

Illinois Department of Human Services Report to the General Assembly Strengthening and Transforming Behavioral Health Crisis Care in Illinois January 28, 2024

Pursuant to 405 ILCS 160, the Strengthening and Transforming Behavioral Health Crisis Care in Illinois Act, the Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Mental Health (DMH), in partnership with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) and the Governor's Office's Chief Behavioral Health Officer (CBHO), is pleased to present this status report and action plan to the Illinois General Assembly.

Consistent with 405 ILCS 160/30, DMH and HFS have been working with CBHO David T. Jones, to solicit stakeholder input in the development of recommendations to coordinate programming and strategies to support a cohesive behavioral health crisis response system. This work evolved from an existing internal process that began in the fall of 2022 under Chief Jones' leadership around modernization of behavioral health care.

After applying in Fall of 2022, Illinois was accepted into [NASHP's 2023 Behavioral Health Modernization Learning Collaborative](#), alongside four other states. The 12-month collaborative was designed to support states in advancing their behavioral health systems through targeted technical assistance and collaborative sessions with other states and subject matter experts. Illinois' application focused on Illinois' behavioral health crisis system and sought to:

1. Establish the groundwork for a Unified Crisis Continuum (UCC) for all individuals in Illinois capable of: accepting, triaging, responding, and supporting individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis (mental health or substance use);
2. Ensure parity and equity for the various populations within Illinois by creating a "no wrong door" policy;
3. Centralize publicly-funded behavioral health data in a single State data repository; and
4. Maximize federal funding opportunities.

In 2023, Illinois developed the Illinois NASHP Team, an inter-departmental team comprised of representatives from key entities such as the Governor's Office and the Illinois Departments of: Children and Family Services (DCFS); Insurance (DOI); Public Health (DPH); Healthcare and Family Services (HFS); Human Services (DHS), Divisions of Mental Health (DMH) and Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR). The Illinois NASHP Team focused efforts towards reaching consensus on a desired future crisis system that capitalized on existing strengths, addressed gaps, and prioritized the experience of the individual(s) experiencing crisis.

Subsequently, through a series of meetings hosted and organized by the CBHO including DMH and HFS, occurring between July and October 2023, the Departments were able to explore the critical nuances of telephonic crisis response programs such as the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and the Crisis and Referral Entry Service (CARES) and the State's various mobile crisis response programs operated by DHS and HFS.

With the leadership of CBHO Jones, these discussions were productive, establishing a shared vision, leading to high-level agreements on multiple areas of focus for ongoing collaboration to achieve long- and short-term goals. This shared vision and areas of focus were subsequently shared amongst the entire Illinois NASHP Team, concluding Illinois' NASHP work in November 2023.

In December 2023, the Strengthening and Transforming Behavioral Health Crisis Care in Illinois Act (STBHCC) stakeholder group launched a monthly engagement of the NASHP members, with an expanded inclusion of stakeholders (listed in the appendix) in accordance with Public Act [103-0337](#). The STBHCC Steering Committee has conducted two stakeholder meetings so far.

The kickoff meeting on December 12, 2023, provided an overview of the STBHCC Act and the current Illinois behavioral health crisis programs, with a specific focus on HFS and DMH crisis systems. During this discussion, CBHO Jones overviewed the work performed by the Illinois NASHP Team during 2023, setting the stage for feedback from the STBHCC stakeholder workgroup. The subsequent January 10, 2024 meeting further delved into these topics, featuring presentations from SUPR on their crisis programs and the UIC Crisis Hub on the cost analysis component of the legislation. The group discussed strengths in current crisis programs that should be retained or reinforced. Key considerations included pinpointing opportunities for efficiencies in the behavioral health crisis system and determining the requisites for establishing a robust behavioral health service system to support crisis call center(s). The STBHCC leadership team is gathering stakeholder recommendations to integrate into the ongoing work to further develop Illinois' UCC.

With a monthly meeting cadence established, the group will be tasked to develop recommendations for the State's UCC in February. This collaborative effort amplifies the community voices and complements recommendations from the Illinois NASHP Team.

Consistent with 405 ILCS 160/20, DMH has convened an interagency working group to examine the roles of individuals with lived experience in the behavioral health crisis workforce. The development of this group was the result of a recognition that the utilization of individuals with lived expertise in behavioral health crisis service provision requires coordination across the various regulatory authorities whose policies separately impact a single set of behavioral health crisis care providers within communities.

- The Crisis Care Continuum Program funded by DMH includes a role for individuals with lived expertise which is titled "Engagement Specialist." An Engagement Specialist is defined as someone with their own lived expertise in receipt of behavioral health care who works as part of a team responding to individuals in the community who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis. DMH has defined specific training for Engagement Specialists as a part of the grant agreements with the community providers who are participating in this program.
- DHS-SUPR supports roles similar to the Engagement Specialist, promoting recovery supports delivered by peers, or individuals with lived experience, in treatment, recovery, and community settings.
- HFS has introduced other approaches to peer-based services in its administrative code and under the Illinois Medicaid State Plan, introducing new opportunities and approaches to peer-based services to be supported under the Illinois Medicaid program.

