

REPORT ON PROJECT CALM
June 30, 2013

In February of 2010, Lily Yamamoto of the Montana Board of Crime Control contacted YCDF commander Captain Dennis McCave and asked if Billings/Yellowstone County had a program that might fit a criminal justice/mental health collaboration grant that had been released by the US Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. The original purpose statement for the grant proposal was as follows: *"The purpose of this program is to increase public safety through innovative cross-system collaboration for individuals with mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders who come into contact with the justice system."* The jail counselor, Terry Jessee, was already working in concert with the Community Crisis Center here in Billings in an attempt to provide services to people who were constantly involved with the criminal justice system, but who had mental health issues.

Based on that informal cooperation, Jessee, Crisis Center director MarCee Farrar-Neary, and Captain McCave responded to the request for proposal by offering a coordinated program through Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department and the Billings Community Crisis Center called Project CALM (Collaborate, Align, Link, Manage). The idea was to assign a case manager to the jail on a full-time basis to help establish services for the target population. Captain McCave had proposed the concept several years earlier as a possible method for reducing recidivism and re-arrest among that target population.

The program design called for the case manager to schedule appointments with community service providers for people leaving the jail prior to their release. In addition, the case manager would continue to work with those persons in the community once they were released in an effort to prevent their re-arrest. As part of the assistance, the case manager would provide help with doctors' appointments, medication assistance, housing, employment, retraining, money management, and a wide variety of other categories.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded a \$250,000 grant for Project CALM in September of 2010. Farrar-Neary and Jessee projected that the program would provide services to 40 unique individuals the first year, and 65 the second, for a total of 105 unique individuals over the two years. At the two-year mark, Project CALM had provided active services to 183 people.

Project CALM provides services in two tracks—full case management and support services. Case management provides assistance, support, monitoring, advocacy, linkage to services, and referrals. The case manager assists in placing clients with services in the community to meet their needs. Those needs include: housing; social security and medical insurance application; co-payments; SNAP benefits (food stamps); Human Resource Development Council benefits; appointments for psychiatrists, medical doctors, optometrists, and dentists; food boxes and shopping assistance; and any other need that may be unique to the client's case. The case manager also teaches life skills to clients and provides emotional and motivational support. These are *permanent* services. The client is expected to meet with the Case Manager once a week, every other week, or once a month depending on the severity of the client's needs.

In the supportive services track, the client is not required to meet with the Case Manager on a regular basis in order to receive services. However, as in the case management track, the Case Manager helps with linkage, referrals, and with brief solution-focused interventions including crisis management.

The grant has been extended to a third year. Although expectations were that the program would spend approximately \$125,000 per year, careful use of resources allowed Project CALM to provide services to those 183 people for significantly less for the first two years. That expenditure includes salaries for 1.5 case manager FTE, Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for 40 area law enforcement officers per year, and support for ongoing community follow-up programs. The current Case Managers are dynamic and

innovative, and have been working directly with officers from the Department of Corrections Office of Adult Probation and Parole on an informal basis. In fact, the Project CALM team has suggested to the Billings office that having case managers working in their offices would be an asset that would reduce the officers' case loads and reduce arrests for violations simply because of the stabilizing affect that the case manager can provide. So while the program was originally designed to work only with persons who were charged with misdemeanors, it is now serving persons charged with both misdemeanors *and* felonies.

Using the grant funds along with local funding, Project CALM has established that such a program can be effective over a long term. In addition to work with Probation and Parole, Project CALM has developed working relationships with Riverstone Health and Billings Clinic; with law enforcement and the courts at all levels; with prosecutors; and with the Office of the Public Defender. The numbers of arrests among many of the people working with the program have been reduced as a result, as has the average length of stay. The most important factor in that result is the constant, ongoing collaboration with those agencies and institutions.

The Project CALM team compared arrests and incarcerations for those 183 clients by tabulating results from 2009 and 2010 (prior to inception), and comparing those with results from the first two years of the program, 2011 and 2012. Jail bed day cost was computed at the rate of \$75.00 per day.

- 183 total clients received active services.
 - 101 (55%) decreased length of stay (LOS)
 - Reduced Total Jail Days from 13,763 to 2,108
Decreased cost from \$1,032,225 to \$158,100
 - Average LOS decreased from 136.2 days to 20.8 days
Decreased cost from \$10,215 to \$1,560

Essentially, those numbers show that while spending less than \$200,000 in the first two years, Project CALM reduced incarceration costs among that same population by more than \$850,000.

By working to maintain stability for persons in the target population, Project CALM worked to lower the costs of arrest, incarceration, and prosecution. As a result, the program works in much the same way as does the Community Crisis Center to promote public safety.