

**PA Mental Health and Justice Center of Excellence  
Telephone Follow-up Survey  
Final Report 8/29/11**

Background

As a supplement to the online survey, one knowledgeable representative from each county was asked to participate in a telephone survey to capture, in more depth, the impact that the mapping has had on the way the county collaborates or functions as well as their views on other aspects of the COE “mission”. The interview is broken into three sections:

- 1) First, the interview focused on the priorities in general, assessing whether or not the identified priorities changed (in order or content) and the rationale and/or barriers for these changes. In addition, we assessed which priorities received the most focus of time and which have had the most progress/action and why.
- 2) The next section of the interview attempted to assess the status of each identified action step for the top 3 priorities identified by the county. The goal here was to determine if any actual changes to the way the county operates resulted from the mapping workshop (in lieu of actual data at this stage) and, once again, to understand barriers, changing time tables and ways the COE can provide assistance in each area. We also included a question to determine if any of the action plans identified were incorporated into the CJAB strategic plan.
- 3) Finally, we assessed other aspects of COE mission, such as helping the county to develop a shared vision regarding behavioral health consumers, influencing the way the county operates and communicates, changes in key personnel, the level of sustained interest in implementing change, groups or organizations that have resisted change, sustainability and technical assistance.

Below we provide some preliminary findings. **The question text appears in red. Illustrative quotes from the interviews appear in purple.**

Some themes that have emerged:

- Counties have been very open to completing the interview and providing feedback.
- Nearly all are very positive about the mapping experience and believe it has fostered better communication.
- Most counties have had at least 1 actual system change since the mapping – this includes counties that were mapped recently.
- Beyond specific changes that have been implemented, all of the counties believe that the mapping has had an impact on the way that their county operates, communicates and cooperates.
- Funding and sustainability are frequently expressed as an area of concern.
- The counties have provided multiple suggestions for continued support from the COE.



### **Number of follow up interviews conducted:**

A total of 12 interviews are anticipated. This number represents one interview for each county mapped by the COE with the exception of joiner counties (Clearfield/Jefferson). Clearfield and Jefferson Counties had two separate mapping workshops, but only one interview was conducted since the action steps and experiences overlap.

- 12 interviews have been completed

### **How long do the interviews last?**

- On average, the interviews have been 50 minutes in length.

### **Who is completing the interview?**

- We contacted the individual in each county who was the primary contact for the mapping workshop. In all cases but one, this individual completed the interview. One county provided an alternate individual to complete the interview.
- The vast majority of the interviews (9/12) have been completed by someone in the mental health system, 1 from the criminal justice system and 2 CJAB members.

### **How long since their mapping workshop?**

- 5 of the mapping workshops were completed six or fewer months ago (“6m or fewer”)
- 7 of the mapping workshops were completed more than six months ago (“more than 6m”)

Preliminary summary statements are ordered according to the three main interview areas (priorities-general, priorities-specific, other aspects of the COE mission). The responses will be broken out by the length of time since the mapping workshop since the passage of time is certainly related to the ability to implement change.

### Part 1: Priorities-General

#### **Did the order of the priorities identified in the mapping change?**

*6m or fewer:*

No = 5

Yes= 0

*More than 6m:*

No = 4

Yes =3 (in 2 situations, this was due to county decision-makers rejecting the idea, in one situation it was because they “got behind the ball” so other things became a priority)

#### **Which priorities received the most focus of time and which have had the most progress (2 separate questions)?**

*6m or fewer:*

- Those getting the most focus of time are those that are most practically pressing (e.g. housing) or those with a time-limited funding opportunity.
- Those with the most progress were those that had already been started before the mapping . This group noted that some people hadn’t yet read the mapping report and others noted that because it was summer, there wasn’t much progress.

- *“A training was being offered, so we took advantage of it. This action step would probably not have been done so quickly if this training wasn’t offered at this time.”*
- *“We are really struggling with data collection, so we’ve spent a lot of time in this area”*
- *“Housing issues related to the gas drilling have received the most focus of time. This is because the prices are going up and the inmates have no place to go when they get out.”*

*More than 6m:*

- Those getting the most focus of time are those priorities for which they have defined working groups who meet regularly, those for which a lot of money has been invested and those that are practically pressing
  - Those with the most progress are also those for which they received funding, it was practically pressing or an actual change has been implemented.
- *“We focused on those priorities which involve access to services for the whole system.”*

- “We have the money to spend right now and this is a good use of those funds.”
- “Because we spent money on it and there is currently a lot of commitment from people in both the MH and CJ system.”
- “Because this (housing) was the area of the greatest need.”
- “The priorities getting the most focus of time are those that are inter-agency or are ongoing initiatives which involve a lot of planning. These are areas that involve more than just a need for funding.”

