

INNOVATION

The concept of a Crisis Intervention Team was first established by the Memphis Police Department in 1988. Since that time it has been adopted in numerous states and throughout California.

PURPOSE

Approximately 40% of persons suffering from serious mental illness will be arrested at least once during their lifetimes. It is imperative that progressive law enforcement agencies assume the responsibility of evaluating situations, recognizing mental illness and the need for treatment and getting the mentally ill person to the proper treatment resources.

An increase in drug/alcohol abuse and the de-institutionalization of the mentally ill has caused many to be homeless, potentially be more violent and involved with law enforcement.

Possible lawsuits regarding excessive force and the inevitable community backlash are major concerns for law enforcement agencies. Traditional police methods, misinformation and lack of sensitivity can cause frustration for the mentally ill and their families, as well as the police. Officers responding to calls

involving the mentally ill are faced with a lack of knowledge about mental illness, resulting in a fear of the unknown, which increases the likelihood of physical confrontation.

TRAINING

- **Academy** – Patrol officers and Public Safety Dispatchers attend a 40-hour curriculum under the instructional supervision of mental health professionals, family advocates and mental health consumer groups. Training enables the officers and dispatchers to understand that mental illness is a disease, not a crime.
- **Instructors** – As a community based effort, instructors have been chosen from a variety of sources: Stanford, Menlo Park Veteran's Hospital, San Jose State University, Santa Clara County Mental Health Department, the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, various community agencies and those in private practice with experience in the assessment and treatment of the mentally ill. Additionally, all instructors are required to complete ride-alongs with officers and sit-alongs with dispatchers and call-takers prior to teaching to better understand police operations.

- **Topics**
 - Schizophrenia
 - Major Depression
 - Bipolar Disorder
 - Personality Disorders
 - Children/Adolescents and Mental Illness
 - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - Dual Diagnosis
 - Medications for Mental Illness
 - Multi-cultural Issues
 - Community Resources
 - Site Visits
 - Suicide
 - Developmental Disabilities
 - Traumatic Brain Injuries
 - Dementia/Alzheimer's
 - Legal/Civil Commitments
 - Non-Violent Interventions
 - Consumer Panel
 - Role-playing Exercises

BENEFITS

- Fewer mentally ill in jail
- A decrease in the emergency commitment population
- Better trained and educated officers and dispatchers
- Less officer time spent at crisis events
- A decrease in the use of force during crisis events
- Fewer injuries to the mentally ill
- Fewer injuries to the police
- Improved interaction between the police and mental health service providers

ENROLLMENT

The CIT Academy is POST approved, Plan IV. However, there is a non-reimbursable fee of \$300.00 for Academy related expenses.

San Jose Police Officers go through an extensive screening process including: a review of Internal Affairs files and recommendations from current and past two supervisors. The San Jose Police Department recommends that a similar procedure be employed by participating agencies.

For further information, contact:

CRISIS MANAGEMENT UNIT
San Jose Police Department
201 West Mission Street
San Jose, CA 95110

PHONE (408) 277-4418
FAX (408) 292-7747

Distributed by:

 **NAMI SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

National Alliance on Mental Illness
2010 N. 1st Street, Suite 530
San Jose, CA 95131-2040
M – F 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Phone: (408) 453-0400
Fax: (408) 453-2100
E-mail: info@namisantaclara.org
URL: www.namisantaclara.org



CIT

Crisis Intervention Team

LAW ENFORCEMENT

AND

MENTAL ILLNESS

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH