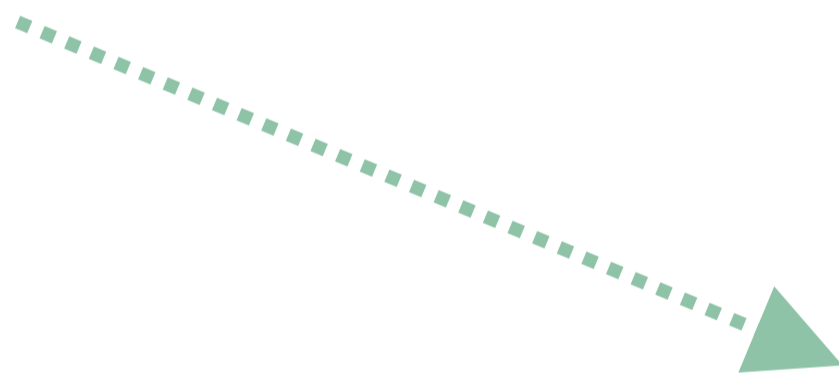
Calls for Change

In 2020, the Minnesota Legislature changed the use of force statutes that govern the way law enforcement responds to people who, may be a danger to themselves or in crisis but are not necessarily a danger to others. There is concern that sending armed individuals could cause unintentional escalation. Elected officials, mental health advocacy groups and community members have made it clear they want mental health professionals as the primary responders to mental health incidents.



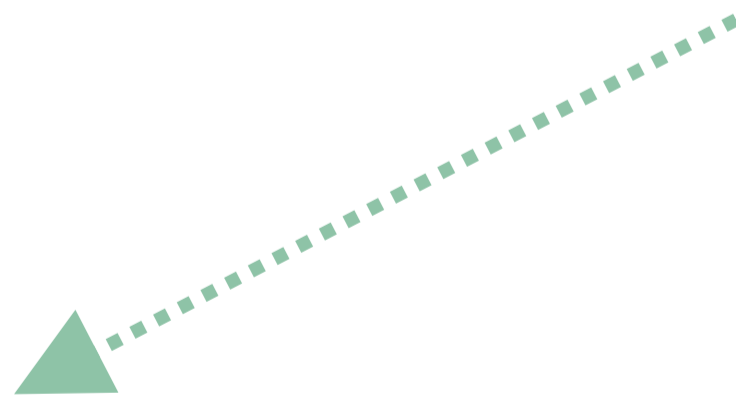
Creating Consensus

Dakota County law enforcement leadership recognizes that our officers and deputies should be the primary responders on any calls involving a crime, violence or the threat of violence. We also understand that there are other professionals who are better equipped with the resources and training to promptly assess and assist with noncriminal, nonviolent mental health incidents.



Moving Forward

The challenge of providing mental health services is the purview of Dakota County Mental Health. When law enforcement steps back from being the primary, on-scene response to noncriminal and nonviolent incidents, the responsibility will fall to Dakota County Mental Health to respond.



Valuable Partnerships

The Dakota County Chiefs recognize that Dakota County Mental Health does not currently have the capacity to act as primary on-scene responders. We are committed to working together to create a response model that meets public demands in a timely fashion.

Next Steps

We would like to schedule a meeting with county staff to discuss your vision for future response models.