

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**“Heritage of Excellence”**

**2016 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING FOR FIRST RESPONDERS**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** JUNE, 2014  
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2015)

**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

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A mental health crisis begins in the field and can either escalate or de-escalate based on the management of the crisis by first responders. Those in law enforcement perceive a paradigm shift in which they have become **gatekeepers** to mental health services. This shift in the role of first responders, particularly those working in law enforcement when dealing with a person suffering from a mental health crisis, has ultimately led to several tragedies in which a person with a mental illness died because of that law enforcement involvement. This has brought into question the breadth and type of training law enforcement officers receive, both in the academy and post academy. In recent months, it is estimated that more than one million people with schizophrenia and manic-depressive illness are not being treated on any given day. These individuals are more likely to experience homelessness, suicide, incarceration, victimization, and violence. Providing frontline law enforcement with the practical tools needed to assess and de-escalate, intervene, and manage these crises driven incidents will lead to better outcomes, for the person in crisis and the community they live in.

**BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY**

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Department of Mental Health, LA County 550 S. Vermont Ave Los Angeles, CA 90020		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-738-4431
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Miriam Brown		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213 738-3412 or 213 305-9575  <b>EMAIL</b> Mbrown@dmh.lacounty.gov
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> <b>SIGNATURE ON FILE</b> Kumar Menon, MSPA	<b>DATE</b> 7/6/2016	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 738-4258  <b>EMAIL</b> kmenon@dmh.lacounty.gov
<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> <b>SIGNATURE ON FILE</b> Robin Kay, Ph.D.	<b>DATE</b> 7/11/2016	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 738-4108

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**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made. Use Arial 12 point font

The magnitude of the problem of untreated mental illness is revealed not only in the numbers, but also in the consequences. As a result, the Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU), Systemwide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART), and Case Assessment Management Program (CAMP) collaborative programs between the Department of Mental Health and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) joined forces to plan, develop, and deliver a training curriculum to frontline law enforcement officers. This collaborative effort resulted in the new four-day, forty-hour, Mental Health Intervention Training (MHIT). The course title MHIT was borrowed from the course developed by the New South Wales Police Service (NSWPS), Australia, who had developed portions of their law enforcement/mental health strategy and training based on the information they had received while visiting the MEU as a part of the *Specialized Policing Responses: Law Enforcement/Mental Health* National Learning Site program. This solidified a pan-Pacific collaboration to this important global issue.

Mental health clinicians and LAPD officers agreed to work on facilitating, teaching, and educating law enforcement officers on topics such as: suicide, mood disorders, traumatic brain injury, mental health on juveniles, schizophrenia, suicide by cop, signs and symptoms of mental health and also play scenarios on how to deal with difficult clients, jumpers and with those who appeared to be responding to internal stimuli. They also teach and discuss the laws between mental health and law enforcement and the importance on working as teams to better serve the mentally ill individuals by providing mental health and avoiding incarceration and/or use of force. The training relies heavily on the adult learning model, which is interactive and requires the students to utilize problem solving skills throughout the learning process. They are taught to not just manage to the crisis but through the crisis, understanding all facets of a mental health intervention.

The MHIT course was first delivered in June of 2014 and received California Peace Officer Standards and Training (CA-POST) certification in December 2014. The CA-POST Executive Director Alan Beal expressed the following, *“The qualifications and caliber of the instructors is exceptional, and the learning activities are second to none.”* The MHIT course was initially scheduled to be delivered every other month, however as the Department recognized the need, it was increased to be delivered every other week for a total of 25 deliveries, beginning in 2016 and on an ongoing basis. The MHIT course was initially designed to be delivered to LAPD officers, however many agencies countywide became interested in sending their officers to attend the course and as of June 2016, **834** personnel have been trained including, including **147** from other agencies besides the LAPD. It is anticipated that by the end of 2016 approximately **1200** officers will have been trained in the MHIT.

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The MHIT is also being used as a core component in the LAPD’s two week Police Science Leadership course for officers just prior to completing their probation

The United States Department of Justice in conjunction with the Council on State Governments continues to recommend law enforcement agencies, including most recently, Baltimore and Chicago to conduct visits, to observe the work being done here in Los Angeles, and specifically to audit and participate in the MHIT course delivery.

The officers who have attended the MHIT completed course critiques, providing feedback on the course content, design, and delivery. The course has received overwhelming positive feedback from the attendees, with more than one officer stating, “this is exactly what we need.” The course content was also shared with the Senior Sergeant in Charge of the MHIT in NSWPS, Matt Ireland. He was so impressed with the course content and design that he is going to integrate many of the unique elements of the LAPD MHIT into their course. This sentiment was echoed by other departments, including Denver Police Department, San Diego Sheriff’s Department Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT), Contra Costa County, Leicestershire Police, United Kingdom, and Calgary Police Service, Canada.

The first responder role in agitation/crisis management is a very important one and sets the tone for all of the subsequent contacts the person suffering from a mental health crisis will have on their journey through a very complicated, regulated and fragmented system of care. There is a need to train on all facets of the system, so that there is an intimate knowledge of each other’s capabilities and legal limitations. The implementation and facilitation of the MHIT training curriculum throughout the County is an important first step in the development of a system wide approach. This includes the consumer, for to see the world through their eyes, failure is not an option, and lives are at stake.

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**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):** Use Arial 12 point font

The implementation of the MHIT is linked to the Goal 2 and 3 of the County Strategic Plan. The plan to implement and expand training for law enforcement officers to have more compassionate and effective interaction with the mentally ill works directly with the pre-booking and post booking diversion of mentally ill offenders, which is one of the core concepts of the MHIT curriculum. In addition, better trained law enforcement officers will likely reduce litigation and judgment costs and will improve public safety.

**GOAL 2: COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESPONSIVENESS:**

Enrich lives of Los Angeles County residents by providing enhanced services, and effectively planning and responding to economic, social, and environmental challenges.

**GOAL 3: INTEGRATED SERVICES DELIVERY:**

Maximize opportunities to measurably improve client and community outcomes and leverage resources through the continuous integration of health, community, and public safety services.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL <b>ANNUAL</b> ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY**

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Providing law enforcement with proper training on mental health will result in jail diversion and mental health treatment to individuals who have encounters with the law. On the humane side, having trained law enforcement on how to defuse and de-escalate critical situations will result on saving lives which has no estimated value. The LAPD arrests approximately 9% of the contacts, while the remainder are hospitalized or referred to other services by SMART/CAMP programs. It is expected that as the numbers of trained officers increases so will the numbers diverted to mental health and the arrests will continue to decrease.