

# Stepping Up Technical Assistance

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH and JUSTICE CENTER - Dr. Sheryl Kubiak, Principal Investigator

Since 2015, over 433 counties across the country have committed to *Stepping Up* to reduce the number of individuals with mental illness in jails. Within Michigan, a total of 21 counties endorsed the initiative through 2017. While local support for *Stepping Up* is strong, communities often lack sufficient data and technical expertise to effectively engage in the cross-system, outcome-oriented planning necessary to move forward with the initiative. Specifically, local stakeholders often struggle with insufficient data to properly identify the target population and implement the appropriate system-wide response; to select and implement appropriate evidence-based interventions; and to develop a sustainable system to track and monitor impact.

To assist Michigan counties in achieving the objectives of *Stepping Up*, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is providing the services and expertise of a leader in the field of jail diversion, Sheryl Kubiak, Ph.D., the principal investigator for the evaluation of jail diversion pilot projects statewide for the Governor's Diversion Council. Dr. Kubiak will lead a technical assistance team comprised of university research faculty and staff from across the state to engage county stakeholders in the observation, assistance, and planning required for stakeholders to effectively implement the spirit of the *Stepping Up* initiative within their communities.

## What services are provided by the *Stepping Up* technical assistance team?

Technical assistance will be organized around the Six Questions of *Stepping Up*.

Q1: Is your leadership committed?

**Q2: Do you conduct timely screening and assessments?**

**Q3: Do you have baseline data?**

**Q4: Have you conducted a comprehensive process analysis?**

**Q5: Have you prioritized policy, practice, and funding?**

**Q6: Do you track progress?**

Using the Six Questions as a guide to the effective implementation of *Stepping Up* in Michigan counties, the technical assistance team will engage county stakeholders in a series of activities geared to enabling stakeholders to critically examine and assess Questions 2, 3, and 4. Once data is obtained, the team can then assist stakeholders with Questions 5 and 6 by creating an action plan and assisting in the development of strategies to assess progress.

## Can technical assistance be tailored to the needs of our county?

Each county will likely differ in the journey toward enhancing its system-level response to persons with mental illness involved in the criminal/legal system. While stakeholders in some *Stepping Up* counties may be able to respond affirmatively to one or more of the above questions, other counties may be stalled. Often strained resources, complex systems, insufficient technology, and limited collaboration between criminal justice, legal, and behavioral health services challenge a community's ability to affirmatively answer the questions. The technical assistance team will work with county stakeholders to assess where they are, where they want to go, and what services will facilitate their trajectory.

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Potential services provided by the technical assistance team are determined based on the needs of the county and will be addressed based on the TA plan. Services include:

- Observation and assessment of advisory board
- Documentation of *Stepping Up* goals & objectives
- Review, mapping, current jail process / Assessment of system efficacy
- Review of current screening and assessment tools / Recommendation of evidence-based tools
- Data review and validation
- Development of baseline data
- Development/implementation of data collection protocol
- Data collection, cleaning, coding, merging, and analysis
- Establish prevalence of SMI in jail
- Create context by comparing county with others across the state
- Stakeholder action planning session
- Presentation of findings and recommendations to stakeholders
- Development/implementation of ongoing, sustained data collection and analysis
- Data system integration consultation and recommendations
- Identification of sustainability strategies

## What is the process for technical assistance?

The provision of technical assistance is typically a six-month process comprised of several steps.

**Step 1: Introductory Meeting.** Telephone call or face-to-face meeting with 1 – 2 key stakeholders to answer questions and set-up site visit. (1-2 hours)

**Step 2: Site Visit, Jail Tour, and Observation of Advisory Board Meeting.** Onsite meeting between technical assistance team members and key jail, CMH, and 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider (if applicable) stakeholders. Activities include observation of advisory board meeting, mapping the jail process, review of current screening and assessment tools, review of existing data/data validation, and review/establish baseline data. (4 – 6 hours)

**Step 3: Development of TA Plan/Timeline and Execution of Data Use Agreement.** Based on the findings of the site visit, the technical assistance team develops a TA plan to examine and assess Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 within the county. The plan is submitted to key stakeholders for approval. In addition, a data use agreement is executed. (2 - 4 weeks)

**Step 4: Implementation of TA Plan/Comprehensive Process Analysis.** During this phase, the TA plan will be implemented within the county. Activities can include implementation of data collection protocols and regular data calls with key stakeholders. (3 - 4 months)

**Step 5: Data Analysis and Reporting.** Upon completion of data collection activities, the technical assistance team will conduct data cleaning, entry, and analysis. In addition, the team will assess baseline data and process; identify service gaps and strengths and areas of concern and proposed improvements. (1 month)

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**Step 6: Action Planning.** The technical assistance process culminates in a stakeholder planning session. During this session, the technical assistance team will present system-level findings and recommendations and IT consultation and recommendations for data system integration. The team will also lead stakeholders in planning for continued data collection and analysis and identify strategies for long-term sustainability. (4 – 6 hours)

## What information is shared with the technical assistance team?

To assess system efficacy, establish baseline data, and establish outcome-oriented data collection strategies, it is necessary for the jail, CMH and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers to share information across systems and with the technical assistance team. Below are some examples of the type of data and information collected in the technical assistance process.

### JAIL

- Composite – number of bookings, capacity, special populations
- Structure – role of CMH and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider
- Services – mental health and substance abuse services provided within jail
- Booking – intake and screening process, individual-level booking data
- Identification – flagging and referrals for mental health services
- Diversion – current diversion programs/processes
- Discharge – process and documentation; services, referrals, medications provided
- Individual-level – individual data including booking, demographics, charges, risk

### CMH and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> PARTY PROVIDER

- Referrals – referrals and kites for services
- Screening and Assessment – mental health and substance abuse screening and assessment tools
- Services – mental health and substance abuse services provided
- Collaboration and case consulting – formal and informal collaboration and consultation with jail staff, providers, courts, probation/parole, etc.
- Discharge planning – process and services provided for jail release
- Referrals and appointments – process for post-release referrals and/or appointments
- Individual-level – individual data including referrals, screening/assessment, services received, medications, CMH status, discharge planning, post-release services

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## **Which counties are eligible for *Stepping Up* technical assistance?**

Counties that are READY! Eligible counties will have 1) a signed and executed *Stepping Up* resolution in place, and 2) an active county-wide cross-system mental health and criminal/legal advisory board<sup>1</sup>.

Eligible counties will be scheduled for technical assistance in 2018 – 2019 based on the AVAILABILITY of the technical assistance team and COUNTY READINESS. Services will be provided to four counties in 2018 and up to seven counties in 2019. Factors of county readiness include a county-level commitment to data sharing and the support of and assistance in data collection efforts throughout the jail and mental health systems.

## **For more information, please contact:**

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<sup>1</sup> This opportunity is open to those counties that are not included among the jail diversion pilot projects.