

The Formation of the Philadelphia Police Departments Behavioral Health Unit and Crisis Intervention Response Teams



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Created
November
2022

Crisis
Intervention
Response Team
(CIRT)

Police Assisted
Diversion (PAD)

Mental Health Facts in Philadelphia



1.5 Million



46%

of adults reported “experiencing poor mental health” at least twelve times over the course of a year.⁹

12-06-22- 12-06-23

- ▶ 2,277,936- 911 Calls
- ▶ 74,430- CIT Tags
- ▶ 2,178- CIRT Tags
- ▶ 749- CIRT Engaged
- ▶ 135,501- All crisis lines (Jan '22- Nov '23)
- ▶ 2,338- Warm Transfers from 911

How did we get here?

- October 27, 2020, police shooting of Walter Wallace, West Philadelphia.
- Walter Wallace, was killed after officers responded to emergency calls.
- 911 was called to his home twice earlier in the day for domestic disturbances before a third call was made about a man armed with a knife.⁶
- **“Civil rights campaigners fiercely questioned the way police departments handle people suffering a mental health problem, not just in relation to the shooting of Wallace but across the US.”**



By the Numbers

- **People with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by police in an encounter.**
 - Co-response has been shown to reduce the likelihood of adverse outcomes for people in crisis, such as arrest or injury.
- **21% of fatal shootings involved someone facing a mental health crisis.**
- **1,114 officers nationally were assaulted during a call responding to a person with mental illness in 2007**
- Clinicians report feeling safer responding to calls with police.

The City of Philadelphia's response to the need for mental health reform in police response:

Crisis Intervention Response Teams (CIRT)



Denver: Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) Program

What is CIRT?

- ▶ Crisis Intervention Response Team
- ▶ Pilot April 2021 → BHU November 2022
- ▶ Officers and Behavioral Health Clinicians responding to 911 calls involving:
 - Persons experiencing serious mental illness
 - Persons in behavioral or emotional distress
 - Otherwise in crisis



PPD CIRT CO-RESPONSE MODEL

- ▶ Two Police Officers and 1 Social Worker in CIRT marked vehicle with MDT
- ▶ Social work providers contracted & supported by DBHIDS
- ▶ Vest and marked uniform on co-responder
- ▶ Non-traditional PPD uniform and vehicle
- ▶ Clinician will remain a safe distance until the CIRT Officer deems the scene is safe.
- ▶ Citywide Coverage



PURPOSE OF CIRT



- ▶ Provide a health-centered response to people in behavioral health crisis in Philadelphia.
- ▶ Supplement and enhance the Philadelphia Police Department's CIT Program.
- ▶ De-escalation
- ▶ Reduce injuries police and civilians
- ▶ Reduce repeat 911 calls
- ▶ Allow patrol officers to resume service
 - ▶ Spend additional time on calls- Average 1:11
- ▶ Be the experts in crisis related calls

CIRT Training



- ▶ Supplement and enhance the Philadelphia Police Department's CIT Program. All CIRT is CIT trained.
- ▶ 80 hours of CIRT training provided by DBHIDS
 - ▶ Includes Reality Based Training
 - ▶ Co-responders and Officers complete together
- ▶ 40 hours Crisis Negotiation training
- ▶ Ongoing Training



Follow Up Teams

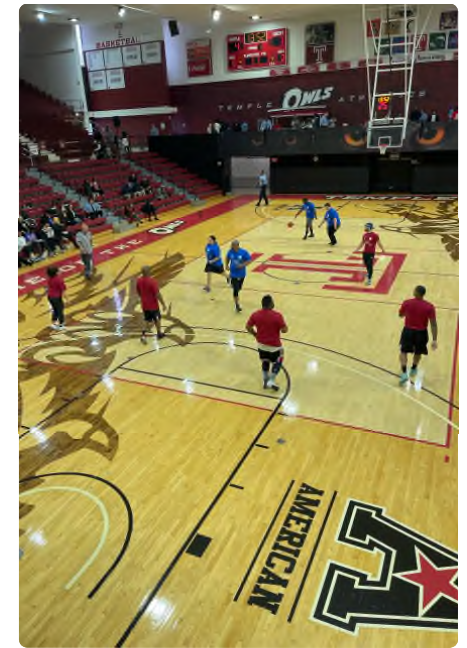
Community Engagement



Community engagement is a way to build and sustain relationships between different organizations and groups.



Good community engagement will mean that everyone involved can understand and act together to help achieve positive change.