## Part 2: Priorities-Specific

### **Have any of the action steps been completed or implemented?**

*6m or fewer:*

- All 5 (100%) of the counties have an actual change that they attribute to the mapping workshop. Some examples include:
  - now using a screening tool to identify veterans
  - now have a behavioral health committee on the CJAB
  - have more mental health personnel in jail so they get meds more quickly
  - now have forensic case managers
  - have received training on issues like Mental Health First Aide and CIT
  - now regularly share information between agencies
- All 5 counties also have action steps that they have not yet started and many that are in progress. Some examples of barriers:
  - “Time....just not enough time has passed.”
  - “When a topic is particularly challenging, it takes a lot of coordination and that slows the progress. “We started with the ‘low-hanging fruit’ – the things that are easier to change.”
  - “Funding....looking for funding is an ongoing activity for all counties.”
  - “Still working on getting “buy in” from various groups.”

### **Have any of the action plans identified in the cross-systems mapping process been adopted by or incorporated into the CJAB strategic plan?**

- 3 of 5 counties indicated that some of the action plans are now part of the CJAB strategic plan, 1 indicated there were no action plans incorporated in the CJAB strategic plan and 1 said they had no meeting yet.
  - “The action step had already been a part of the strategic plan but we added more after our mapping.”
  - “All of our priorities have been adapted into the CJAB plan (CJAB was involved since the beginning). Our CJAB strategic plan was updated 2 weeks after the mapping.”

- **“Two weeks after the mapping we updated our strategic plan...they dovetailed.”**

*More than 6m:*

- All 7 counties (100%) have seen an actual change that they attribute to the mapping workshop. Some examples include:
  - the formation of committees to address housing and employment issues
  - created or expanded reentry committees
  - established better communication with county assistance offices
  - now have peer supports
  - now have much better collaboration with police and community providers
  - several counties indicated they are now providing training to various groups (e.g. police, community providers)
- 6 of the 7 counties have not started some of the action steps. They note that this is usually because there isn't a shared vision regarding what to do, due to funding issues or just because the issue is really big and difficult to fix. Some action steps in 2 counties have been abandoned because of the expense. Some examples of barriers:
  - **“They are just bigger issues and not as easily open to a quick fix. We are not even sure that we know where to start for some of them.”**
  - **“There are always barriers.....nothing specific.”**
  - **“Our jail can't even sustain a computer system...it's going to be difficult!”**
  - **“The inactivity rests on the county, it's an issue of priorities and time...we are trying to get many things done and our time is split.”**
  - **“Funding is going to be our biggest issue.”**

**Have any of the action plans identified in the cross-systems mapping process been adopted by or incorporated into the CJAB strategic plan?**

- The answer to this question is quite split: 2 counties indicate that the CJAB strategic plan does include some of the action plans identified at the mapping, 2 counties indicated that it does not and 3 individuals did not know if their strategic plan included any of the action plans. Some illustrative comments:
  - **“The CJAB has asked us (the MH subcommittee) for feedback regarding a draft of their CJAB strategic plan.”**
  - **“We are still writing the strategic plan.”**
  - **“We haven't had a CJAB board meeting to update them.”**
  - **“I haven't seen our strategic plan.”**

Part 3: Other Aspects of the COE Mission

**Did the cross systems mapping workshop help your county to develop a shared vision regarding behavioral health consumers that become involved with the juvenile justice system?**

*6m or fewer:*

- All counties (100%) indicated “yes”. They see evidence of this in the fact that stereotypes have been dispelled and people interact more and regularly attend meetings. The mapping provided an opportunity to learn about the perspectives of people in other systems.

