

## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

### INNOVATION 7 – THERAPEUTIC TRANSPORTATION FINAL REPORT

The primary purpose of the Innovation – Therapeutic Transportation (TT) project was to increase access and the quality of mental health services to underserved, unengaged groups. It was anticipated that this coming to fruition through the introduction of a more supportive and efficient way to intervene and, when needed, transport clients, while also reducing the risk for further trauma, and ensuring the client a TT member remains with them until the admission process is complete. When a mental health staff or team makes the determination to initiate an involuntary hold (5150 or 5585), the team can wait as long as 5-6 hours for an ambulance to arrive for transportation to the hospital. There are several problems with this practice; including (1) the inefficient use of staff that must stay with the client, (2) the client's own comfort is compromised, (3) once the client is placed in an ambulance or police car for transport, they are secured in such a manner that promotes safety to the exclusion of recovery.

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) intended for these teams to improve the services and supports provided for the individual placed on a hold, provide linkage between the individuals and mental health services, and provide coordination of and connection to services across all services and supports, including psychiatry. The transport team will serve as a back-up team (not first responders) and would work with the LACDMH Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT) and Law Enforcement crisis response teams exclusively, resulting in better availability and more efficient dispatches in transporting individuals to the closest facility. Through decreasing the use of ambulance and law enforcement for the transport of individuals who are medically stable, non-combative/violent and cooperative during the hold process, we hope to see results of improved response times and the ability to respond to a greater number of calls for PMRT. Ambulances and law enforcement having the opportunity to move on to other challenging cases will be realized. Currently, Los Angeles County's revised policy to allow employees to transport individuals placed on 5150/5585 holds is at final review with County Council for approval. This is intended to support providing an innovative approach to greater communication and a reduction in unnecessary fear and anxiety towards hospitalization during the hold process.

Due to challenges encountered in 2019, the 2020 pandemic and the civil unrest there were major changes to the program:

1. The program became a collaborative with Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) this pilot program, vans are operated by the PMRT to transport a client who is on a psychiatric hold or to intervene on the streets to avoid the need for an involuntary hold. Utilizing specially designed vans from the outset of responding to a call for someone in crisis allows the client's healing and recovery to begin from the first moment of contact. All vans are staffed with an expert team from LACDMH and are comprised of a clinical driver, psychiatric technician, and a peer support specialist enabled to rapidly initiate supportive case management.

2. The staff was changed from Nurses and Licensed Clinical Social Workers to Licensed Psychiatric Technicians and added drivers.
3. LAFD provided space at the fire stations to house staff on a trailer to dispatch teams with 7-12 miles radius for immediate response.
4. Five fire stations were identified to cover each supervisorial district and multiple City areas.

The purpose was to expand the current reach and impact by integrating L.A. County mental health experts into the emergency response for calls that come into 911 or go directly to the L.A. City Police Department or L.A. City Fire Department. The pilot program embedded a team of L.A. County mental health experts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in five L.A. City Fire stations across the County to co-respond or take lead on incoming emergency calls related to, or presumed to involve, an individual experiencing a mental health crisis. The program launched in 2021 and was studied for one year with a focus on sustaining and expanding the program into other cities within L.A. County.

Specific benefits of this program include:

- Minimizing the client's trauma, stigma, and loss of privacy and dignity, which is too often a part of the transport process when ambulances and law enforcement are involved.
- Vehicles are designed with a therapeutic interior to ease the stress of the client's situation, and the teams that staff the vans are dressed in civilian clothes, not uniforms, to further de-escalate the situation.
- The Therapeutic Transportation Program's approach shortens the wait time for medically stable, non-combative, and cooperative individuals – a crucial objective for the safety of both clients and the responding LACDMH team.
- For many underserved groups, the first encounter with mental health services is often through a mental health crisis. Changing the standard transportation practices to a more private, less traumatizing, and less stigmatizing experience will lower a perception barrier to accessing mental health services and increase the likelihood families would volunteer to intervene on behalf of the potential client to obtain mental health services.
- The program frees up vital first-responder resources such as law enforcement patrols and ambulances to focus on other community safety and health priorities

**Based on these identified benefits, LACDMH proposes continued funding for this program under Community Supports and Services: Alternative Crisis Services funding.**