Data Entry



PPD App



Co-Responder data gathering



CIRT Engagements



Barricade?

All

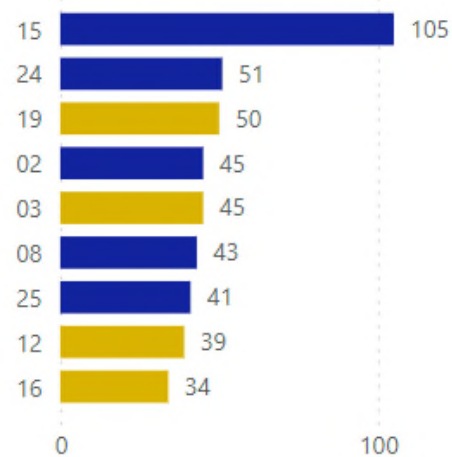
749

Total Number of Engagements

17

of Barricade Events

Engagements by District

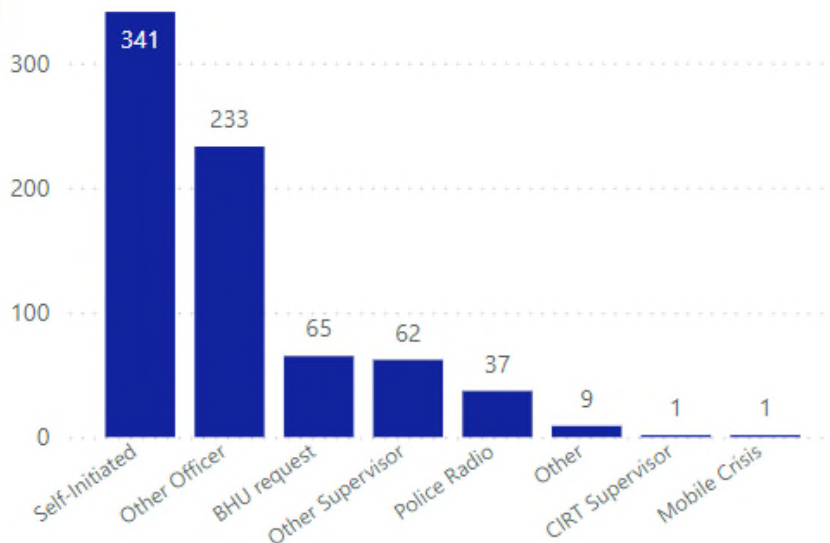


Nature of Call

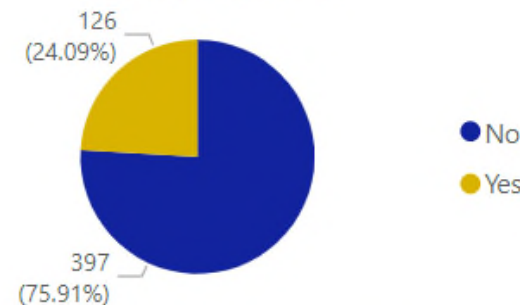
Count

PSCRM	151
PWEAP	150
HC	90
DOM	75
IVPER	67
PGUN	48
MC	42
CWB	20
DBUSN	19
IVPRM	14
DSCH	12
DNCF	10
Total	749

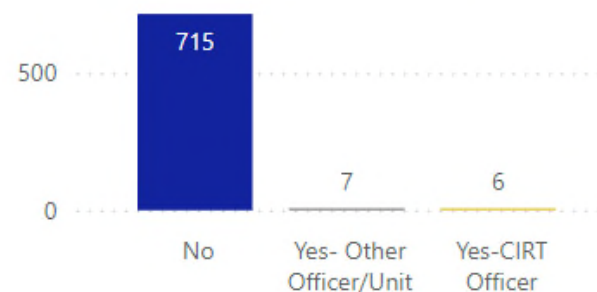
How was CIRT dispatched?



