



Institute of Law, Psychiatry,
and Public Policy

Evaluation Proposal

**To Accompany the Alternative (Non-Law Enforcement)
Transportation of Children and Adult in Mental Health Crisis:
Recommendations for the 2018 General Assembly Session**

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The Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy (ILPPP) at the University of Virginia is an interdisciplinary program in mental health law, forensic psychiatry, forensic psychology, forensic neuropsychology and forensic social work. Institute activities include academic programs, forensic clinical evaluations, professional training, empirical and theoretical research, and public policy consultation and review.

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Evaluation Overview

The following evaluation proposal was produced by the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy at the request John Oliver of the SJ 47 Advisory Panel on Mental Health Crisis Response and Emergency Services Panel to accompany their recommendations for the 2018 General Assembly session entitled, Alternative (Non-Law Enforcement) Transportation of Children and Adult in Mental Health Crisis.

Purpose: The following proposal lays the groundwork for an evaluation of the program described in the recommendations for “Alternative (Non-Law Enforcement) Transportation of Children and Adult in Mental Health Crisis” as created by the transportation work group of the SJ 47 Advisory Panel on Mental Health Crisis Response and Emergency Services. The evaluation will be both summative and generative as it will assess program implementation and attainment of outcomes in addition to providing information for policymakers and program stakeholders in deciding future directions and expansion for the program.

This evaluation has three main focus areas:

Process Assessment: The primary goal of the Process Assessment is to determine if the program was implemented as outlined in the initial program recommendation.

Outcomes Assessment: The primary goal of the Outcomes Assessment is to determine if the program achieved outcomes specified in recommendations as well as those specified by stakeholders.

Efficiency Assessment: The primary goal of the Efficiency Assessment is to determine whether the costs of the program were reasonable given the effectiveness and benefits.

Stakeholders: The evaluation planning period will include particular emphasis on stakeholder engagement through the following steps:

1. Identify relevant stakeholders (groups or individuals)
2. Identify stakeholder interest and perspective
3. Identify the stakeholder role in the evaluation (e.g., planning, site-based data collection)
4. Continue to engage stakeholders throughout the evaluation process

Design: This evaluation will follow a quasi-experimental mixed method design. Using purposive sampling¹, a comparison group (or groups)² with similar characteristics to the localities implementing the alternative transportation program will be identified.

Data Collection: The evaluation will utilize quantitative and qualitative measures. Evaluators will utilize existing literature on trauma informed care, mental health crisis care related outcomes, and evaluation techniques when developing evaluation measures. The final evaluation measures will be a product of stakeholder input, existing literature, evaluator expertise, and program-specific elements.

Evaluation Purpose

The following proposal lays the groundwork for an evaluation of the program described in the recommendations for “Alternative (Non-Law Enforcement) Transportation of Children and Adult in Mental Health Crisis” as created by the transportation work group of the SJ 47 Advisory Panel on Mental Health Crisis Response and Emergency Services. The evaluation will be both summative and generative as it will assess program implementation and attainment of outcomes in addition to providing information for policymakers and program stakeholders in deciding future directions and expansion for the program.³ The evaluation will separate results by age group (adult or child) as well as a producing a combined report. For data elements, they will be requested by age group alongside and several child-specific data elements (e.g., parent/caregiver surveys or interviews) to enable this two-part evaluation. Child specific data elements will be developed in collaboration with the workgroup (as part of the Advisory Panel on Mental Health in Crisis Response and Emergency Services) coordinating the pilot of alternative transportation for children. Special emphasis will be placed on ethical considerations and evaluation planning around child transports.

This evaluation has three main focus areas: Process Assessment, Outcomes Assessment, and an Efficiency Assessment.

Process Assessment

The primary goal of the Process Assessment:

- To determine if the program was implemented as outlined in the initial program recommendation.

Evaluators will draw program standards and process measures from the aforementioned recommendation from the SJ 47 Advisory Panel on Mental Health Crisis Response and Emergency Services as well as the program goals stated in the DBHDS/DCJS recommendations for statewide implementation that were developed pursuant to HB 1426 (Garrett)/SB 1221 (Barker). Evaluators will employ ongoing program process monitoring to assess whether the program is operating as intended (as defined in the previous step).

