

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute Recommendations

**An Update for City Council
April 19, 2022**

Introductions

City of Austin

- Commander Eric Fitzgerald, Austin Police Department
- Assistant Chief Andy Hofmeister, Austin/Travis County EMS

Integral Care

- Dawn Handley, Chief Operations Officer
- Sherry Blyth, Director, Crisis Services, Specialty Substance Use Treatment and Justice Initiatives
- Kedra Priest, Practice Manager, Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT)

Background

- Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI)
 - Recommendations for First Responder Mental Health Calls for Service
- MMHPI re-engaged in 2020 to assist with implementation of all six recommendations
- Additional contract to complete implementation executed in December 2021 to be completed March 31, 2022

Recommendation #1, #2, #3, #6

“APD Chief’s Mental Health Program and Response Advisory Function Developed Within the Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (BHCJAC)”

“Mental Health Training for Call Takers & Dispatchers”

“Mental Health Integrated Dispatch”

“Community Outreach in Collaboration with NAMI Central Texas”

Call Data



- 3,766 calls were diverted away from law enforcement in 2021
- On track to divert 7,800 calls to clinicians this year
- Research indicates when officers are aware of a mental health crisis component:
 - Arrest rates were 45.5% lower
 - Use of Force was as much as 56.3% lower

Recommendation #4

“Sustainability of EMCOT, Including Telehealth Expansion”

- Funding for EMCOT has been secured
- Telehealth expansion is ongoing
 - APD deployed 265 iPads to 5 sectors
 - APD currently addressing low utilization through training and education
 - EMS has capability but are currently addressing low utilization through training & education

Recommendation #4 Continued

- Telehealth capability is available, but utilization has been low
- MMHPI conducted several focus group surveys and interviews of field staff to determine “why?”
- Based on feedback provided, an educational video has been developed
 - Being distributed to APD & EMS field staff after final review

Jerry's Story

Jerry called 911 and requested police response after he and his partner got into a fight and he was afraid of what he would do to himself.

Recommendation #5

“Collaboration with APD Crisis Intervention Team and Community Health Paramedic Program”

- Began seeing clients in April 2022
- Continuing to increase staffing as resources allow

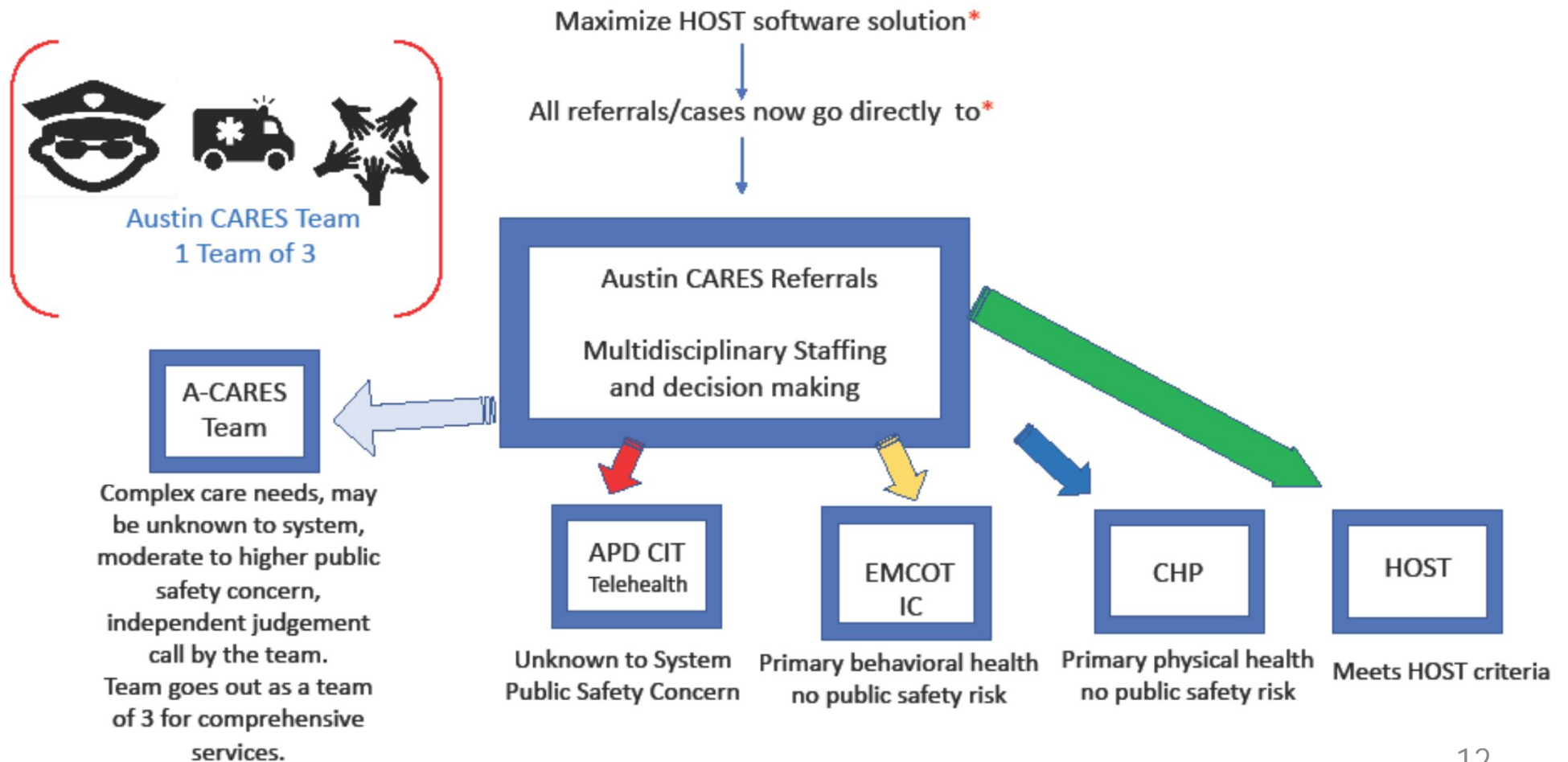
Recommendation #5 Continued

- Multi-disciplinary team comprised of police officer, mental health clinician & paramedic
- Utilized to engage individuals with:
 - A suspected or known threat to public safety
 - Complex medical needs
 - Severe mental health concerns
- Same concept as the HOST team but for mental health needs

Recommendation #5 Continued

- Training & orientation was completed in March 2022
- Team reviews cases referred to APD-CIT to determine needs and directs referrals to other resources
- Team will first serve as a “follow-up” resource to solidify workflows and test processes

Former CIT Referrals (Cases) → Standardized Referral Form for Rapid Staffing* → No proc. change for officers in field*



CARES Scenario

Actual call coordinated by program manager at CTECC, in current capacity unable to dispatch all together, had to walk over and speak with CHP 100 for dispatch.

Questions

