

## Stepping Up Initiative

### **Issue/Action Requested:**

Request that the Board of Commissioners receive and accept the draft plan for the creation of a Stepping Up Task Force to develop an action plan that can be used to achieve a measurable impact in our local criminal justice system and reduce the cycling of those with mental health through the criminal justice system.

### **Background/Purpose of Request:**

Each year, about 25,000 people with severe mental illness end up in North Carolina's jails. Almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders. The Stepping Up Task Force will consist of key community leaders in law enforcement, local government, and private entities with a goal to create conditions that allow for optimal success for those living with mental illness and/or co-occurring substance dependence and who are, or are at risk, of being involved in the criminal justice system.

May 15, 2017 the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to support the Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our county jail, commit to sharing lessons learned with other counties in the state and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees, and residents to utilize the comprehensive resources available through Stepping Up.

### **Plan :**

- Convene a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies
- Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk as a baseline to guide decision making
- Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in Brunswick County for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders
- Identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community
- Develop a mission/vision/ purpose for the Stepping Up Task Force
- Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the needs and prevalence assessment data and examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers
- Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan
- Create a process to track progress using data and information systems and to report on successes

**Invite list:**

***Justice system***

- Brunswick County Sheriff's Office
- Brunswick County District Court Judge
- Brunswick County Superior Court Judge
- Brunswick County District Attorney
- Oak Island Police Department
- Southport Police Department
- Calabash Police Department
- Boiling Spring Lakes Police Department
- Leland Police Department
- Sunset Beach Police Department
- Shallotte Police Department
- Holden Beach Police Department
- St. James Police Department

***Behavioral health system/healthcare***

- Coastal Southeastern United Care
- Brunswick County Health Services
- Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center
- Doshier Memorial Hospital
- Coastal Horizons
- New Hope Clinic
- Trillium Health Resources

***Community***

- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Brunswick Opioid Task Force
- Brunswick Crisis Consortium
- Faith Based Community Representative

***County government***

- County Commissioners
- County Manager
- Health & Human Services Advisory Board
- Health & Human Services

When: August 2017

Proposed chair/coordinator for Initial Meeting: David Stanley, Health and Human Services Executive Director