## Outcomes and Data

### Therapeutic Transportation incidents from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

During this period, (TTP) responded to N = **2,275** incidents **1,608 (71%)** during the AM shifts (7AM-7:30PM) and **667 (29%)** during the PM shifts (7 PM- 7:30 AM). The table below displays the number of incidents by month and shift. Only station 4, and 94 have both an AM and a PM shift. The remaining stations only have AM shifts due to hiring challenges for this shift. Majority of calls N = **235 (10.9%)** were during the month of April 2023, followed by June N = **219 (9.6%)**

FIRE STATION #	SD*	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	HOURS OF OPERATION	ADDRESS
4	1	01/30/22	24/7	450 East Temple Street, Los Angeles CA 90012
59	3	03/06/22	24/7	11505 W. Olympic Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90064
77	5	05/16/22	12/7	9224 Sunland Boulevard, Sun Valley, CA 91352
94	2	08/08/22	12/7	4470 Coliseum Street, Los Angeles, CA 90016
40	4	09/26/22	12/7	330 Ferry Street, Los Angeles, CA 90731

\*SD-Supervisorial District

### INCIDENTS BY STATION:

STATION #	INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STATION 4	1,184	52%
STATION 40	69	3%
STATION 59	265	12%
STATION 77	229	10%
STATION 94	528	23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>100%</b>

Station 4 was the busiest station during the reporting period, handling **52%** (N=1,184) of all incidents, followed by station 94 handling **23%** (N=528) of the calls. It may be due to the fact that both these stations have a PM shift.

### INCIDENTS BY STATION AND DISPOSITION:

STATION #	5150	6000	CANCELLED IN ROUTE	CANCELLED ON SCENE DUE TO MEDICAL	DID NOT MEET LAFD CHECKLIST REQUIREMENTS	PHONE CONSULT	REFER	REFUSED SERVICES	VOLUNTARY	TOTAL
STATION 4	348	97	469	32	24	2	8	31	173	1,184
STATION 40	14	3	25	6	1			3	17	69
STATION 59	66	37	126	8	1		3	1	23	265
STATION 77	66	19	122	4	3		1	3	11	229

STATION #	5150	6000	CANCELLED IN ROUTE	CANCELLED ON SCENE DUE TO MEDICAL	DID NOT MEET LAFD CHECKLIST REQUIREMENTS	PHONE CONSULT	REFER	REFUSED SERVICES	VOLUNTARY	TOTAL
STATION 94	188	10	250	13	2			5	60	528
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>2,275</b>
% DISPOSITION	30%	7%	44%	3%	1%	0%	1%	2%	12%	100%

**30% (N=682)** of all incidents were placed on an involuntary hold while **12% (N=284)** voluntarily were held and **7% (N= 166)** were 6000.

**INCIDENTS BY STATION AND DESTINATION:**

STATION #	UCC	HOSPITAL	CLINIC	EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT	OTHER FACILITY	LPS FACILITY	TOTAL
STATION 4	206	178	139	59	22	4	608
STATION 40	8	9	13	2	2		34
STATION 59	10	52	27	18	12	3	122
STATION 77	48	3	6	31	2	3	93
STATION 94	135	40	41	33	3		252
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,109</b>
% DESTINATION	37%	25%	20%	13%	4%	1%	

**37% (N = 407)** of all incidents were transported to an urgent care center and **25% (N = 282)** were transported to a Hospital. **20% (N = 226)** went to a clinic.

**INCIDENTS BY STATION AND FACE TO FACE CONTACT:**

STATION #	NO FACE TO FACE	FACE TO FACE	TOTAL	% FACE TO FACE
STATION 4	507	677	1,184	57%
STATION 40	28	41	69	59%
STATION 59	130	135	265	51%
STATION 77	124	105	229	46%
STATION 94	254	274	528	52%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>1,232</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>54%</b>
% FACE TO FACE	46%	54%	100%	

**54% (N=1,232)** of incidents that TT responded to have had a face-to-face contact. Station 40 had the most face-to-face contacts with **59%** of their total incidents followed by station 4 which had **57%**. TT had no face-to-face contact with **46% (N = 1,043)** of all calls. Of these incidents, **33% (N = 339)** had no face-to-face contact because the calls were cancelled in route.

