
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Members: Tips for Supporting the Local Behavioral Health Service Continuum

TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATORS

A Trial Court Administrator's oversight of the operations, facilities, and budget of a courthouse equips them to provide critical insight into the functioning of the courthouse and how it impacts the community. A Trial Court Administrator's perspective can help shape meaningful improvements in the design and set up of courthouses, the effectiveness of various courts and specialized dockets, and in the continuum of local behavioral health services.

Improve Courtroom Interactions

- *Review processing* of cases to ensure timeliness of cases, reduce backlogs, pending, and closed cases; leverage technologies to enhance efficiencies, such as use of automated court notifications.
- *Become knowledgeable* of the variety of treatment courts and other court-based diversion programs to make informed recommendations.
- *Train clerks and courtroom staff* in how to work with individuals with mental and substance use disorders.

Partner with Stakeholders & Advocate for Systems Change

- *Collaborate* with local stakeholders to ensure court policies and programming consider and benefit people with mental and substance use disorders.
- *Establish relationships* with behavioral health and criminal justice leaders in the community to discuss and implement court efficiency and improvement strategies.
- *Become familiar* with mental health and substance use treatment providers in the community.
- *Participate* in the local Criminal Justice Coordinating Council or subcommittee focused on behavioral health issues to develop innovative solutions to community needs, including:
 - Improving collaboration between local stakeholders.
 - Identifying people with mental and substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.
 - Assessing opportunities for diversion from the criminal justice system to treatment where appropriate.
 - Identifying gaps and opportunities in the local behavioral health service continuum.
 - Advocating for funding for behavioral health services and diversion programs.
 - Fostering a culture change to increase reliance on behavioral health professionals rather than criminal justice professionals for people with mental and substance use disorders.
- *Support data collection* and system mappings so stakeholders understand the current behavioral health and criminal justice systems, and their impact on the community.
- *Advocate for funding* for community-based behavioral health services, including inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance use treatment, among peers and local leaders.
- *Communicate support* for diversion initiatives and increased funding for services across the behavioral health continuum.