¹ Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that selects participants based on the characteristics of the population as well as the objectives of the study as opposed to random selection.

² Evaluators may determine that a composite group of 2 or more localities may serve as the best comparison for one locality implementing the program.

³ The following text was used as a reference for this evaluation proposal:

Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (Seventh ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Example Process Assessment Elements⁴	
<i>Potential Evaluation Question</i>	<i>Potential Data Elements</i>
How many persons are transported via the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons transported • Hours spent transporting persons
Are these persons receiving services of the same standard outlined in the program recommendations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle information • Transporter qualifications and training • Number of times restraints used during transport • Contractor procedures and standards of professionalism for review
What is the demographic/clinical makeup of persons receiving alternative transportation services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic information of persons being transported • Clinical diagnosis of individuals being transported
Are there categories of persons who are underrepresented due to problems with program process among those receiving alternative transportation services (e.g., children’s transportation)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic information of persons being transported • Clinical diagnosis of individuals being transported • Date/Time information for transports • To/From location data for transports
Are resources, facilities, and funding adequate to support important program functions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditures beyond initial funding (including details on what functions needed additional funding)
Is performance at some sites significantly better or poorer than at others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To/From location data for transports • Date/Time information for transports

Outcomes Assessment

The primary goal of the Outcomes Assessment:

- To determine if the program achieved outcomes specified in recommendations as well as those specified by stakeholders.

Evaluators will draw on outcomes specified in the recommendations and will also assess outcomes specified by stakeholders prior to program implementation. Evaluators will seek to determine the “program effect” on outcomes that can be uniquely attributed to the program.

Example Outcomes Assessment Elements⁵	
<i>Potential Evaluation Question</i>	<i>Potential Data Elements</i>
Did the program successfully reduce the “excessive burden” on law enforcement agencies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative reports from law enforcement agencies on perceived burden • Number of transports provided by law enforcement officers • To/From data for law enforcement transports

⁴ Note: These tables only include potential evaluation questions and associated data elements. These will be vetted during the evaluation planning period.

⁵ Note: These tables only include potential evaluation questions and associated data elements. These will be vetted during the evaluation planning period.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours spent by law enforcement officers transporting
Were law enforcement officers more often able to attend to their regular duties and preserve the safety of their communities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overtime hours for law enforcement officers transporting On-call officers called to duty for transport Hours alternative transportation providers spend transporting
Did the program successfully reduce or avoid stigma experienced by the target population?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative and/or survey data from persons who were transported Qualitative and/or survey data from alternative transporters
Did the program successfully reduce or avoid trauma experienced by the target population?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative and/or survey data from persons who were transported Qualitative and/or survey data from alternative transporters Number of times restraints used during alternative and law enforcement transport
Did the program lead to improved clinical outcomes for participants (e.g., length of stay, cooperativeness)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length of stay for persons who were transported Qualitative and/or survey data from alternative transporters Qualitative and/or survey data of TDO facility personnel Qualitative and/or survey data from Emergency Department of origin personnel

Efficiency Assessment

The primary goal of the Efficiency Assessment:

- To determine whether the costs of the program were reasonable given the effectiveness and benefits.

This section will be a collaborative effort between the ILPPP and additional personnel with expertise in the area of cost-benefit analysis. As such, this assessment is much like the previous two and will be adjusted according to stakeholder and expert input during the planning period. The analysis will be an ex post analysis meaning this will be done retrospectively once the program is in place to inform the decision-making process to expand it to other regions.

