

R3

MOTION


PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Officers in Los Angeles are often called on to deal with situations involving mental health emergencies. These calls are difficult for officers, and can sometimes lead to dangerous incidents for the officer and the person suffering from mental illness. There is an increasing need for the Police Department (LAPD) to help de-escalate incidents involving mentally ill individuals before they spiral out of control. Currently, the LAPD's Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) assists wide Mental Assessment Response Teams (SMART), which responds to calls for service involving individuals suffering from more severe mental illness crises. As a result of this model, LAPD is recognized as a national leader in dealing with individuals suffering mental health crises, but more can be done.

While the MEU and its SMART teams are invaluable assets for the LAPD, they cannot deal with every case involving mental illness. Often, officers in the field, with remote assistance from the MEU help desk, are tasked with responding to calls without SMART support. Officers in the field are given training in handling individuals suffering from mental illness as cadets in the Police Academy, and some have further training when assigned to the field. LAPD also offers officers the opportunity to attend an intensive, week-long Mental Health Evaluation Training (MHIT) program, which provides officers hands-on-training on how to address situations involving individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

MHIT is currently a voluntary training program, and the Department does not have the resources to offer it to every officer who wishes to attend. LAPD offers this training every month, and there is a waiting list of officers attempting to participate. With the increased focus on mental health issues, MHIT should be expanded and this program should be offered to every officer. LAPD needs to report on the steps and resources needed to expand the MHIT program and make it mandatory.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Police Department (LAPD) be instructed to report on its Mental Health Evaluation Training (MHIT) program, including the scope of the training and the skills that are provided to attending officers, as well as on the number of officers being trained. The report should also discuss what resources would be needed, including expansion of the training cadre, for the MHIT program to include all officers coming into contact with individuals who may be suffering from mental illness.

PRESENTED BY:   
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SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL



MAY 5 2015