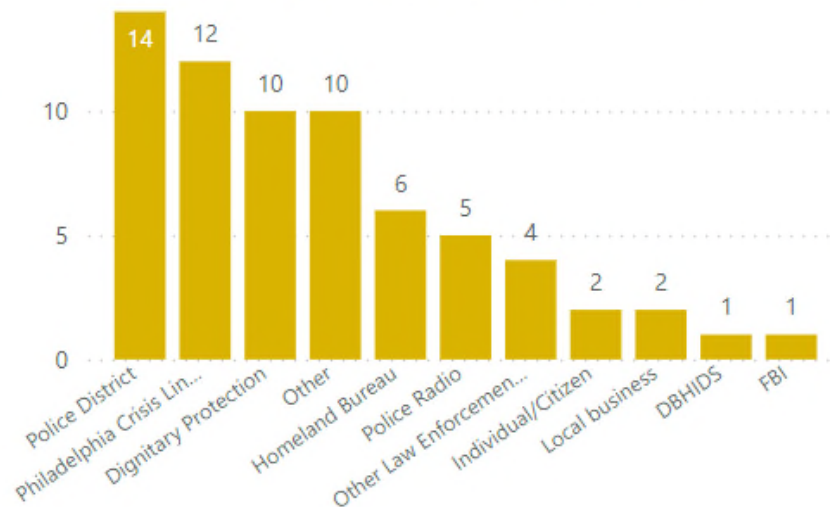
If other officer(s) were on scene were they resumed?



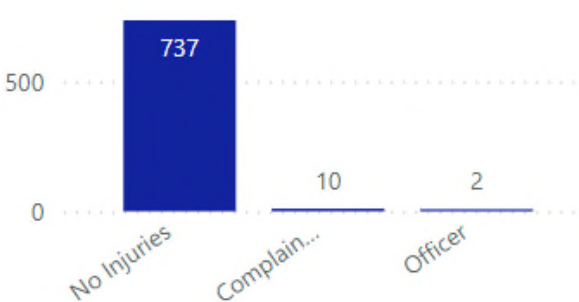
Was there force used?



If BHU Request, what was the source?



Injuries?



Average Time on Call (hh:mm)

01:11

Additional Time Spent on Investigation by Police

1d, 07h, 21m

Additional Time Spent on Follow Up by Police

0d, 15h, 24m

Additional Time Spent on Follow Up by Provider

20d, 00h, 33m



CIRT Engagements



Barricade?

