



Exploring the Criminal Justice/Mental Health Intersection Project

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission is charged with overseeing the implementation of California's Mental Health Services Act (also known as Prop 63) and the transformation of California's mental health system. The 16 member Commission includes the California Attorney General and a county Sheriff appointed by the Governor.

In collaboration with stakeholders, the Commission provides vision and leadership to expand awareness and understanding of issues facing community mental health. The Commission conducts projects to examine critical issues and make informed decisions on how to improve services and provide better care to consumers.

Through the more than \$2 billion generated every year by Prop 63, some \$350 million is earmarked annually for prevention and early intervention services and another \$100 million is designated for innovations. Most of those funds are distributed directly to counties to provide services with a range of goals, including reducing the involvement of mental health clients in the criminal justice system.

THIS PROJECT:

The purpose of this project is to explore the opportunities to reduce the number of mental health consumers in California's criminal justice system, while examining ways to improve mental health care for those in custody.

The lead of this project, MHSOAC Commissioner Bill Brown, is the Sheriff of Santa Barbara County and the First Vice President of the California State Sheriff's Association. Sheriff Brown chairs the project's subcommittee which includes Commissioners Richard Van Horn and Tina Wooton.

The premise of this project is that reducing criminal justice involvement and promoting recovery of those with mental illness will require us to improve the connections between the criminal justice and mental health systems, for those who are able to be diverted and those who must remain in custody.

The work also will include the exploration of best practices around the country that could guide California's investments in our mental health and criminal justice strategies. With the funding available through Prop 63, particularly for prevention and early intervention and innovation, there is a tremendous opportunity to transform our approaches to serving people with mental health needs.