**“Since a lot of the key players participated in the mapping, we got to learn about their concerns and issues. It was a real eye-opener.”**

**“A byproduct of the mapping meeting was to bring the MH and CJ people to the table. In the end, the CJ now understands the MH position better and the MH people now understand the job of law enforcement and their position better. It helped to dispel a lot of stereotypes.”**

**“We had a good mix of people, so there were a lot of ah-ha moments. Everyone communicated.”**

*More than 6m:*

- 6 of the 7 counties indicate the mapping helped to develop this shared vision. It is evident in the new committees that have been formed. The one county that did not believe the mapping helped to develop the shared vision indicated that, although the mapping was a good starting point, they didn’t develop a shared vision as a result of it.
- Examples of other comments from the counties:
  - **“Mapping helped to bring the parties to the table and to re-establish priorities.”**
  - **“The CJ system hadn’t thought at all about MH clients, prior to the mapping.”**
  - **“We already had collaborations between MH, CJ and other agencies in place prior to the mapping, but the mapping was helpful in crystallizing new areas of planning.”**
  - **“Since the mapping, the CJ system is now taking a different approach. They are more likely to ask for assistance and guidance as compared to before the collaboration.”**

**Since the mapping workshop, have there been any specific changes to the way your behavioral health or criminal justice system operate, cooperate or communicate**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- All counties (100%) indicated “yes” and they feel that particularly communication is much improved and that the agencies in their county operate/cooperate differently in some way. Some examples and illustrative statements include:
  - **“There is now more reaching out between agencies - we now have a name and face for the people we are talking to.”**
  - Jail census list is now distributed to the MH/MR housing coordinator on a daily basis

- “We cooperate more now....we meeting regularly and are making progress on action steps.”
- We now have a specific contact person at the county assistance office who helps us get MA reinstated at re-entry.
- “We understand each other better now...and there is more of a spirit of cooperation.”
- “Probation and our VA are now mutually referring clients to each other.”
- “Individuals are getting their meds (30-day supply rather than 2 day supply) and treatment started more quickly upon release.”

*More than 6mo:*

- All 7 counties (100%) believe that the mapping was particularly helpful in improving communication and cooperation. Some examples and illustrative statements include:
  - “We now have several actual changes in place in the way our county operates, like we have increased funds for housing now, we hired a director of mental health for the jail and we have a data sharing plan in place.”
  - “When I hear “no”, I now understand why.”
  - “We now have a lot more collaboration and we can understand other viewpoints now.”
  - “Thing keep getting better, we get a lot more calls now and people are more interested in solving issues together.”

**Since the mapping workshop, have there been changes to key individuals who were involved in this process?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- 4 out of the 5 counties have not had any changes to key individuals

*More than 6 mo:*

- 6 of 7 counties have had changes to key individuals due to retirement, re-election, etc. They indicate that this slows the progress because you have to bring them up to speed and you don’t always have their buy-in.

**Have the participants in the cross-systems mapping workshops sustained their investment in implementing change**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- All 5 counties feel that there is sustained investment because people still are attending meetings and showing interest.

*More than 6 mo:*

- 6 of the 7 counties indicate that individuals have sustained their interest. The one county that answered “no” to this item indicated that no one takes any action unless one or two specific people (who were leaders in the mapping) initiate the action and keep on them. Some examples and illustrative comments from the follow-up interviews:
  - “Our meetings are still well-attended and there are a lot of examples of collaborations between agencies.”
  - “Those who attended the mapping are still invested and they have even brought in more of their colleagues!”
  - “People have continued to attend meetings and they now extend invitations for us to attend their meetings. It feels like there is more of a presence at the meetings and people now actively look for training and support.”

**Have you encountered groups or organizations in your county that have not been open to implementing the changes identified in the mapping workshops?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- 3 of the 5 counties indicate no resistance
- Two counties indicated resistance
  - “When it involves money, some agencies are resistant to change. We have to show them that it will make it easier for them.”
  - “Our probation department doesn’t seem interested or invested in the changes. They didn’t stay for the full mapping and they really aren’t cooperating now.”

*More than 6 mo:*

- 2 of the 7 counties indicate that they have encountered groups or organizations that are not open to change.
  - “Some of the CJ groups are not open to change.”
  - “A few groups of been resistant, but mostly we can work out issues.”

**Are there appropriate structures/resources in place to continue to implement and maintain the changes that have resulted from the workshop?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- Two counties indicated that they believe they have the structures/resources to maintain change
  - One of these counties was mapped one month prior to the interview.
  - “We have a MH court, an active judge, a forensic team, a MH treatment team and prison MH services...these are all in place and will form the basis of the changes (this

person later did bring up the issue of funding by indicating that it is a given that funding will be a continuous need).”

