

**Harford County Local Care Team (LCT)  
Local Management Board  
Office of Children, Youth & Families  
Department of Community Services**

**Fiscal Year 2019 Report**

**Local Care Team – Role**

The role of the Local Care Team (LCT) is to be a forum for families of children with intensive needs to receive assistance with the identification of potential resources; and provide interagency discussion and problem solving for individual child and family needs. The LCT can refer children and families to Care Management Entities when appropriate, and provide information on available local and community resources.

During the LCT discussions, the youth and their family members, LCT member agencies and others (e.g. members of the family’s social support network, service providers and agency representatives) collaboratively develop a plan of care and then work to implement that plan across all agencies. Providing comprehensive care through this process requires a high degree of collaboration and coordination among child-and family-serving agencies and organizations. These agencies and organizations work together to provide access to flexible resources and a well-developed array of services and supports in the community, which helps to decrease the numbers of children being placed out-of-state.

The LCT is not a venue to review a single agency’s program plan (i.e. Family Involvement Meeting, Individualized Education Plan, treatment plan and/or court order). The LCT cannot guarantee admission to any recommended facility or program, nor does the LCT have any authority or responsibility over other agencies or facilities. It does not directly control any funds for placements or community based services. Meetings occur on a regular, usually bi-weekly basis, in accordance with Harford County Public Schools. The State Coordinating Council (SCC) and the Governor’s Office for Children (GOC) provide oversight of the LCT and it is to function in accordance with terms set forth by Maryland Code, Human Services § 8-405 through § 8-408.

Each LCT has a Coordinator, which serves as staff support to the LCT. The LCT Coordinator maintains detailed notes from each case discussion and tracks attendance of the LCT meetings. They help to facilitate the process and ensure that member agencies are following through with actions and recommendations. They are also mandated to maintain a directory of all community-based resources in the jurisdiction and develop and present training modules to groups of stakeholders.

## **Local Care Team – Membership**

LCT Members are expected to attend all meetings and if they are unable to attend, they should notify the LCT Coordinator in advance and send a designee whenever possible. The parent or guardian must be in attendance. LCT includes at least one representative from the following agencies:

- Department of Juvenile Services
- Department of Social Services
- Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Harford County Health Department
- Harford County Local Management Board
- Harford County Public Schools
- Maryland Coalition of Families (parent advocate)
- Office on Mental Health / Core Service Agency of Harford County

All records or information shared at an LCT meeting is confidential and will not be re-disclosed without the written consent of the guardian.

## **Local Care Team Meeting – Statistics & Data**

This report includes demographic and descriptive data from completed referral forms, meeting minutes and action plans for each family. During FY 2019, the Harford County LCT reviewed cases for 51 different youth. Some youth may come through LCT more than one time. The average age of those youth was 14 years old (age range 1-18). The data on age is the age of the youth when they originally were referred to the LCT. Of the 51 youth, 53% were male and 47% were female.

### Case Types

The LCT typically reviews three types of cases. Case types can focus on (1) review and approval for a Voluntary Placement Agreement request, (2) review and approval for the Teen Diversion Program and/or (3) technical assistance and resources.

#### *Voluntary Placement Agreement*

In Maryland, children enter out-of-home care for a variety of reasons and under a number of circumstances. Children can enter placement through a Voluntary Placement Agreement under which a parent voluntarily places a child in the care of the State. A child may be placed in a family home (such as foster or kinship care), a community-based residential facility (such as an independent living program), a non-community-based residential facility (such as a detention center or drug treatment program), or hospital.

### *Teen Diversion Program*

The Teen Diversion Program is a psychiatric rehabilitation day program operating under the auspices of the Harford County Health Department and housed within the Harford County Public School system. Treatment is focused on diverting adolescents, ages 13 through 17, from a more restrictive therapeutic or educational placement and reintegrating them back into the community. Adolescents typically participate in outpatient treatment for a minimum of 12 weeks, although the length of treatment may be longer, or shorter, based on treatment progress.