This intergovernmental workgroup has allowed DHS and HFS to identify opportunities for alignment and to begin to plan for a shared stakeholder engagement to gather recommendations regarding participation of individuals with lived experience across Illinois behavioral health crisis system. Viewed by the Departments as a vital Behavioral Health Crisis Workforce initiative, this internal group, under the leadership of CBHO Jones, plans to engage stakeholders to solicit feedback and inform policies and decisions around this vital workforce issue. Key concerns to be reviewed and addressed are:

- Reviewing definitions that currently exist across DMH, HFS, and SUPR, with an intention of aligning and streamlining these definitions, service provision, and related claiming for peers' work;
- Expansion of eligibility for recognition of lived experience to include being a parent or family member of a person with a behavioral health challenge, or a person from a disadvantaged or marginalized population;
- Recommendations regarding the design and provision of training for individuals providing crisis response; and
- Other potential modifications to the various ways peers are incorporated into crisis response models currently supported by the various agencies.

It is the intention of DMH to utilize these discussions to inform recommendations included in the action plan to be filed with the Illinois General Assembly consistent with 405 ILCS 160/25.

Appendix
STBHCC Stakeholders

Non-Government Stakeholders:

Name	Agency	Relationship
Amburn, Ashley	Hoyleton Youth and Family Services	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Baker, Lore	Association for Individual Development	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Barisch, Stephanie	Center for Youth and Family Solutions	HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Campos, Blanca	Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois (CBHA)	Advocacy Organization
Carnahan, Lori	DuPage County Health Department	988 Provider & HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Churchey-Mims, Michelle	Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois (CBHA)	Advocacy Organization
Crider, Regina	Chapin Hall	Parents/Family Advocate
Daniels, Lia	Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA)	Advocacy Organization
DeLoss, Jud	Illinois Association for Behavioral Health (IABH)	Advocacy Organization
Durbin, Andrea	Illinois Collaboration On Youth (ICOY)	Advocacy Organization
Evans, Josh	Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF)	Advocacy Organization
Flores, Nestor Isaac	Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc.	HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Gimeno, Jessica	Access Living	Advocacy Organization (CESSA Champion)
Greskiw, Amy	Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center	590 & HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Hamann, Tara	Transitions of Western Illinois	HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Harvey, Anna	University of Illinois School of Social Work	Parents/Family Advocate

Name	Agency	Relationship
Joergens, Megan	Lawrence County Health Department	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Johnson, Sam	Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider & HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Kreul, Joseph	Rosecrance	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Marrero, Alyssa	Association for Individual Development	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Meeks, Jacob	AFSCME	Labor Unions
Miller, Emily	Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF)	Advocacy Organization
Nichols, Mike	Comprehensive BH Center of St. Claire County, Inc.	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider
Schmitz, Mark	Transitions of Western Illinois	HFS Pathways Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) Provider
Smith, Tyler	Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois (CBHA)	Advocacy Organization
Wilson, Simone	Turning Point	DMH Mobile Crisis Response (590) Provider

Government Stakeholders:

Name	Agency
Albert, David	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Allen, Roberta	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Betz, Lisa	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Brothers, Jennifer	Cook County Health
Cole, Shawn	Office of Medicaid Innovation (OMI), University of Illinois System
Craycroft, Lucy	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Cunningham, Kelly	Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
Epstein, Jennifer	Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)
Flores, Adam	Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI)
Frye, Amy	Office of Medicaid Innovation (OMI), University of Illinois System
Herman, Kristine	Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
Hinshaw, Kati	Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
Jones, David T.	Illinois Governor's Office (GO)

Name	Agency
Jones, Lorrie	University of Illinois Chicago Behavioral Health Crisis Hub (UIC Hub)
Kennedy, Kristen	Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
Lake, Amanda	Illinois Department of Human Services - Substance Use Prevention & Recovery (DHS- SUPR)
Lichterman, Allie	Mayor's Office
Marshall, Kristen	Illinois Governor's Office - Comprehensive Community-Based Youth Services (GO-CCBYS)
Muehlbauer, Carrie	Office of Medicaid Innovation (OMI), University of Illinois System
Patton-Burnside, Tiffany	The Chicago Department of Public Health (CPDH)
Pickett, Matt	Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI)
Reinert, Lee Ann	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Rollinson, Ryan	Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Mental Health (DHS-DMH)
Rueter, Karrie	Illinois Department of Human Services – Division of Family and Community Services - Comprehensive Community-Based Youth Services (CCBYS)
Warren, Alisha	The Chicago Department of Public Health (CPDH)
Weiner, Dana	Illinois Governor's Office (GO)
Williams, Craig	University of Illinois Chicago Behavioral Health Crisis Hub (UIC Hub)