- All of the remaining 3 counties indicate that funding may become an issue
  - “When we don’t have the resources, we’ll have to look for funding.”
  - “We are constantly working on this issue by looking for funding opportunities”

*More than 6 mo:*

- 2 of 7 counties indicate that there are not resources in place to sustain the changes and this is due to funding issues.
  - “We are working on funding issues which is our biggest issue. We’re currently relying lot on in-kind support.”
  - “We have buy-in from key people/agencies, but funding is often an issue.”

**Do you see opportunities for the Center of Excellence to further support your county after the mapping process?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- Several ideas for continued support were mentioned:
  - sharing information between counties (e.g. what works) so they don’t need to reinvent the wheel
  - followup from the COE in terms of their progress and time to discuss the issues that have risen
  - recommendations for screening tools
  - a quarterly newsletter to highlight updates to the website
  - providing examples of MOU, providing speakers on particular topics (e.g. engaging people)
  - mapping the juvenile system
  - Notifying them about funding opportunities (Note: this is already a regularly-updated feature on the web)

*More than 6 mo:*

- All 7 counties indicated that they believe the COE can be a support in the future. Topic areas are presented above.

**Has your county requested technical assistance?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- 2 of the 5 counties have received technical assistance since the mapping and have been very satisfied.

- Counties that did not have technical assistance weren't sure if it was free and weren't sure of the appropriate of certain requests. Some ways in which the COE could provide technical assistance:
  - Helping them with grant applications (identifying outcomes, giving them feedback)
  - Providing information about screening tools
  - Giving us information about best practices
  - Develop a matrix of best practices being used in other counties
  - Provide more training on specific topic areas as requested by the county

*More than 6 mo:*

- 2 of the 7 counties have requested and received technical assistance. This assistance was in the area of developing a comprehensive data system and critical-time training. All counties identified areas in which they believe they could use technical assistance (their responses are listed with the previous question).
  - **"We haven't asked for assistance yet, but we know where to go if we need it."**

**If someone were to ask how you'd improve any aspect of the COE (to mapping workshops, the follow up provided after the mapping, technical or other assistance), what would you say?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- At the mapping planning stage, make sure that the mapping isn't scheduled on a day on which court is in session. Otherwise, the court people can't attend.
- They recommend that we push for dates for the action plan –otherwise things slide.
- Mapping workshop could be 2 full days so that there is more time to flesh out the action steps (length of the workshop was noted by 2 people).
- Really need to make sure the decision makers are at the mapping...working on getting these people is worth the time.

*More than 6 mo:*

- The pace keeps it interesting, even if it is exhausting. But we need to focus not only on MH populations but also those with intellectual disabilities, substance abusers and other vulnerable populations.
- Give more time for the action planning!
- Would have liked to have higher level decision makers at the mapping as well as more front-line people since they do the work.
- There's only so much that the COE can do...this is the responsibility of the county!
- Because the mapping addresses all 5 intercepts at once, it's really important to have the right mix of people.

**If you were talking to another county about the benefits of the cross-systems mapping workshops, what would you say?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- “I have already talked to other counties and I’m telling them to do it! It’s really worth while and I’m trying to push people to do this.”
- “Do it without hesitation...you learn a lot about your own process.”
- “It really opens the lines of communication and cooperation.”

*More than 6 mo:*

- “Sitting across from people is really good...you can sit and talk and respectively express your issues and challenges and you learn where you and the other people can give a little.”
- “There are several benefits: it gives credence to what we’ve (the MH folks) have been trying to do, it brought people together who wouldn’t normally get together and it gave us a format/template to work from.”
- “It fosters communication...you need to leave your ego at the door and talk and listen. It’s hard work! These are imperfect systems.”

**Anything else our funders or advisory board should know?**

*6 mo or fewer:*

- “The process works so please keep it going!
- “If it comes to the issue of funding and sustainability...it’s good to get people working on this and good to build collaborations. Keep it going and it will eventually spread.”
- “Keep it going...(the COE)...it is a worthwhile investment! The cost savings across the counties will be quantifiable.”

*More than 6 mo:*

- “This is just the beginning....we will have a continuing, ongoing need regarding this population.”
- “We will have an ongoing need for TA!”
- “The forensic population is the biggest challenge that we serve. The more that can be done through the cross systems mapping and the support of the COE, the better. But you need to come up with ways to address funding...this is a HUGE challenge. You need to get both systems to do joint planning in this area.”