Youth can be referred to the teen Diversion Program for a: Diagnostic Evaluation; as a Diversion from more intensive mental health or educational placement or for Step Down services after a residential treatment or non-public educational placement

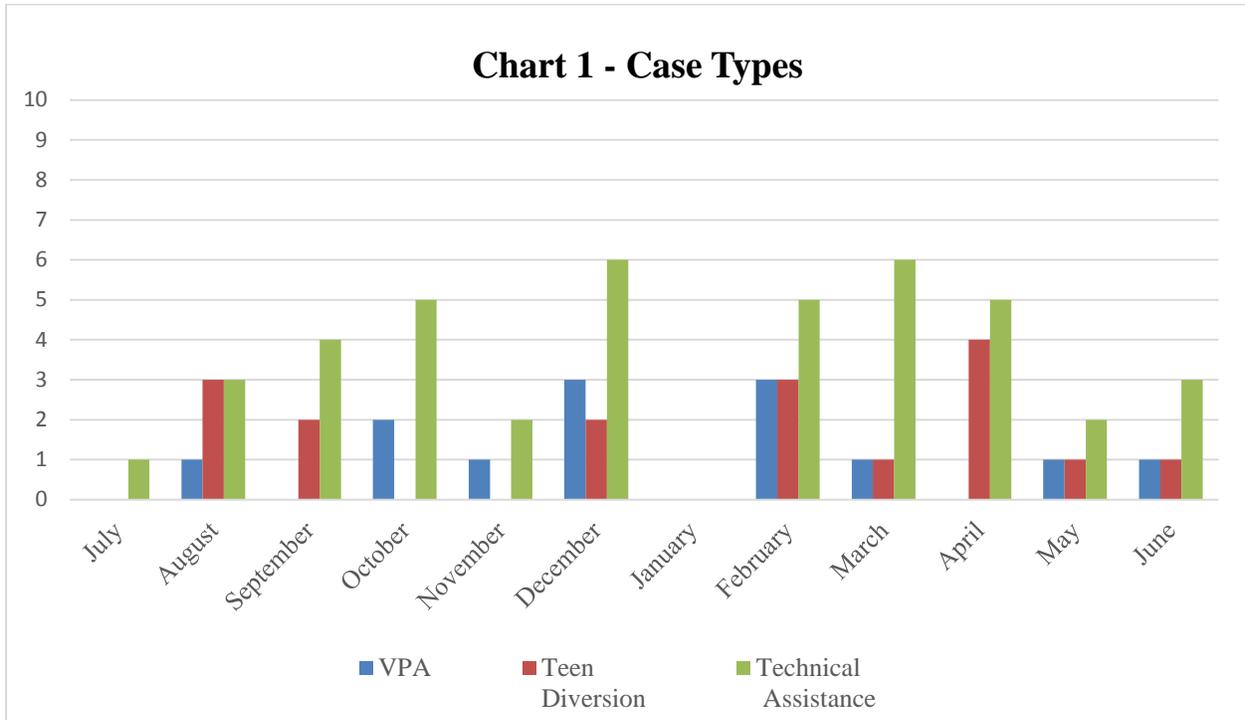
The Local Care Team serves as the mechanism that reviews and approves all intakes to the Teen Diversion Program. An application and intake packet must be completed by the parent or guardian of any student referred to the program. All applications will be reviewed for final determination of candidate appropriateness and acceptance into the program. Services in the program include:

- Psychiatric Rehabilitation
- Individualized, Family and Group Therapy
- Socialization and Recreational Activities
- Psychiatric Evaluation & Psychological Assessment
- Medication Evaluation & Management
- Case Management & Transition Planning
- Didactic Drug & Alcohol Group
- Conflict Resolution & Communication Groups
- Vocational Readiness Training
- Nutrition & Other Health Education
- Crisis Intervention with 24-hour support

### *Technical Assistance and Resources*

During the LCT meeting, technical assistance and resources are discussed. Families are given information on resources in the County with contact information.

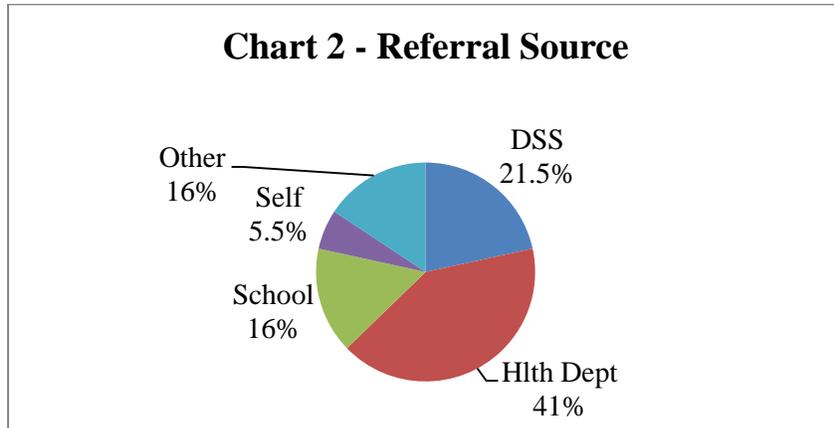
See Chart 1 for a breakdown of the different types of cases presented to the LCT. The LCT was cancelled in January due to weather.



