

THE
STEPPING UP
 INITIATIVE

**A National Initiative to
 Reduce the Number of People
 with Mental Illnesses in Jails**

An estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses almost three-quarters of whom also have substance use disorders are booked into local jails each year. Federal and state policy and funding barriers, along with limited opportunities for law enforcement training and arrest alternatives in many communities, have made county and other local jails the de facto mental health hospitals for people who cannot access appropriate community-based mental health treatment and services. Counties recognize the need for systems-level change to help them better link people to treatment and services.

COUNTY



opening and adopting a cross-system action plan through strategies such as: ● States with county resolution ● Counties with resolutions ● No resolutions

Providing a small number of counties with intensive technical assistance that includes onsite work to help use the planning framework, implement evidence-based practices and demonstrate strategies that result in measurable change

Providing counties with broad-based technical assistance for applying the planning framework through webinars, network calls and other information-sharing opportunities

Assisting states that support counties' efforts to implement the Stepping Up framework statewide; and

Promoting federal policies that support counties' efforts to reduce the prevalence of people with mental illnesses in jails

Stepping Up Framework

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represents foundational thinking of the Stepping Up initiative that encourages counties to assess their existing efforts to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jail by considering the following questions:

- 1 Is our leadership committed?**
- 2 Do we conduct timely screening and assessments?**
- 3 Do we have baseline data?**
- 4 Do we conduct a comprehensive process analysis and inventory of services?**
- 5 Have we prioritized policy, practice and funding improvements?**
- 6 Do we track progress?**

Stepping Up urges county leaders to review current practices and to adopt policies, programs and practices that are informed by their impact on the following measures:

Stepping Up Resources

The Stepping Up partners have developed an online toolkit with a wealth of resources that are continuously updated to provide the latest information on research and best practices to counties. Resources are all publicly available on the Stepping Up website and include:

To learn more or join the initiative please visit StepUpTogether.org