

## The Who, What, and How of Interagency Criminal Justice-Behavioral Health Teams

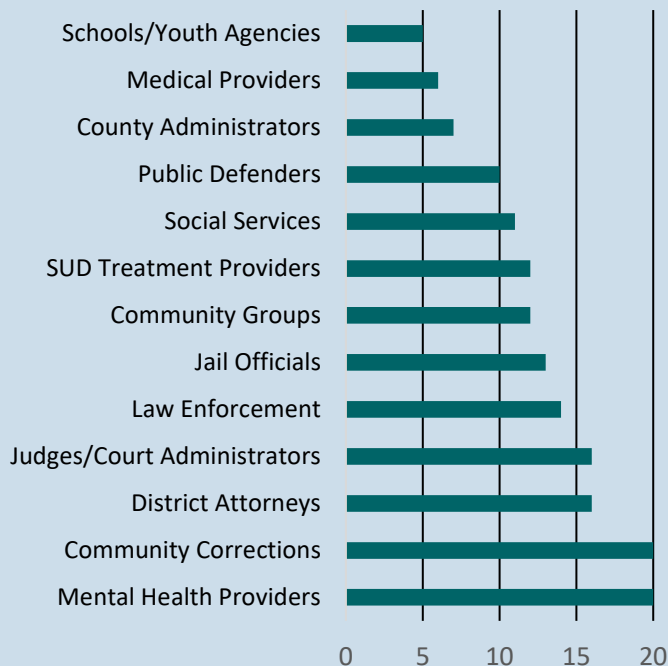
Interagency teams of criminal justice and behavioral health staff are an often recommended—but little understood—strategy to improve services for justice-involved people with mental illness and/or substance use disorder. Based on interviews with 52 agency staff (31 behavioral health, 21 criminal justice) and survey responses from 758 (432 criminal justice, 311 behavioral health, 15 multi-agency), we asked three questions:

- 1. Who is on interagency teams?**
- 2. What do teams do?**
- 3. What works in developing and sustaining teams?**

1

### Who is on Interagency Teams?

*It goes beyond criminal justice and behavioral health!*



2

### What do Teams do?

*Often begin with a limited focus before expanding to new mission(s)/partners*



Criminal Justice  
Advisory Boards  
(CJAB)



SUD Teams  
(opioids, MAT coalitions,  
drug courts)



Crisis Response  
Teams



Assistance with Basic  
Needs

## 3

### What works in developing and sustaining teams?

*Consensus is a product—not a prerequisite—of collaboration*

Drawing on our survey data, we analyzed whether three team-building strategies were associated with more interagency collaborations (controlling for agency characteristics)

#### Strategy 1

##### *Learning about/from other agencies*

1. Use technical assistance to develop staff skills
2. Identify champions for change in 2 agencies
3. Participate in activities to learn from other agencies or counties



*Strategies 1 and 2 were associated with more collaborations!*

#### Strategy 2

##### *System integration with other agencies*

1. Promote information sharing
2. Improve screening and assessment across agencies
3. Work on “hand off” from one agency to another



#### Strategy 3

##### *Consensus building with other agencies*

1. Engage in collaborative problem solving
2. Create a shared vision/goal
3. Develop consensus of goals



*Strategy 3 was not...*

#### **Interviews revealed consensus building was a product—not a prerequisite— of collaboration**

*Through collaboration and newly opened communication, agencies overcame longstanding disagreements.*

*“Until the coalition was born and we started to come to the table...we didn't know what the other entities were being frustrated with” (Jail Staff)*

*“Sometimes criminal justice and social services see the world differently, so being able to... keep good lines of communication open has been very valuable” (Mental Health Staff)*