

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Memorandum of Understanding between the Montgomery County Department of Police and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) concerning the operation of the Mobile Crisis Team.

This agreement is made the 11<sup>th</sup> day of January, 19 99.

The Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) is a service of the DHHS, provided by the Crisis Center at 1301 Piccard Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850. It is staffed by mental health professionals who respond in pairs to appropriate requests for emergency outreach services. (The official police code for MCT is "MC-44").

The team's main objective is to provide crisis intervention services in the community to persons who are experiencing a psychiatric emergency and may be at risk of psychiatric hospitalization. Their aim is twofold: to reduce the number of inappropriate admissions to Springfield State Hospital by utilizing community-based treatment programs, and to facilitate hospitalization when the client cannot be stabilized in a less restrictive environment. The team may be utilized in other instances when emergency mental health intervention is required and the intervention must take place on-site in the community, such as situational crises involving loss or child-focused family crises.

The team will be operational from 4 p.m. to midnight, 365 days/year. They will conduct on-the-scene assessments, provide immediate and follow-up services, and handle next day referrals.

There will be a periodic review of the operation of the Mobile Crisis Team by all involved parties to address and resolve problems that may arise.

### PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- A. A person who is experiencing a psychiatric or psychosocial emergency and is unable or unwilling to access the Crisis Center or other appropriate face-to-face service qualifies for the services of the MCT.
- B. If the Montgomery County Police encounter a non-violent situation in which an individual is contemplating having a person petitioned, or encounter a person who seems to suffer from a mental disorder who is in a crisis, they are encouraged to request the services of the MCT.
- C. The Mobile Crisis Team's program will have a direct effect on police operations by reducing the need for police intervention in many psychiatric emergency situations. However, MCT interventions that result in a Petition for Emergency Evaluation signed by MCT staff will require police intervention. As designees of the Health Officer, MCT staff are empowered to sign Petitions which are then enforced by the Police Department without prior judicial review. As part of its standard operations procedures, the MCT will request that the Police accompany them on most of its responses. Permission to not involve the Police requires supervisory approval.
- D. Those people who are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs are not excluded via initial screening merely because of their condition. Each situation will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

**PROGRAM GUIDELINES** (Cont'd)

- E. The Crisis Center also has 24 hour walk-in and telephone crisis intervention services in addition to the mobile crisis capability. To access the MCT, the police will contact them by phone at the Crisis Center or via the police radio. The team will respond to the location of the incident as quickly as possible.

**STATEMENT OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES****POLICE DEPARTMENT**

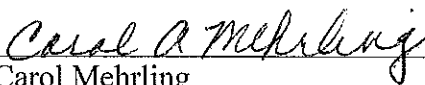
1. When working together at the location of an incident, the MCT and the police will take into consideration factors such as past history of the family and the individual involved, the physical safety of all persons, the seriousness of any criminal offenses involved, the mental well-being of the individual, etc. When attempting to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution to the incident, the police department recognizes the role of the MCT and will defer to them on mental health related issues. The MCT also recognizes that the police department will assume authority in assuring the public safety and with respect to criminal offenses.
2. If a subject becomes physically aggressive, the Police Department is responsible for ensuring the physical safety of the crisis team members.
3. If the team signs a Petition for Emergency Evaluation, the Police will enforce the petition by bringing the emergency evaluatee to the local designated emergency facility without seeking judicial review as provided for under provision 10-622 et seq., Health-General Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Evaluatees will be transported in strict accordance with department directives.
4. To access the MCT, the Police will call 301-315-4000 or request the MCT via the police radio. (MC-44)

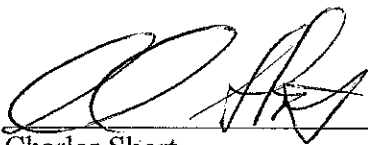
**MOBILE CRISIS TEAM**

1. From 4:00 p.m. to Midnight, 7 days per week, the MCT will monitor and operate on Channel 1 of the police radio as their primary channel, so they can be contacted in the event their services are requested. MCT staff will notify ECC when switching to a channel other than their primary one. The MCT vehicle is equipped with a police radio.
2. The MCT will make every effort to resolve the crisis utilizing community based resources and avoid hospitalization.
3. When the MCT and the police have been called to the scene of a mentally disordered individual who is in a crisis, the police will remain present until the situation is stable and there is no need for their continued presence. The MCT will remain until the matter is resolved.

**MOBILE CRISIS TEAM** (Cont'd)

4. The MCT may request that the police meet them at the location of any mobile crisis case. MCT will provide police with a brief synopsis of the situation prior to entrance of the residence. Police will respond and remain on the scene until it is agreed that their presence is no longer required.
5. Transport of clients to indicated programs would be the primary responsibility of the client or the family. When that is not feasible, MCT will provide transportation within Montgomery County as long as the client poses no physical threat to the team.
6. MCT staff will carry photo IDs and an ID card that states their authority to sign petitions.
7. In order to deliver MCT services, the staff of the Crisis Center will be trained as follows:
  - Orientation regarding operation of police radio and codes
  - State statute regarding Emergency Petitions
  - On-going behavioral health management training
8. Crisis Center will take the leadership role to develop and offer training to all MCPD officers regarding management of behavioral emergencies.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Mehrling  
Chief of Police  
Montgomery County Department of Police

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Short  
Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

Date 12/28/98

Date 1/11/99