



Conference of
CHIEF JUSTICES



2019 CCJ/COSCA Western Region Summit

Improving the Court and Community Response to those with Mental Illness

May 22-24, 2019 | Sun Valley Resort | Sun Valley, Idaho

State Priorities (as of June 10, 2019)

11 states and territories participated in the 2019 CCJ COSCA Western Region Summit on Improving the Justice System Response to Mental Illness. While every state is grappling with similar issues, the states, and especially the state judiciaries, are involved in very different ways. In some states, such as Arizona, the courts are a central player in convening constituent groups and facilitating solutions. In other states the issue is only front and center now because of successful lawsuits, and the courts are only peripherally involved.

Nonetheless, the elements of the state action plans developed on the final day matched the themes heard throughout the summit – the role of the judiciary as convener, adoption of the Sequential Intercept Model, the importance of diversion from the traditional criminal justice system, and the importance of innovative wrap-around services.

State Priorities

Each state and territory left the summit with a commitment to move forward, and regardless of where they are in the process of addressing the issues, there was a shared energy and commitment to step up and convene or reconvene the constituencies necessary to implement meaningful solutions. Some action items are general and aspirational, and some are immediate and specific, but all of them represent meaningful movement forward in improving the justice system response to mental illness.

Alaska

- Explore ways to avoid criminal case initiation
- Expand CIT
- Look for more AOT options, which may include advocating for statutory changes
- Develop a crisis response center in Anchorage
- Focus on reentry services
- Coordinate efforts – hold a summit this fall to get everyone on the same page, inventory assets, explore existing initiatives, and develop a consensus for moving forward together
- Engage in public education about the issues

Arizona

- Encourage crisis response measures in rural Arizona
- Expand SIM training to every county
- Follow up on the action plans from the previous statewide summit, county by county

- Hold a follow up summit next year
- Expand training for all judges, with enhanced training for those with dedicated mental health related dockets
- Explore mental health liaisons
- Explore telehealth options
- Expand and improve data collection in order to improve performance and to support resource requests
- Look to expand these approaches to juvenile cases.

California

- Focus on pretrial services and integrate mental health concerns into the roll outs of pretrial programs statewide.
- Implement AB 1810—a discretionary diversion program for qualified persons who have committed a crime because of a mental disorder.
- Support the national efforts to get workable changes to the Code of Federal Regulation 42 Part 2 to help remove some of the barriers to providing continuity of care for individuals moving in/out/through our criminal justice and treatment systems.
- Find workable solutions to the Not in My Backyard (NIMBY) issues. Research any organized efforts for a public education campaign to try to reduce the stigma associated with siting treatment facilities.

Colorado

- Engage judicial leadership, brief the Chief Judges and the Supreme Court, en banc
- Convene a statewide steering committee, and subsequently a statewide summit
- Inventory what's happening now, statewide, and develop a statewide evaluation plan
- Develop best practice guidelines and support, targeted to each local judicial district
- Identify existing data resources and data gaps

Guam

- Re-establish a multi-disciplinary forum to get everyone focused on the issues and to develop consensus, leading to a summit
- The summit will focus on the SIM, and will develop a strategic plan to implement identified best practices
- Initiate a CIT program
- Integrate evidence based mental health screening instruments and other best practices with the ongoing pretrial reforms
- They will request TA to assist in the process

Hawaii

- Create an interagency steering committee by June
- Hold a statewide summit in the fall of 2019, potentially with TA assistance
- Assess resources and gaps between now and then
- Look at diversion opportunities, and include Hawaii Cares as a part of that
- Assess data collection needs
- Engage the broader community in the conversation, including the Bar.

Idaho

- Ask the Governor, Supreme Court and legislative leaders to convene to be briefed on the issues, what's been done already, and where they need to implement changes
- Create a strategic plan, including SIM mapping, and prioritize goals based on that so we start with what is most important
- Review statutes to see what we can already do and if we really need statutory changes or not. Much may be already permitted, but we aren't doing it (re AOT and diversion)
- Look for demonstrable cost savings to pitch to policymakers
- Convene a statewide summit next year

New Mexico

- Never Pass 0 initiative (commitment to focus on intercept zero and not allow unnecessary penetration into the system)
- Create a multidisciplinary action team
- Request TA for an assessment of resources, and experts to plan the road forward
- Convene a two-day training, with the first day for all judges, and a second day for local policy makers
- Hire a behavioral health specialist in the AOC to lead these reforms
- Convene a statewide summit when appropriate
- Review existing AOT statute for sufficiency and potential improvement

Oregon

- Present the issues and lessons learned at this summit to all Presiding Judges in July
- Create a Judicial Task Force on Behavioral Health. The interbranch task force with broad representation would be responsible for:
 - Designing person-centered behavioral health justice response, and diversion programs that reduce recidivism
 - Driving the transition to the SIM
 - Creating a Behavioral Health Guide for Presiding Judges
- Examine a menu of best practices, including diversion protocols, civil commitment reform, expanded housing resources, court-based case managers, expanded CIT, crisis centers as alternatives to jail, co-responders, and enhanced early behavioral health screening and assessment
- Develop statewide and local training on innovations and best practices. Oregon will request CSG and or NCSC/SJI TA resources to help with both the Task Force and the trainings

Utah

- Establish a committee to bring together relevant constituencies to develop consensus in the judiciary and elsewhere
- Hold a statewide summit this fall
- Train stakeholders to implement local summits
- Promote diversion and CIT expansion, which may require legislation
- Explore ways to avoid the ER step in the process

Washington

- Expand Courthouse Navigators initiative
- Inventory and assess current practices, needs, and opportunities
- Coordinate the local efforts that are already going on so we can expand good ideas and share effective practices
- Review data resources and needs across agencies
- Try again for funding for a behavioral health specialist in the AOC
- Convene a statewide summit in 2020

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