All

749

Total Number of Engagements

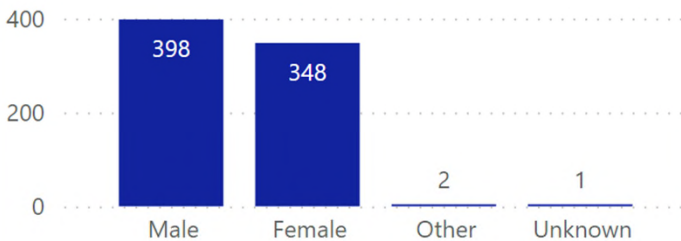
38

Average Age

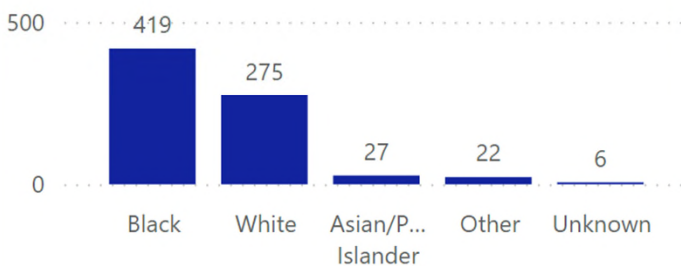
72

Juvenile Engagements

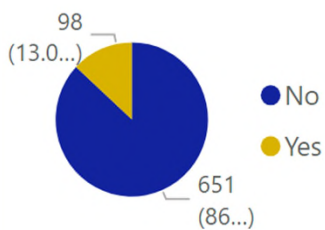
Gender



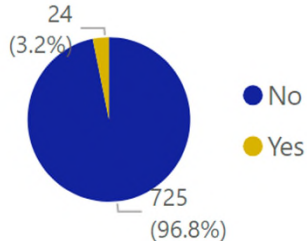
Race



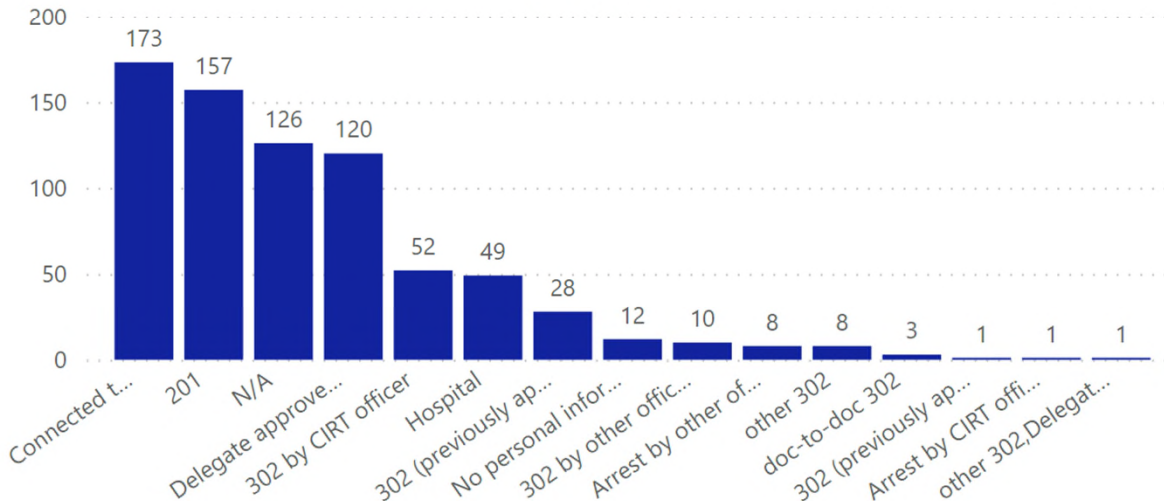
Hispanic?



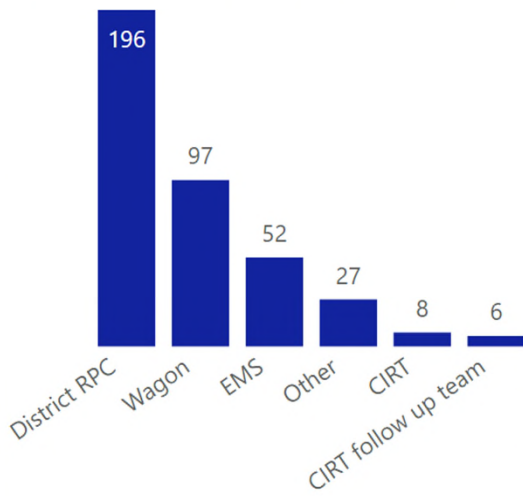
Veteran?



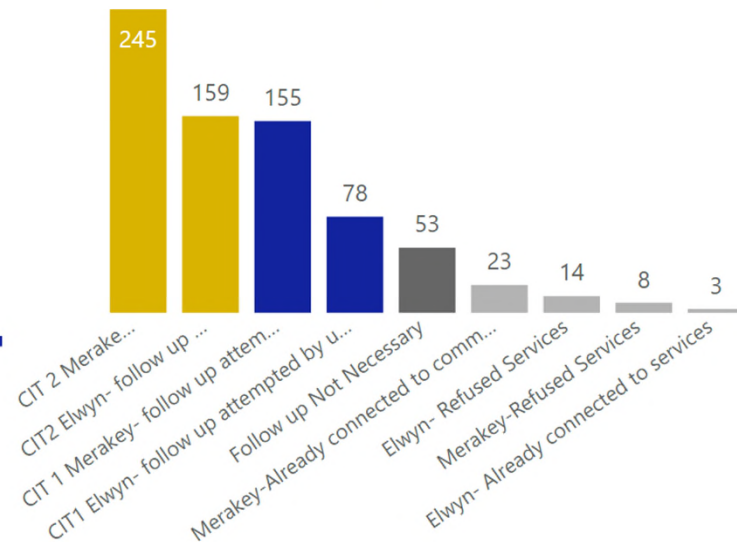
Outcomes



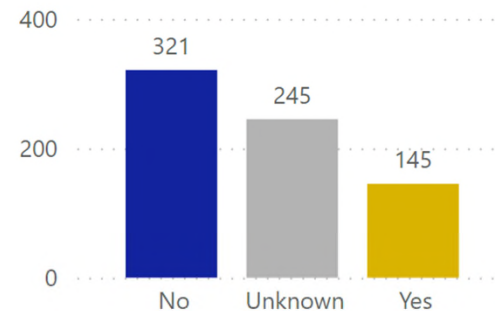
201/302 Method of Transportation



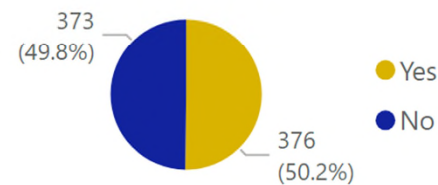
Follow Up Status



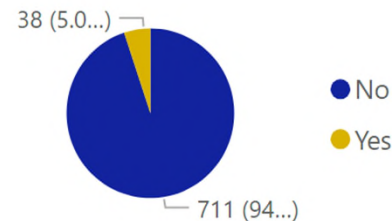
Does the individual suffer from substance use disorder?



