**An Examination of The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) In A Rural US State**

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Recent statistics on the prevalence of mental illness reveal that one in every four adults in any given year will experience a diagnosable mental illness at some point in their lifetime. Furthermore, research reveals that a disproportionate number of persons with mental illness (PwMI) are involved in critical police encounters resulting in arrest, and at the most extreme end of the spectrum, police shootings. Specialized Police Response (SPR) training has been implemented in the United States to address concerns related to police encounters with people who have mental illness. The most popular option is the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). Through surveys and focus groups conducted with CITs in four rural-specific communities in a US state, we examined the extent of inclusive collaboration between law enforcement, community advocates, institutional correctional staff, providers of behavioral health services, and administrators of mental health, substance use, and criminal justice programs. Our findings reveal both advantages and impediments to the development of community partnerships and implementation of CIT in rural areas. It is anticipated that this information will allow city and county leaders in rural settings to make informed decisions about implementing programs that require cross-systems collaboration and locally based problem-solving.