

Transforming Crisis Response -The Community Mobile Crisis Response Team

Category: Oral Presentation

Abstract Body

The Community Mobile Crisis Response Team is a partnership between the Calgary Police Service (CPS) and the Alex Community Health Center (The Alex) and other community partners such as the Distress Centre Calgary. Funded by the City of Calgary and the Calgary Police Service, this pilot is based on the ‘Transforming Calgary’s Crisis Response System: Final Report,’ developed by the Centre for Suicide Prevention and PolicyWise for Children and Families and a direct response to Calgarians identifying the need for transformational change in policing and the development of a systemic approach to support individuals experiencing crisis due to addiction, mental health and other psycho-social challenges. One of the hallmarks of this crisis service is the inclusion of staff with lived experience, a need clearly articulated through community engagement. This pilot is currently serving two police districts, with the plan to further expand. The intent is to divert crisis calls away from police to reduce unnecessary engagement with law enforcement agencies and to provide persons in crisis with a response rooted in community need. The pilot provides a person-centered, trauma-informed, equity-based and anti-racism approach to crisis response for those experiencing a substance use and mental health crises. In addition, this pilot works in collaboration with existing crisis response teams to collectively improve access to services; including enhanced cultural awareness for those living in Racialized communities, and a sustained commitment to reduce systemic stigma. This community-based crisis response intervention addresses the lack of situational support and effective coping mechanisms of community members, with a key element being the connection to The Alex and other community services for integrated follow up, case management and provision of wraparound support, promoting future crisis prevention. This collaboration ensures community members have access to rapid, mobile, and judgement-free crisis support when they need it the most.

Key Words

- Caring in Crisis
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion issues
- Mutual Help/Peer Support/Lived Experience
- Prevention/Harm Reduction

Learning Objective # 1

To describe approaches to transform crisis response systems.

Learning Objective # 2

To employ strategies to strengthen community resilience.

Reference # 1

Gurm, K., John, S., McInnes, S., Parker, N., Olson, R., Foster, J., Asif, A., and Grunau, M. (2021) Transforming Calgary's Crisis Response System: Final Report. Edmonton: PolicyWise for Children & Families.

Reference # 2

James, R. & Gilliland, B. Crisis Intervention Strategies. (2016). Boston: Cengage.

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