RESOLUTION 5 OF 2019

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE STEPPING UP INITIATIVE, A NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

WHEREAS, On May 5, 2015, the National Association of Counties (NACo), the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, and the American Psychiatric Foundation (APF), in partnership with the U.S. Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Assistance, launched a new initiative to support counties of all sizes in reducing the number of people with mental illness in correctional facilities, and

WHEREAS, the initiative is called Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails, and will provide assistance to counties that want to see better results in civicersion, reduced recidivism and recovery for people with mental illnesses by drawing on the expertise and experiences of state and local policymakers, criminal justice and behavioral health professionals, and individuals with mental illnesses and their families, and

WHEREAS, counties routinely provide treatment services to the estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses booked into correctional facilities each year;

WHEREAS, prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in correctional facilities are three to six times higher than for the general public;

WHEREAS, almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in correctional facilities have co-occurring substance use disorders;

WHEREAS, adults with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in correctional facilities and, upon release, are at a higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders;

WHEREAS, county correctional facilities spend two to three times more on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions compared to those without these treatment needs;

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families;
WHEREAS, Centre County and all counties take pride in their responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare, and safety of its residents in efficient and cost-effective ways;

WHEREAS, Centre County has supported the Centre County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) since its creation in 2011, which now has trained 342 Centre County officers, including police officers, corrections officers, 911 telecommunicators, probation officers, EMS personal and others in related capacities, and

WHEREAS, in 2015 Centre County completed a Center of Excellence Cross-Systems Mapping workshop to promote progress in addressing criminal justice diversion and treatment needs of adults with mental illness in contact with the criminal justice system. This exercise also enhanced activities of the Centre County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) including the efforts of the Centre County Reentry Coalition and the Centre County CIT, and

WHEREAS, in March 2018, Centre County Correctional Facility instituted a Behavioral Modification Status Program to take action to avoid prolong placement of individuals with serious mental illness in restrictive housing by providing innovative treatment plans/programs to assist in restoring the individual, achieving a healthy environment for a positive rehabilitation and transition to the community.

WHEREAS, Penn State Psychological Clinic and Crossroads Counseling provides mental health services for individuals in the Centre County Correctional Facility and Centre County MH/ID El D&A provides a part-time case manager to meet with individuals requesting mental health services during and upon release, and

WHEREAS, through Stepping Up, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation are encouraging public, private, and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in correctional facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Centre County Board of Commissioners does hereby sign on to the call to action to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our county correctional facility, commit to sharing lessons learned with other counties in the state and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees, and residents to participate in Stepping Up. We resolve to utilize the comprehensive resources available through Stepping Up to:

- Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in correctional facilities;
• Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals’ needs to better identify adults entering correctional facilities with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels;

• Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community;

• Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the correctional facility assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers;

• Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan; and

• Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

ADOPTED this 2rd day of July 2019.

CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Michael Pipe, Chair

Mark Higgins, Commissioner

Steven G. Dershem, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Margaret N. Gray, Administrator