



# City of Seattle

Seattle Police Department

April 18, 2011

TO: Councilmember Tim Burgess  
Chair, Public Safety and Education Committee  
Seattle City Council

FROM: Assistant Chief Paul McDonagh  
Special Operations Bureau

SUBJECT: **Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) Q1 2011 Report**

This report summarizes outcomes of the SPD-Mental Health Professional (MHP) partnership through for the first quarter of 2011. The preliminary outcomes reported below indicate that we have made a good start toward meeting program goals.

**Background:** The Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded the Seattle Police Department a grant to fund a Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) pilot program. The program sought to partner an MHP with an officer from the Crisis Intervention Team. Program goals:

- Increase timely assistance to mentally ill persons contacted by police.
- Reduce costly interventions, such as jail or hospitalization.
- Reduce time of involvement and repeat calls for patrol officers.

Our MHP, Justin Dawson, is a full member of CIT, and began his assignment on November 1, 2010. Following train-up, he began casework and field response on January 3, 2011. When partnered with either of the two officers assigned to the CIT, he investigates cases routed to the team by patrol officers, performs outreach, collaborates with social services agencies, and responds to in-progress calls involving mental illness.

**Preliminary Results:** Quantitative performance of the CIT during the first quarter of 2011 is summarized in the table.

Items Tracked	2011 Q1
Cases routed to CIT	1,081
Cases assigned for follow-up	371
Cases cleared	135
Clearance per team member	45

Although we have had just three months experience with the CIRT model, we believe we are off to a promising start. Noteworthy accomplishments include the following:

- **Case triage:** The CIRT triages cases to achieve the best value from a public safety perspective. Those cases involving a significant risk to public safety are handled first, although they are much more complex and demand more work hours than do cases involving simple assessment and referral.



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- **Collaboration with service partners:** The MHP has well-established direct communication with a wide array of service providers, allowing him to efficiently connect the client to treatment or social services.
- **Effective outreach and assessment:** The MHP can conduct a thorough assessment of needs and conduct preliminary assessments *in the field*, when responding to in-progress incidents and when conducting follow-up. This often eliminates the need for arrest or hospitalization and multiple triage screenings.
- **Identification of frequent clients:** The MHP can identify multiple calls and incidents involving the same individual, cross-reference each, and then resolve them through development of a single case.

MHP Case Summary	
Cases assigned	78
Cases cleared	42
- Cleared "administrative"	19
- Cleared by "referral to non-law enforcement agency"	18
- Cleared "inactive"	5

Cases were cleared administratively by the MHP's direct and intensive work and included outreach, assessment, treatment strategies, and case management. In other cases, clearances were achieved after MHP assessment by referring the client or the client's support system to treatment or social services.

- **Qualitative outcomes:** Statistics tell just part of the story. Equally significant are some preliminary qualitative findings:
  - The MHP works directly with patrol officers to resolve on-going problems. Many officers have expressed appreciation for working with Mr. Dawson to resolve "revolving-door cases".
  - The MHP has provided crisis assessment at a barricaded-person incident, and de-escalation during in-progress patrol calls involving mentally ill individuals.
  - Working in direct partnership with an officer, the MHP has more than doubled the performance of the CIT officer due to the increase in intervention options and intercept points. For example, Mr. Dawson can safely outreach clients that previously would have required a police response, providing CIT officers with an alternative to arrest or booking.

We look forward to providing you with additional information when we brief the Committee on the 20<sup>th</sup>. For reference purposes this report is designated as 2011 Council Question #8 in SPD's internal recordkeeping system.

cc: Councilmember Sally Bagshaw  
 Councilmember Sally Clark  
 Deputy Chief Nick Metz  
 CIT Sergeant Joe Fountain  
 Justin Dawson, MHP  
 Mike Katz, CBO