Did we increase the individual's connection to services?



Do you believe the individual would have been arrested if CIRT unavailable?



911 Behavioral Health Crisis Script

Instructions For Use Of Script

- The script questions should be asked if they have not already been answered during the course of the call.
- Once the script is complete, incident should be forwarded to dispatcher with all available information.
- Consult with behavioral health navigator in police radio when appropriate.
- Note answers to questions in remarks, use appropriate CAD tags/commands, and request a CIRT Unit and/or CIT Officer be dispatched.
- Follow existing policy regarding notifications, documentation, and deployment of resources

1

Are you or the person you are calling about experiencing problems related to mental issues, suicidal feelings, or is the person using drugs/alcohol?

If NO:  script.

Proceed to ask dispatch questions

If YES: Tag / Command CIT,
Ask question 2.

and

If YES to suicidal: Follow Policy
on Suicidal Calls.

2

Is there anything that would make communicating with this person difficult? (i.e. language, hearing impairment, sight impairment)

If NO:  script.

Proceed to ask dispatch questions

If YES: ask pertinent
questions to assist with
determining what
assistance is needed (i.e.
Language Line)

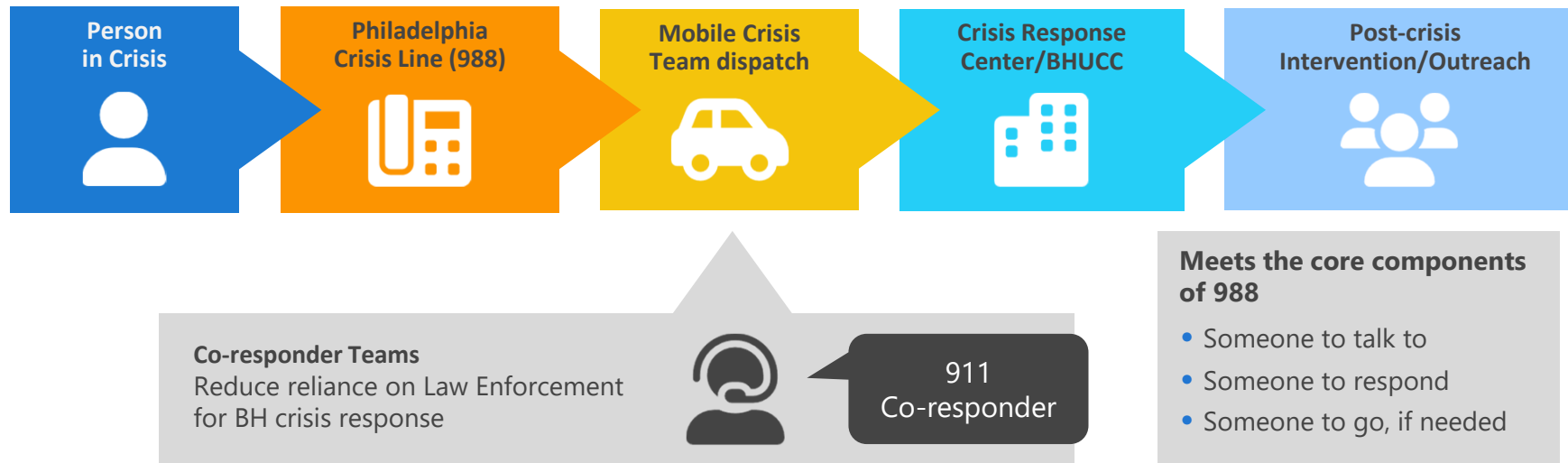
Radio Script

Police Radio

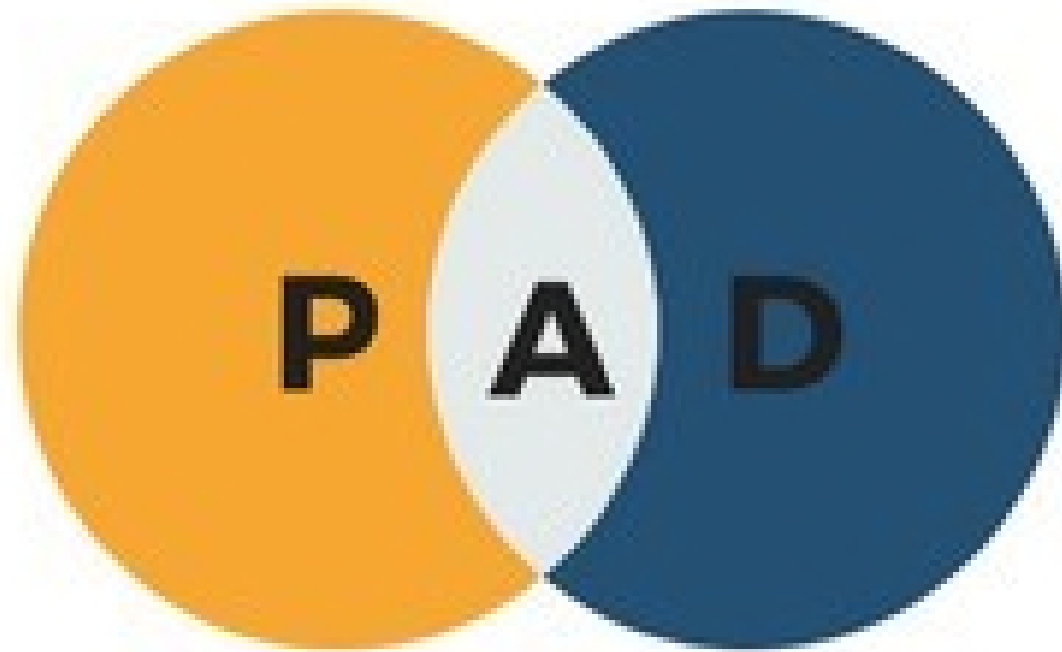
- Police Radio, in collaboration with Department of Behavioral Health and DisAbility (DBHIDS), will identify calls to be directly dispatched to:
 - CIT Officers
 - CIRT Unit
 - DBHIDS clinician at Police Radio
 - Philadelphia Crisis Line

Philadelphia Crisis Continuum

Goal: An enhanced crisis system that ensures immediate and appropriate response and access to treatment and resources for Philadelphia



Police Assisted Diversion



Police Assisted Diversion

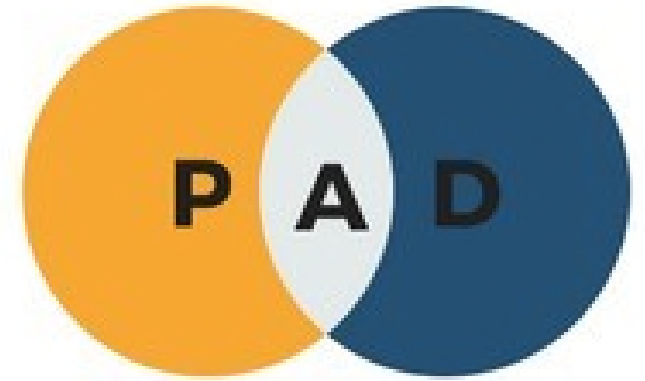


- Police Assisted Diversion is a program designed to divert individuals away from the criminal justice system.
