



CCSM Issues Committee First Draft
Too few mobile crisis providers in Maine 4/13/2022

Currently in Maine, we have only 87 full time crisis workers to handle 24/7 situations across the State of Maine. For reference for 24/7 statewide law enforcement response, there are 2500 officers. While DHHS realizes changes need to happen, they are currently going through a process to reform the crisis system. Until that reform happens, we need an immediate short-term plan to increase the number of competent crisis workers to handle the mental health crises across the state. Otherwise, law enforcement officers will continue to be the primary crisis responders for the State of Maine.

Recommendations:

1. First Responder Model-This term describes the staffing levels needed to adequately respond to a crisis situation. This is currently not the model used.
 2. Co-responders with law enforcement- This embeds social workers on law enforcement teams to go to calls together when mental health expertise is needed.
 3. Peer Support on mobile crisis teams - Having peer support specialists that go to crisis calls with a clinician.
 4. Mental health education for all first responders- All first responders should have a robust mental health education to better assist when they respond.
 5. Increase the numbers of officers trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). In Maine, currently under Maine law a minimum percentage are required for law enforcement departments. Some choose to train all their officers, and some do very little. We would like to see a more robust percentage of trained officers in Maine.
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Expected Outcome:

We want to see the most appropriate responses to people in crisis situations across the State. We want both officers and people in need to experience less trauma when they have needs. We want people to be served by the most appropriate responders, highly recommending that peer support and social workers lead the way to responding to Mainers in a crisis.

To submit feedback, ideas or a personal story relating to this issue statement, please send to the CCSM either by mail at: 219 Capitol St. Suite 7 Augusta, ME 04330 or email at vmccarty@maineccsm.org

DEADLINE TO RESPOND May 10, 2022

Thank you.
