**The Changing Mission of American Policing**

Increases in opioid-related overdoses, police involvement in mental health related incidents, and high profile police community incidents have required law enforcement and public health officials to collectively develop new approaches towards their mission. CDHS researchers have assisted police throughout Delaware as they evolve and implement new and innovative programs to respond to the changing police focus. Led by Senior Scientist Daniel O’Connell, the CDHS team is evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of several police/community initiatives.

**Hero-Help**

Daniel O’Connell, Principal Investigator

Ellen Donnelly, Co-PI

The New Castle County Division of Police (NCCPD), has brought together stakeholders from public health and criminal justice to coordinate treatment for people suffering from addiction and/or mental health problems. The program aims to: Provide direct (i.e., treatment) and indirect (i.e., housing, mental health, transportation) supportive services to people suffering from addiction, decrease the number of fatal and non-fatal overdoses, reduce contact with the criminal justice system associated with addiction as measured by arrests and incarceration, and offer standing opportunities for immediate treatment among individuals who first ask for help and those who want to re-engage with the program.

**Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Site-based Program (COSSAP)**

Daniel O’Connell, Principal Investigator

Ellen Donnelly, Co-PI

The Delaware Criminal Justice Council received DOJ-BJA funding for statewide efforts to implement new opioid-intervention programs in five geographically diverse localities and establish pre-arrest or post-arrest law enforcement diversion programs for individuals who commit low level, non-violent, drug-related offenses by utilizing community-based substance use and behavioral health services, largely in the southern Delaware counties. Because CDHS is already evaluating the NCCPD program, they were selected to evaluate the COSSAP program using similar methods. Delaware was selected to receive 2022 COSSAP funds which will expand the program further.

**Connect and Protect**

Daniel O’Connell, Principal Investigator

Dana Holz, Co-PI

The Connect and Protect project is designed to support law enforcement–behavioral health cross-system collaborations and to improve public safety responses and outcomes for individuals with mental illness or co-occurring mental illness and substance use. The program will enhance a law enforcement–behavioral health response by conducting focus groups for underserved populations, increasing training options and developing standardized police policies and practices for response to MI and CMISA, as well as increasing access to services by providing additional case management embedded with police. CDHS is assisting with the focus groups and evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the program.

**Closing the Divide: Mutual De-escalation Strategies**

Daniel O’Connell, Principal Investigator

Ivan Sun, Faculty Associate

This initiative will implement a platform for sharing the varying perceptions between the police and community members through education, training, and outreach. The program incorporates virtual reality (VR), in-person scenario training, workshops, and open forums to educate and discuss the nature of police interactions with members of the community. The CDHS team is evaluating response to the program through surveys and key informant interviews.