

Mental Health Court Strategy recommendation

Strategy Title: Expand Access to Diversion Options and Therapeutic Courts and Improve Jail Services provided to Individuals with Mental Illness and Chemical Dependency

Strategy No: 11b – Increase Services Available for New or Existing Mental Health Court Programs

County Policy Goals Addressed:

- Diversion of youth and adults with mental illness and chemical dependency from initial or further justice system involvement.
- Explicit linkage with, and furthering of, other council directed efforts including the Adult and Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plans, the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County, the Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan, and the Recovery Plan for Mental Health Services.
- A reduction of the number of people who cycle through the jail, returning repeatedly as a result of their mental illness or chemical dependency.

1. Program/Service Description**A. Problem or Need Addressed by the Strategy**

The prevalence of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system is a nationwide problem. Estimates of the prevalence of people with mental illness in jails range from 5% to 16%, depending on the definition of mental illness that is used. On any given day in city jails throughout King County, an estimated 15% of inmates have serious mental illness. Once in jail, these individuals stay much longer than inmates with similar charges who are not mentally ill. Mental health court is an effective tool for engaging and keeping people with mental illness in community-based treatment. At the present time, access to mental health court is limited to just a few jurisdictions.

B. Reason for Inclusion of the Strategy

Mental health courts are an essential component of a jail diversion continuum of service and have been shown to be effective in engaging clients in treatment and reducing future jail bookings. Mental health court services for misdemeanor offenders are now limited to individuals who commit offenses in unincorporated King County, the City of Seattle and the City of Auburn, through King County District Court, Seattle Municipal Court, and Auburn Municipal Court. Increasing access to mental health court throughout King County could improve mental health outcomes for people in the criminal justice system and reduce the prevalence of people with mental illness in jails across King County.

C. Service Components/Design

This strategy will enhance services and capacities at existing mental health courts to increase access to these programs for eligible adult misdemeanants throughout King County. Service enhancements will include expanded mental health court treatment services programming within the City of Seattle Municipal Mental Health Court and the City of Auburn Municipal Mental Health Court or may include the placement of a new Mental Health Professional (called a “court monitor” or “court liaison”). In addition, King County District Court Mental Health Court will be made available to any misdemeanor offender in King County who is mentally ill, regardless of where the offense is committed.

D. Target Populations

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court target population: mentally ill misdemeanor offenders with an AXIS I diagnosis in any King County municipality that is referred to the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office for filing into the King County District Court Mental Health Court.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court target population: mentally ill defendants that are found not competent for trial, approximately 200 individuals annually.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court target population: mentally ill misdemeanor offenders with an AXIS I diagnosis.

E. Program Goals

1. The King County District Court Mental Health Court program goals are to: 1) protect public safety; 2) reduce the level of recidivism (considering frequency, offense severity and length of time between episodes) of persons with mental illness with the criminal justice system; 3) reduce the use of institutionalization for persons with mental illness who can function successfully within the community with service supports; 4) improve the mental health and well-being of persons with mental illness who come in contact with Mental Health Court; 5) develop more expeditious case resolution than traditional courts; 6) develop more cost-effective / efficient use of resources than traditional courts; 7) develop more linkages between the criminal justice system and the mental health system; and 8) establish linkages with other community programs that target services to persons with mental illness.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court program goals: Connect incompetent SMC defendants with treatment, housing, and other services
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court program goals: Reduction in jail, hospital, emergency services costs; reduced recidivism; and linkage to needed treatment, services and housing.

F. Outputs/Outcomes

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court outputs/outcomes: 1) Provide MHC services to 200 additional offenders referred from King County cities; 2)

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decrease length of stay in jail; 3) decrease jail recidivism among participants; 4) identify and coordinate resolutions among two or more King County jurisdictions for 60 city offenders (= to 30%) who are referred to MHC; 5) establish and provide a minimum of 50 days of MHC services in South End and Eastside of King County

2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court outputs/outcomes: The outputs will be number of defendants contacted and number of service connections made. Outcomes will include reduced recidivism at SMC for those clients working with the new court liaison. SMC is prepared to assist with evaluation processes and can provide SMC recidivism data.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court outputs/outcomes: To be determined

2. Funding Resources Needed and Spending Plan

A total of \$1,295,252 is available annually.