- Participants are individuals who in previous years would have been arrested for incidents such as retail theft, prostitution, and narcotics possession.
- PAD connects these individuals to a wide range of services such as housing, substance use treatment, food, and transportation services.

PAD History

- ▶ 2017: PAD pilot program, 22nd District
- ▶ 2018: Citywide Vice Unit, East Police Division & Narcotics Strike Force
- ▶ November 2022: Behavioral Health Unit is created
- ▶ January of 2023: Expanded to Regional Operations Command North
- ▶ April 2023: Citywide expansion
 - ▶ ROC North (3901 Whitaker Ave) & ROC South (3900 Lancaster Ave)

Police Assisted Diversion



- **Arrest Referral**: When an officer responds to a call involving PAD offenses where an arrest is involved, they have the ability to contact the PAD office to divert this individual into services . This is an attempt to stop the repeated cycle that often comes with substance use disorder by providing the services needed to improve way of life.
- **Social Referral**: People who are referred because they request help, are proactively offered help by a Philadelphia Police Officer, and are eligible for it. When an officer comes upon any person that is need of social services. Most importantly a connection to addiction treatment services, medical care, mental health and shelter. Providers are there to help navigate a system that is often hard to manage for many on their own.
- **Family Engagement Referral**: Police building a bridge to the families often left in despair with a feeling of having no where to call for assistance. The family Engagement is specifically designed to help concerned and heartbroken families who have a loved one dealing with SUD and need help finding loved ones who are living on the streets with the assistance of our outreach teams as well as providing guidance and support from Law Enforcement for the families. When we come across their oved ones on the streets we are able to provide direct services in the moment as well as reconnect them with their families.