**INCIDENTS BY STATION AND TT TRANSPORT SERVICES:**

STATION #	NOT TRANSPORTED	TRANSPORTED BY TT	TOTAL	% TRANSPORTED
STATION 4	586	600	1,184	51%
STATION 40	35	34	69	49%
STATION 59	144	121	265	46%
STATION 77	137	92	229	40%
STATION 94	280	248	528	47%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>% TRANSPORTED?</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

TT transported **48% (N=1,093)** of all the incidents they responded to, Station 4 transported **51%** of their incidents followed by station 40 at **49%**.

**INCIDENTS BY STATION AND REASON IF NO TRANSPORT:**

STATION #	# OF INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE
TRANSPORTED BY TT	1,095	48.1%
CALL CANCELLED	1,049	46.1%
CLIENT REFUSED	49	2.2%
TRANSPORTED VIA AMBULANCE	44	1.9%
ON-SCENE TREATMENT/RESOLUTION	16	0.7%
OTHER	13	0.6%
CLIENT AWOLED	4	0.2%
LAW ENFORCEMENT DISENGAGED	4	0.2%
LEFT IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT	1	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above displays the reasons TT incidents did not result in a transport.

This program has expanded to include the city of Santa Monica.

**Therapeutic Transportation incidents from January through December 2022**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CALLS**

During the months of January through December 2022, Therapeutic Transportation Teams received **1,680** calls. Station 4 received **65%** (N=1,090) of the calls while station 59 received **15%** (N=246) followed by Station 94 which received **11%** (N=182)

Months	Station 4	Station 40	Station 59	Station 77	Station 94	Total
Jan*	3					3
Feb	129					129
Mar*	88		20			108
Apr	120		30			150
May*	94		23	1		118
Jun	93		11	15		119
Jul	108		32	19		159
Aug*	102		30	28	4	164
Sep*	96		39	21	44	200
Oct	105	16	31	19	50	221
Nov	82	15	16	17	42	172
Dec	70	4	14	7	42	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1,680</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Month Station open

## TRANSPORTED

57% of calls were transported by Therapeutic Transportation Teams. The table below illustrates the number and percentage of transported calls by station and month.

Station	Station 4		Station 40		Station 59		Station 77		Station 94		Transport	No Transport
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Jan*	2	1									2	1
Feb	79	50									79	50
Mar*	68	20			10	10					78	30
Apr	83	37			16	14					99	51
May*	66	28			15	8		1			81	37
Jun	51	42			7	4	7	8			65	54
Jul	64	44			23	9	6	13			93	66
Aug*	60	42			13	17	15	13	2	2	90	74
Sep*	59	37			18	21	9	12	22	22	108	92
Oct	52	53	9	7	13	18	9	10	29	21	112	109
Nov	42	40	9	6	10	6	5	12	20	22	86	86
Dec	37	33	3	1	3	11	5	2	17	25	65	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>722</b>
<b>% Transported</b>	<b>61%</b>		<b>60%</b>		<b>52%</b>		<b>44%</b>		<b>49%</b>		<b>57%</b>	

## OUTCOMES

**36%** (N=598) of calls during this period we placed on an involuntary hold, **21%** (N=360) of calls during this period were evaluated, did not meet criteria, or transported for services (6000), **4%** (N=75) were evaluated and accepted voluntarily accepted services while **38 %** (N=636) of calls were cancelled due to various reasons. The table below illustrates the various dispositions by station during this reporting period.

Station #	5150	6000	Cancelled	Refer	Refused	Voluntary	Total
<b>Station 4</b>	404	250	386	2	4	44	<b>1,090</b>
<b>Station 40</b>	8	3	14	0	0	10	<b>35</b>
<b>Station 59</b>	67	63	107	2	0	7	<b>246</b>
<b>Station 77</b>	40	17	62	2	1	5	<b>127</b>
<b>Station 94</b>	79	27	67	0	0	9	<b>182</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>1,680</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## DESTINATION

**57%** of TT calls were transported to a facility. Majority of transported calls, **43%** (N=413) were transported to UCC, followed by **32%** (N=310) were transported to a hospital. **11%** (N=107) were transported to the emergency room and **10%** (N=98) were transported to a clinic.

Station #	Clinic	ER	Hospital	Other Facility	UCC	No Transport	Total
<b>Station 4</b>	43	55	235	26	320	411	1,090
<b>Station 40</b>	5	2	5	1	8	14	35
<b>Station 59</b>	18	14	47	13	30	124	246
<b>Station 77</b>	8	28	6	4	14	67	127
<b>Station 94</b>	24	8	17	0	41	92	182
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>1,680</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>43%</b>		