Co-Responder Program

Managing Agency: Denver Crime Prevention and Control Commission

Partners: Denver Crime Prevention and Control Commission; Denver Police Department; Mental Health Center of Denver

Areas of Effort: Coverage and Care
Public Safety Officer Training & Transformation
Addiction Recovery Services

The Co-Responder program is a joint project between Mental Health Center of Denver and the Denver Police with the primary base of operation located with the Denver Police Department.

Mental Health Center of Denver staff members work with police to provide a response to persons in the community in crisis or in need of appropriate interventions. At times response may be with other emergency, corrections and first responders.

The goals of the Co-Responder initiative, in essence, is to assist Denver Police in determining the best response to persons they encounter who are presenting with a possible mental health issue, brain injury, intellectual disability and/or other behavior(s) that require action even when a “law enforcement” based intervention is not immediately warranted. Co-Responders take the lead from the police officer(s) once the scene is deemed safe and the police have completed their criminal justice assessment. Up to this point Co-Responders are researching what is known about the person; providing a clinical assessment of the individual’s needs and identifying the most appropriate service response and/or treatment setting for the person. They, along with the police and other responders, maximize the likelihood that appropriate referrals are made and services are rendered.

Following this initial response, Mental Health Center of Denver Co-Responders continue providing short-term and pro-active system navigation and coordination to ensure the person is engaged with appropriate resources and services.

Contact: Chris Richardson, Program Manager, Mental Health Center of Denver. Chris.Richardson@MHCD.org or 303-504-7836.