

"Nothing About ME Without ME"

Coordinated Services Team Newsletter

April 2018

Issue 22

Manitowoc County

Mental Health Awareness Flagging

Recently I was able to attend a NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) conference including a training on Mental Health Awareness Flagging. Mental Health Awareness Flagging is a pilot program that officers in Janesville Wisconsin have been implementing over the past year. This training discussed the initiative to improve outcomes for individuals living with mental illness and their involvement with law enforcement.

Mental Health Awareness Flagging is a visual indication used within the Rock County Law Enforcement Management System that notifies an officer that an individual may experience a mental illness. This resource provides law enforcement officers with additional information that may assist them in responding appropriately and maximize safety for the individual, the officer, and the community. This flag, if used appropriately, should prompt the officer to utilize their Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) skills during the response, to consider the impact of potential mental illness to the incident, and to assist with the officer's approach and decision making.

Mental Health Awareness Flags are based on credible information that the individual has a history of mental illness. This information can come from the individual themselves, from a collateral source such as family members, the officer's own observations of mental health symptoms, or the nature of the call if related to a need for psychiatric hospitalization. Each flag is reviewed by a Law Enforcement Supervisor.

Due to HIPPA regulations protecting the client's rights and confidentiality is the central focus. The steps Rock County and the Janesville PD have taken to ensure this is done appropriately are involving the consumers voice at the decision-making table, involving the local NAMI chapter, articulating that the

Join our Coordinated Services Team Coordinating Committee!



Upcoming CST CC Meetings

May 8th, 2018

CST Coordinating Committee
Meeting noon-1:00pm

June 12th, 2018

CST Coordinating committee
Meeting Noon-1:00 pm

If you would like more information about CST or any of the topics in this newsletter please contact

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purpose of the mental health awareness flag is to improve outcomes for individuals living with mental illness and that information shared as part of this initiative will not be used in a manner that adversely affects the client. These flags are reviewed every year to ensure the accuracy in the process. Having this flag allows for officers to approach a situation differently knowing there is an individuals with a mental health situation.

Since implementing the Mental Health Awareness Flags the Janesville PD has experienced a downslide in calls for service. According to the department, studies show, that during an equal number of days prior to implementing a mental health awareness flag on an individual with a known history of mental illness, Officers received 1,871 calls for service, after, only 941. That is a 48% decrease in service calls.

Along with the Mental Health Flags the Janesville PD has also incorporated the use of a Crisis Strategies Information Sheet (CSIS) which is an individually created crisis plan. The information contained in a CSIS is only available to law enforcement and can only be created with the client's permission. These plans are a collaborative effort between Rock County Human Services Department and Law Enforcement. The plans give client specific details that will assist officers in crucial information such as mental health condition, any medications being used, triggers, and professional supportive services that can be contacted in case of police contact. These crisis plans are attached to the clients Mental Health Awareness flag and are a very condensed versions of a typical crisis plan due to the time availability these officers have during an emergency or service call.

Mental health concerns are a worldwide epidemic and safety of the individual, officer, and community are a top priority when going out to a service call for all law enforcement officers. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), forty-seven million people in the United States suffer from a mental illness each year. There are over two-million jail bookings every year involving individuals with a mental illness and twenty-five percent of fatal law enforcement shootings involve a person with a mental illness. Police are often the first to respond to a person experiencing a mental health crisis; and as such, the need existed to reassess how officers respond and interact with those individuals to better address their needs. (Chief David Moore, Janesville PD)

All information used was supplied by the Janesville Police Department and Rock County Law Enforcement evidence based decision making initiative.



In the Community

Super Hero Family Fun Night

Friday, April 27th from 5pm-7pm at the
Lincoln Park Zoo
1215 N8th St, Manitowoc

Activities include: Superhero Meal & Snacks
for Sale, Zoo Admission, & Games

Everyone is encouraged to dress like
your favorite Superhero

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Free 8-hour training that teaches how
to identify and respond to signs of
mental health concerns in youth ages
12-18. Goal is to train 1,200 people who
regularly interact with youth of our
community. Registration is required for
more information contact
lisastephan@co.manitowoc.wi.us

In the Best Interest of the Child...

Thursday May 3rd 8:45am-Noon
Holiday Inn Manitowoc

Learn firsthand the devastating effects
of the opioid crisis on our families and
community as together we try to
maneuver through the complicated and
often frustrating world of reunification
and/or permanent placement options.

Registration from 8am-8:45am pre-
registration is appreciated at
[https://best-interest-of-the-
child.eventbrite.com](https://best-interest-of-the-child.eventbrite.com)

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