Resolution 2021-S6-1101

Behavioral Mental Health Crisis Response Team

The Undergraduate Student Government
Legislative Body
First Reading: March 1st, 2021
Second Reading/Voting: March 8th, 2021

Chief Sponsor(s): President Wasan Kumar,

WHEREAS, Public safety, mental health, and creating diverse student resource pools are key priorities for the Undergraduate Student Government; then

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that USG endorses the following proposal for a Behavioral Mental Health.

Date: February 15, 2021
Re: DRAFT proposal and job description

Background

The Use of Force subcommittee was created by the Public Safety Board (PSB or the Board) to: (1) review policies and provide feedback; (2) serve as a liaison and to provide communication to the larger group; and (3) review UICPD’s use of force data. With the support and encouragement of the Board’s chairs, the subcommittee is taking a comprehensive and broad approach to completing those specific charges.

In particular, beyond surveying the existing use of force data, policies, and practices, we are proactively researching and considering alternatives to the use of force, including crisis de-escalation techniques and non-police response alternatives to non-violent crises.

We have studied the Crisis Assistance Helping Out On the Streets (CAHOOTS) program that has served as non-police crisis intervention in Eugene, Oregon for over thirty years. The Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) in Denver, Colorado is a similar program that launched in June 2020 with promising results in its first six months. We conclude that these non-police crisis intervention programs present a viable model upon which to base policing reform proposals at UIC. Beyond simply reforming UICPD, this approach proposes a new paradigm for understanding police intervention and interaction with civilians.
A Behavioral Health Crisis Mobile Response Team (BHCMRT) is a separate, independent institution that can work in partnership with UICPD to respond to emergency calls involving non-violent crises. In non-violent crises, emergency dispatchers would call on and send a BHCMRT response in lieu of sending police. Initially, such a sweeping change in practice may seem inadequate. After all, the armed police intervention model for emergency response has been a central feature of our social and cultural expectations about safety, law, and order since colonial times. But empirical data and thirty-one years of experience in Eugene demonstrates that a non-police response is a viable alternative to armed-police responses. In 2019, out of 24,000 calls to which CAHOOTS responded, only 250 of those—or 1%—required supplemental police presence.

An added benefit is the potential increase in availability of police officers to address calls that do require their presence. For example, the CAHOOTS program resolved an estimated 17% of the Eugene Police Department's overall call volume. In addition to the increase in availability of officers to fight crimes, there was an estimated $8.5 million a year savings to taxpayers in public safety costs.

University of Illinois at Chicago

Police Liaison Mobile Crisis Counselor

Position Description:

Serves as a liaison to the UIC Police Department to assist with calls involving non-violent crises. The Crisis Counselors' offices are located at UIHealth which provides 24/7 behavioral health services. The Crisis Counselor will assist with transfer and evaluation of persons of concern for needed behavioral health services including risk assessment.

Key Responsibilities/ Duties:

- Responds to a variety of calls in which an armed law enforcement response is deemed unnecessary, including welfare checks, transportation to social or medical services, suspected behavioral or mental health issues, death notices, provision of public assistance or social service resources (such as housing, etc.), and sexual assault, domestic violence, and other traumas (in some instances).
- Facilitate hospital transfers (e.g., from the crisis scenes, Counseling Center, Campus housing, etc.) to the emergency room
- Become knowledgeable about various policing and mental health resources and
assist in recommending to appropriate level of care and referrals (i.e., hospitalization, counseling center, other community resources)

- Follow up with person to facilitate recommendations (e.g., facilitate follow up call to counseling center to help make appointment if needed)
- Utilize trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction strategies to respond to emergent needs of people in crisis while maximizing the safety of everyone involved.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

- Master’s Degree in psychology, social work, counseling or related field.
- Independently licensed to practice in the State of Illinois (i.e., LCPC, LCSW, LMHC or equivalent)
- Sensitivity and experience working with a diverse population, particularly BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color), LGBT+ communities, and persons with disabilities.
- Bilingual, Spanish speaker preferred
- Evenings, nights, and weekends required

**Number of Positions to be Filled:** Three Full-Time and One Part-time worker

- Director or Coordinator who performs the duties of a Crisis Counselor as well as is responsible for operations, scheduling, supervision, protocols for intervention, budgeting
- In addition to the Director/Coordinator, two or three full-time Mobile Crisis Workers
- At least one part-time on call worker to cover shifts as needed
Crisis
Call to Comm. Center
EMS
Mobile Crisis
May refer to MC
Deescalate and assess
Resolution
Referral
Transport
Hospital
Service Providers
Shelter

President, Wasan Kumar

Speaker of the House, Daisy Stancheva