### Referrals

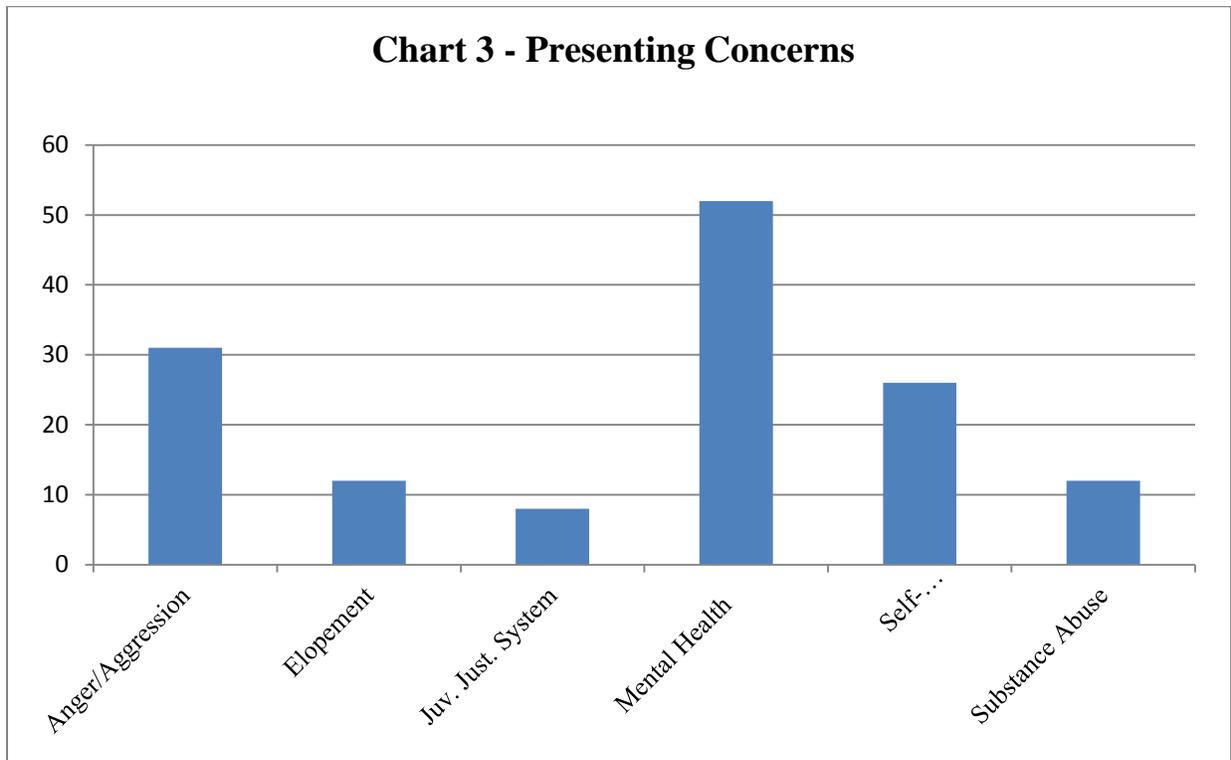
Families can be referred to the LCT by member agencies or families may self-refer. If an LCT member agency determines that a child may require assistance with resources, that agency should promptly refer the child’s case to the LCT for discussion and coordination of interagency services. Any time a member agency believes that a child may require the services of an out-of-state program, that agency shall immediately refer the child directly to the State Coordinating Council (SCC). If a family is in need of technical assistance or brainstorming and have no involvement with any of the LCT member agencies, the family can also self-refer. The LCT Coordinator will complete the LCT Referral Form, with the family’s assistance.

See Chart 2 for a breakdown of the agencies that referred to the LCT. Of the 51 youth that came through LCT, 41% were referred by Harford County Health Department (specifically, the Teen Diversion program), 21.5% were referred by Harford County Department of Social Services, 16% were referred by Harford County Public Schools, 16% were referred from other agencies (non-profit agencies, residential treatment centers, court system, etc.) and 5.5% were self-referrals.