Dates	Activity	Funding
To be determined	King County District Court Mental Health Court expansion to all municipalities in King County	\$1,193,252
To be determined	City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court expansion	\$85,000
To be determined	City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court expansion	\$17,000
	Total funding	\$1,295,252

3. Provider Resources Needed (number and specialty/type)

A. Number and type of providers (and where possible FTE capacity added via this strategy):

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court (KC MHC): This strategy may provide funding for new judicial and court services staffing and overhead. In addition, KC MHC will develop and provide access to services related to housing, treatment and emergency needs within available resource parameters.

King County District Court Probation Division: 2 FTE Mental Health Specialist Probation

King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office: 1 FTE Senior attorney, 1 FTE Paralegal, 1 FTE Victim Advocate and administration overhead

King County Office of Public Defense: 1 FTE Senior attorney, 1 FTE Social Worker

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King County Department of Community and Human Services, Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division contracted positions:
1 FTE MHC court monitor, 1 FTE MHC Peer Counselor

2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: This strategy will include expanded mental health court treatment services programming within the City of Seattle Municipal Mental Health Court or may include the placement of a new Mental Health Professional (called a "court monitor" or "court liaison").
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: This strategy will include expanded mental health court treatment services programming within the City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court or may include the placement of a new Mental Health Professional (called a "court monitor" or "court liaison").

B. Staff Resource Development Plan and Timeline (e.g. training needs, etc.)

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court

Dates:	Activity:
Within 90 days of Council approval	The process for cases to be referred to the KC Prosecutor could be implemented within 90 days of Council approval. Some cities will be more conversant with this process and thus able to utilize the MHC sooner. During the 90-days pre-implementation, activities would include hiring of personnel, providing training to cities, developing protocols and tracking/data systems for referrals, outcomes, problem solving, scheduling and conducting MHC in identified locations, etc. Contract negotiations with the county will include defining the eligible population to be served through MIDD MHC funds.
6-9 month phased-in start up	Based on the experience when the KCDC MHC began in 1999, it is hypothesized that a 6-9 month period will be necessary as a "ramp up", during which time MHC staff are involved in training and consultation with the city partners.

2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court (SMC)

Dates:	Activity:
June 2009	SMC would need to work with King County to expand the current contract and MOA with Sound Mental Health. King County staff successfully and quickly expanded other

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	<p>contracts with SMH for other MIDD strategies. SMC expects that similar turnaround time would be possible with an additional liaison, with services starting by June, 2009. Contract negotiations with the county will include defining the eligible population to be served through MIDD MHC funds.</p>
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3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court

Dates:	Activity:
To be determined	<p>The City of Auburn currently holds a mental health court calendar. In addition, Auburn contracts with organizations to provide both in-patient and intensive care treatment. Auburn expects that that implementation would be quick and seamless. Contract negotiations with the county will include defining the implementation start date and eligible population to be served through MIDD MHC funds; currently the Auburn Municipal Court mental health calendar includes defendants without an AXIS I diagnosis and defendants with chemical dependency as the primary presenting issue.</p>

C. Partnership/Linkages

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court: The King County District Court, Mental Health Court will continue to partner with the King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division, other criminal justice agencies, community mental health service providers and housing programs. In addition, KCDC, MHC will establish partnership with any municipalities in King County wishing to refer MHC cases to the KC Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: The City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court will continue to partner with the King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division, other criminal justice agencies, community mental health service providers and housing programs.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: The City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court will continue to partner with the King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division, other criminal justice agencies, community mental health service providers and housing programs.

4. Implementation/Timelines

A. Project Planning and Overall Implementation Timeline

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court: To be determined
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: To be determined
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: To be determined

B. Procurement of Providers

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009

C. Contracting of Services

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.

D. Services Start Date(s)

1. King County District Court Mental Health Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
2. City of Seattle, Seattle Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.
3. City of Auburn, Auburn Municipal Court: To be determined by adoption of revised strategy after receipt of MIDD Oversight Committee report in April 2009.