PAD Providers

Merakey

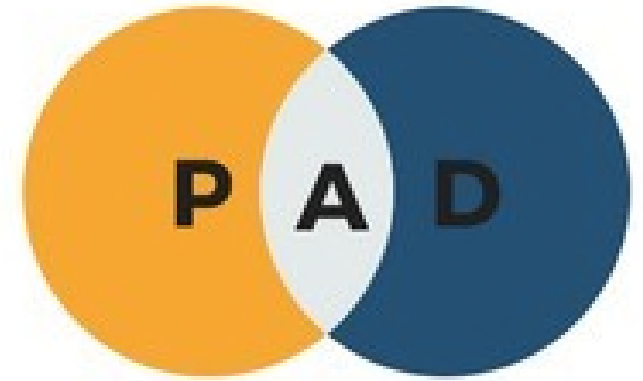
Salvation Army

One Day At A Time (ODAAT)

PATH

UPENN

Police Assisted Diversion 2023



2023: Total PAD Arrest Diversions Citywide: 1,471

- Narcotics: 909
- Prostitution: 92
- Retail Theft: 470

- Total ROCN Arrest Diversions: 1057
- Total ROCS Arrest Diversions (launched April): 414

Social Referrals

- Total Social Referrals citywide: 229
- Total ROCN Social Referrals: 152
- Total ROCS Social Referrals (launched April): 77

Highest District Utilizers of Arrest Diversions

- ROCN (24th – 569)
- ROCS (6th – 74)



PAD Dashboard

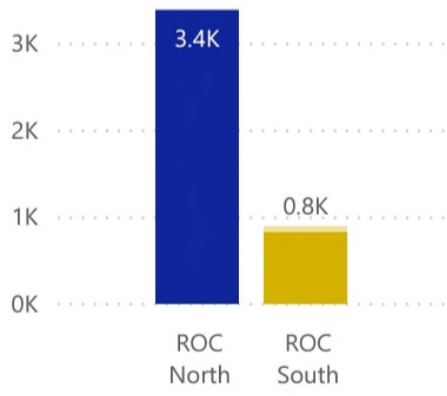


Arrest Diversions	All Screenings
3322	4182
Social Referrals	Not Screened
463	450

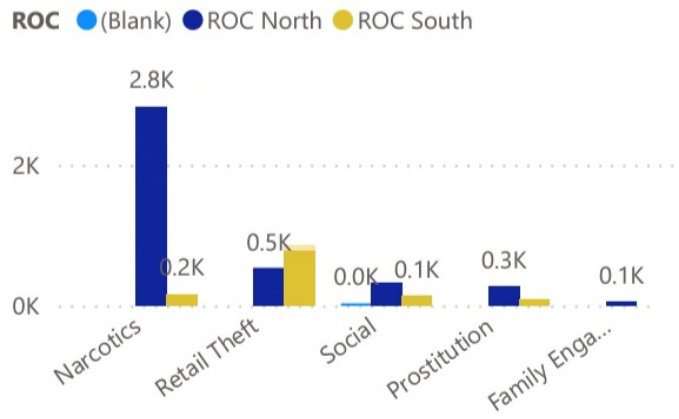
Type of Referral
All

PAD Eligibility
All

ROC - Screened Only



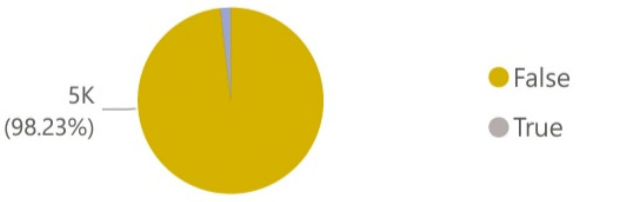
Type of Referral



PAD Eligibility



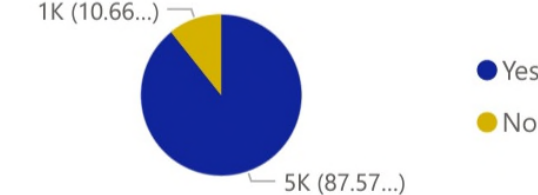
Prolific Offender?