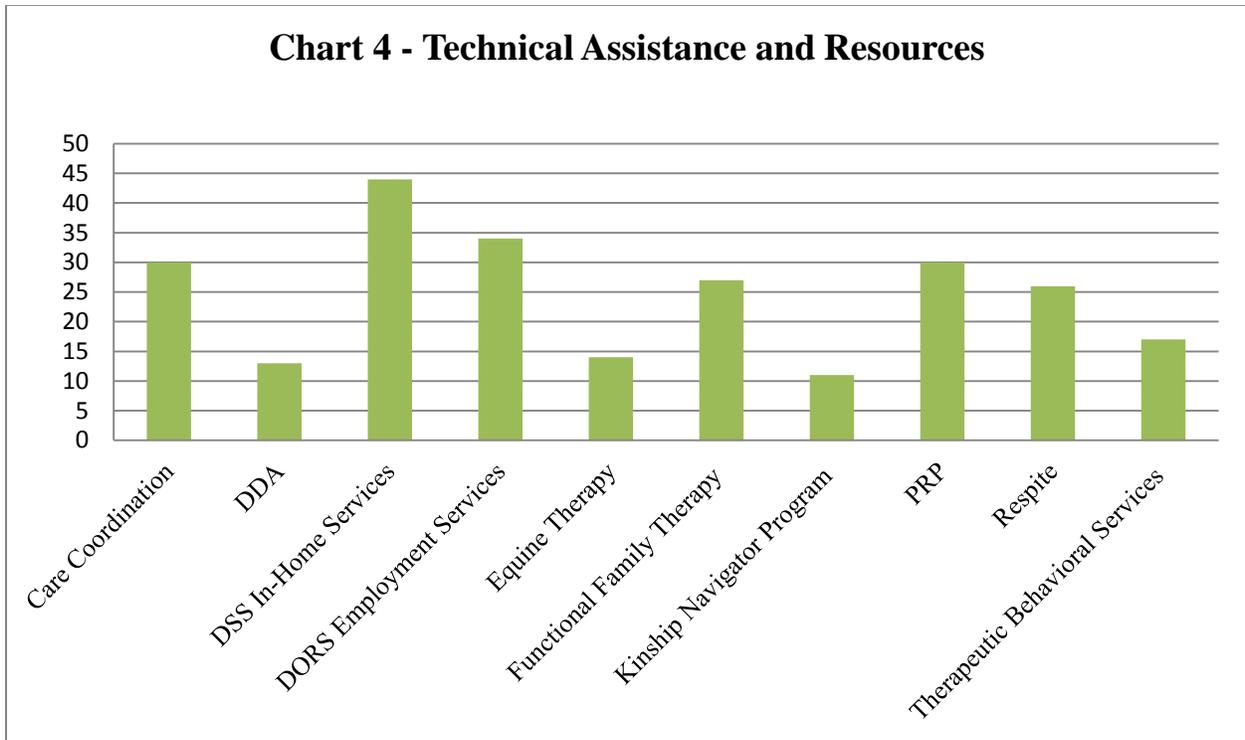
### Presenting Concerns

Families come to the LCT with varying levels of concerns for their children. Of the 51 youth included in this report, the top presenting concerns were anger/aggression, elopement, juvenile justice system involvement, mental health concerns, self-harm/suicidal ideation and substance abuse use. There are other presenting concerns that arise at LCT, but only those most discussed are included here. See Chart 3 for a breakdown of the top presenting concerns that were discussed.



## Technical Assistance and Resources

During the LCT meeting, technical assistance and resources are discussed. Families are given information on resources in the County with contact information. The LCT Coordinator follows up with families 2 - 4 weeks after the initial LCT date and in the future if requested by the family. See Chart 4 for a breakdown of the types of resources provided to families. Each resource is described in greater detail below. This list is not all inclusive of the various resources within the County that are available to families.



### *Care Coordination*

Care coordination involves organizing activities and sharing information among all of the participants concerned with a youth's care to achieve safer and more effective care. The main goal of care coordination is to meet patients' needs and preferences in the delivery of high-quality, high-value health care. Care coordination involves conducting an intensive family interview upon entry and then building a team of people that will work with the youth and family in their community. That team could be composed of school staff, mental health professionals, advocates, family members, and community members. Staff help families build relationships with supports and services and help them understand and access public mental health services.

### *Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)*

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) partners with people with developmental disabilities to provide support and resources to live fulfilling lives. It is the primary State agency that funds community-based services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. It

provides a coordinated service delivery system, so that people receive appropriate services oriented toward the goal of full integration into their community. The community-based service delivery system includes various home and community-based services and supports provided through either a Medicaid State Plan, Waiver program or via DDA State funded services.

