

Crisis Intervention Teams - Facts & Benefits

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Model was first developed and implemented in 1988 as a result of a partnership between the Memphis, TN Police Department, the University of Memphis, The University of Tennessee and the Memphis Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. The team was developed to address the special challenges to law enforcement posed by persons with mental illness and to better serve the community.

The Memphis Police Department experienced significant benefits as a result of using the CIT model. Other departments around the country who have implemented CIT's are experiencing similar benefits:

Less need for the use of lethal force

Prior to 1988 the Memphis Police Department experienced an average of 5 to 6 officer involved shootings per year. Since 1988, there have been two officer involved shootings of mentally ill individuals by non-CIT trained officers of the Memphis Police Department.

Reduction in Officer Injuries

Officer injuries dropped 85%.

Reduction in injuries to mental health consumers

Reported injuries to mentally ill individuals dropped 40 %.

Reduction in SWAT call outs

SWAT call outs dropped 55 % from .042 per 100 calls to .019 per 1000 calls.

Reduction in time "off patrol"

CIT officers are usually back on patrol within 15 minutes of bringing a mental health consumer to a designated medical center for evaluation. Prior to CIT, officers spent an average of 4 hours with mental health consumers in Emergency Rooms.

Reduction in civil litigation

Reduction in deaths and injuries have also significantly reduced costs associated with litigation.

Improvements in community relations

The skills learned by CIT officers lead to successful interventions in ALL aspects of officers' patrol responsibilities, leading to better morale and improved community relations for the department.

Reduction in emergency room recidivism

ER recidivism rate dropped to less than 20% after implementation of CIT model.

Decrease in involuntary commitments

Involuntary commitments decreased from over 40 % to 25%.

Jail Diversion

In Memphis, the census of mentally ill individuals in jail custody has dropped from 15 % in 1988 to 3% today. (The national average of mentally ill individuals currently incarcerated ranges from 15 to 20%.) Arrests were reduced 90%, from 20 arrests per 100 calls prior to CIT inception down to 2 arrests per 100 calls since the implementation of CIT.