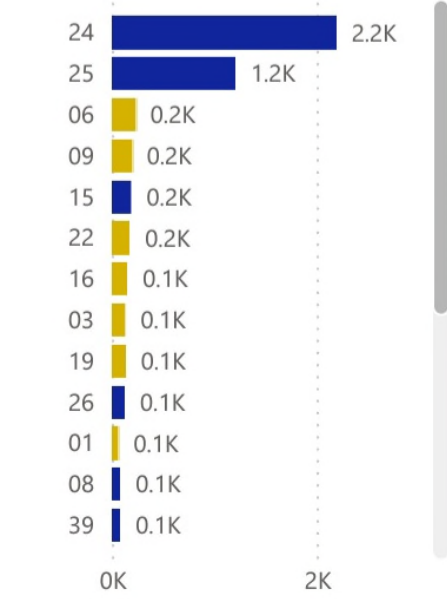
Homeless?



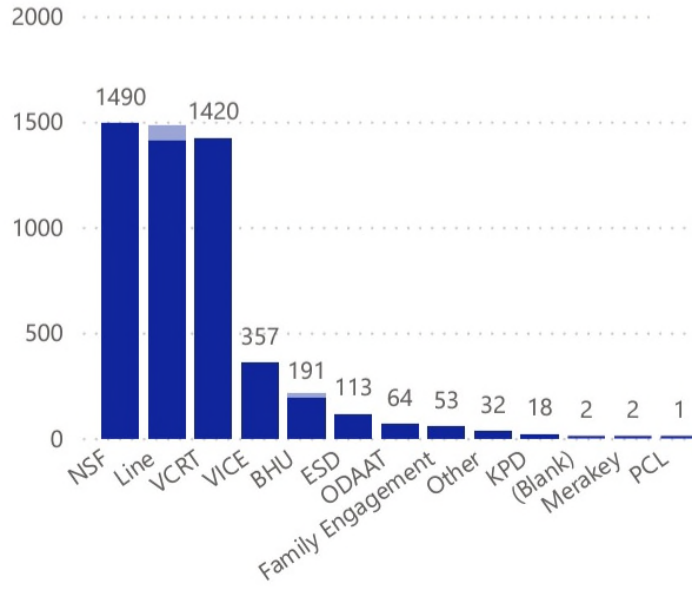
Philadelphia Resident?



District of Referring Unit



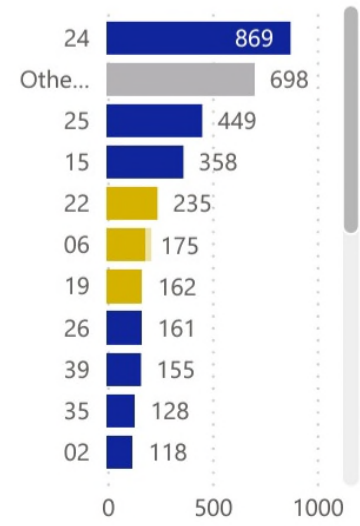
Referred from?



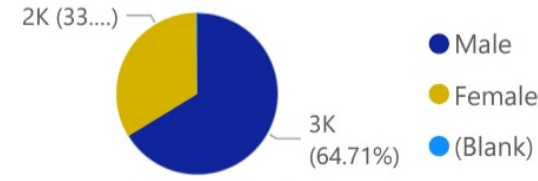
ZIP Code of Residence

ZIP Code of Residence	Count
19134	790
19124	278
19140	249
Unknown	228
19133	219
19132	165
19107	138
19139	122
19121	115
19131	111
19120	98
Total	4677

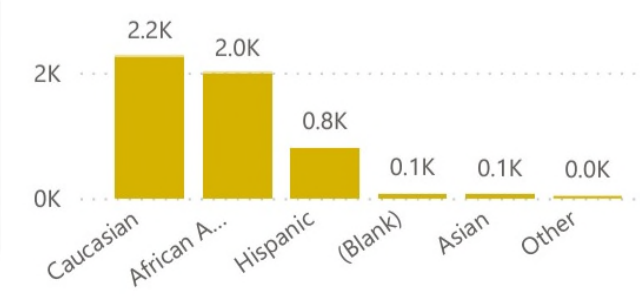
District of Residence



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



Questions?

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 - ▶ Philadelphia Police Department Draft memorandum 21-xx (03-28-2021). subject: pilot crisis intervention response team (cirt) program
 - ▶ VICE News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCmTcS5YvOQ>