Resolution No.: 18-253
Introduced: September 15, 2015
Adopted: September 22, 2015

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsors: Council President Leventhal and Councilmembers Katz, Rice, Navarro, and Hucker

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SUBJECT: The Stepping Up Initiative – A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illness in Jails

Background

1. Counties routinely provide treatment services to the estimated two million people with serious mental illnesses booked into jail each year.

2. Prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in jails are three to six times higher than for the general population.

3. Almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders.

4. Adults with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and upon release are at a higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders.

5. County jails spend two to three times more on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions compared to those without these treatment needs.

6. Without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families.

7. Montgomery County has a responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in efficient and cost-effective ways. Montgomery County has long been committed to diverting people with mental illness and co-occurring disorders from jail through efforts such as the Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team, the Department of Health and Human Services' Community Assessment and Transition Services' assessment at intake, and the collaboration between the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation and the Department of Health and Human Services to offer community supervision and minimize jail stays by linking people with community-based treatment. The county's Criminal Justice Behavioral Health Initiative is using the Sequential Intercept Mapping process to identify service and intervention gaps and prepare proposals to reduce the number of mentally ill people who are booked into the jail.

8. Through the *Stepping Up Initiative*, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation are encouraging public, private and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following action:

1. The Montgomery County Council signs on to the Call to Action to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our county correctional system and commits to sharing lessons learned with other counties in Maryland and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees and residents to participate in *Stepping Up*.

2. The Criminal Justice Behavioral Health Initiative, a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from the multiple department and agencies, will utilize the comprehensive resources available through *Stepping Up* to:

   - Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels.

   - Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance disorders.

   - Use this information to implement a research-based plan with measurable outcomes. Process and funding barriers will be identified as a part of the planning process. The county will track and report its progress.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Linda M. Lauer

Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council