Example Efficiency Assessment Elements⁶	
<i>Potential Evaluation Question</i>	<i>Potential Data Elements</i>
What are the costs (including expenses and quantifiable program activities) of the alternative transportation program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency fiscal records relating to transportation expenditures (of CSBs, law enforcement agencies, and the alternative transportation provider)

⁶ Note: These tables only include potential evaluation questions and associated data elements. These will be vetted during the evaluation planning period.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target cost estimates for providing transportation (of CSBs, law enforcement agencies, and the alternative transportation provider)
What are the benefits (including explicit monetary savings and quantifiable program outcomes) of the alternative transportation program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overtime hours or on-call officer use for transportation and wage rate from law enforcement agencies • Lengths of stay for program participants in TDO facilities and facility-based estimates of daily costs • Record of injuries to officers as a result of transporting TDO persons

The findings from the evaluation will be used to inform program stakeholders and policymakers on the implementation, outcomes, and efficiency of the Alternative Transportation Program in New River Valley Community Services, Mount Rogers CSB, Cumberland Mountain CSB, Highlands Community Services, Dickenson County Behavioral Health Services, Planning District 1 CSB, and Region Ten CSB.

Stakeholders

Throughout the evaluation planning and implementation process, stakeholders in the program will be engaged to inform evaluation questions, evaluation measures, and data collection methods. The following steps will guide stakeholder engagement:

1. Identify relevant stakeholders (groups or individuals)
2. Identify stakeholder interest and perspective
3. Identify the stakeholder role in the evaluation (e.g., planning, site-based data collection)
4. Continue to engage stakeholders throughout the evaluation process

Potential stakeholders include:

- Law enforcement agencies
- Community Services Boards
- Individuals under TDO
 - Caregivers of children under TDO
- Magistrates
- State hospital personnel
- TDO facility personnel
- Alternative transport personnel
- Involved/affected family members
- SJ 47 Advisory Panel

Thus far, evaluators have spoken with Community Services Board’s representatives at Region Ten and Mount Rogers who will be involved in the implementation of the Alternative Transportation program. As a part of the initial evaluation planning, identifying and involving stakeholders is a top priority for the evaluation team.

Evaluation Design

This evaluation will follow a quasi-experimental mixed method design. The advantage of the mixed methods approach is that it is able to capture both the subjective and objective aspects of a program. Mixed methodology also enables the triangulation of data, and minimizes the weakness of monomethod program evaluation. Using purposive sampling, a comparison group with similar characteristics to the localities implementing the alternative transportation program will be identified. A comparison group may be formed as part of a pre-post design wherein the implementing CSBs will provide data from their locality prior to program implementation. If it is more feasible to use CSBs which are not program participants as a matched comparison group, evaluators will use statistical methods (e.g., propensity score matching) to control for differences between the two groups when carrying out analyses.

Matching characteristics will be determined by evaluators in collaboration with participant CSBs. Comparison CSBs will be selected based on these criteria and contacted for participation in the evaluation. Law enforcement agencies associated with comparison CSBs will also be contacted for interest in participation. If CSBs and their associated law enforcement agencies decline to participate, evaluators will identify secondary choices for comparison CSBs that will be contacted for participation. If it is determined that there are no acceptable comparison CSBs, evaluators will utilize a pre-post design with available retrospective data from participant CSBs.

Data Collection Methods

The evaluation will utilize quantitative and qualitative measures. Evaluators will utilize existing literature on trauma informed care, mental health crisis care related outcomes, and evaluation techniques when developing evaluation measures. The final evaluation measures will be a product of stakeholder input, existing literature, evaluator expertise, and program-specific elements.

Quantitative measures will include data such as number of transports, transport hours, existing facility/stakeholder records, financial data, and cost estimates. Some additional measures that are not already collected by program stakeholders may be formed in order to provide data for specific aims of the evaluation. These measures will be developed in collaboration with stakeholder groups.

Qualitative measures will be used in most areas of the evaluation but will be most useful for the aspects of the Outcome Assessment that are difficult to quantify. Evaluators will work with stakeholders to develop questionnaires or interview questions for program participants who may be asked for self-report data on subjective measures of participant experience, clinical outcomes, and other program outcomes deemed relevant by stakeholder groups.

Developing data collection methods and target data elements will be a secondary step of the evaluation planning phase. It is critical that this step involve participation from program stakeholders to determine methods that will yield rich data without compromising program integrity or overburdening those implementing the program.