#### *Department of Social Services (DSS) Consolidated In Home Services*

Consolidated In-Home Services is a continuum of non-entitlement service programs designed to promote the safety and well-being of children and their families; enhance a parent's ability to create a safe and stable home environment; and maintain permanency while preserving family unity. These programs are designed to enable a child to remain safely at home while receiving intervention services. Ensuring the safety, well-being and permanence of children is paramount to child welfare practice throughout Maryland. A referral to Consolidated In-Home Services is based upon the safety and risk factors present in the family, as determined by standardized risk and safety instruments.

#### *Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS)*

Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) helps people with physical, emotional, intellectual, developmental, sensory and learning disabilities go to work and keep their jobs by providing services such as career assessment and counseling, assistive technology, job training, higher education and job placement. DORS will assign a counselor who will discuss DORS services and find out if an individual is eligible for these services. Many DORS counselors are specially trained to work with specific groups like high school students or individuals who are deaf/hard-of-hearing, blind or have persistent mental illness.

#### *Equine Therapy*

Equine Therapy (also referred to as Horse Therapy, Equine-Assisted Therapy, and Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy) is a form of experiential therapy that involves interactions between patients and horses. It involves activities (such as grooming, feeding, haltering and leading a horse) that are supervised by a mental health professional, often with the support of a horse professional. Both during the activity and after the youth have finished working with the horse, the equine therapist can observe and interact with the youth in order to identify behavior patterns and process thoughts and emotions. The goal of equine therapy is to help the youth develop needed skills and attributes, such as accountability, responsibility, self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and self-control.

#### *Functional Family Therapy (FFT)*

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an empirically grounded family intervention program for at-risk youth aged 11-18 and their families; including youth with problems such as conduct disorder, violent acting-out, and substance abuse. FFT is multi-systemic and focuses on the treatment system, family and individual functioning, and the therapist as major components. Within this context, FFT works first to develop family members' inner strengths and sense of being able to improve their situations.

### *Kinship Navigator Program*

The Kinship Navigator Program is an information and referral program that supports kinship caregivers who are caring for their minor relative(s), who are unable to remain safe in the care of their parents. Kinship Navigator services targets kinship caregivers who were not involved in the child welfare system as an outreach prevention strategy that promotes safety, permanency and well-being. Local department of social services have a designated Kinship Navigator, who is available to provide services to relative caregivers. Kinship Navigators are knowledgeable about their community resources and services available in their respective jurisdiction.

### *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP)*

A Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP) provides a wide-range of support services and educational programs to promote independent living skills such as understanding one's illness; medication management; symptom/illness management; proper nutrition; personal hygiene; money management; and smoking cessation. The program also offers therapeutic recreational components including art; creative writing; wellness and exercise; computer classes; and group activities. Off-site therapeutic activities may include shopping trips, picnics, bowling, the library and visits to local attractions. The programs work to ensure that the whole health goals are met for individuals consenting to rehabilitation services.

### *Respite*

Respite care provides parents and other caregivers with short-term child care services that offer temporary relief, improve family stability, and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect. Respite can be planned or offered during emergencies or times of crisis. The two types of respite offered in the County include: community based and out of home respite.

### *Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS)*

Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) is designed to provide rehabilitative treatment interventions to reduce or improve target behaviors and maintain the improved behaviors through the restoration of a participant to his or her best possible functional level. The services provide the participant with behavioral management skills to effectively manage the behaviors or symptoms that place the participant at risk for a higher level of care. The goal of these services is to restore the participant's previously acquired behavior skills and enable the participant to develop appropriate behavior management skills.

### **Local Care Team – Outreach**

The LCT Coordinator has spent significant time in her role working on outreach efforts within the County to let community stakeholders know about the LCT and the services it can provide. For FY 19, those outreach efforts included:

- PTA Presentations at the following schools: Homestead Wakefield Elementary School, North Harford Elementary School, Youths Benefit Elementary School, Norrisville

Elementary School, Darlington Elementary School, Forest Lakes Elementary School, Deerfield Elementary School, Prospect Mill Elementary School, Magnolia Middle School, North Harford Middle School, Edgewood Middle School, Fallston High School, Bel Air High School and presented to the Harford County Council of PTA's.

- Distributed brochures to local library branches through the Harford County Public Library.
- Attendance at Community Events: Edgewood Community Event, Back to School Haircut Event, Victory Park event, Teen Court Program, 2nd Chance Job and Resource Fair, World of Faith Outreach Christmas Give-a-Way Event and Bel Air High School's Parent 101 Resource Night.
- Met with Harford County Public Schools Director of Student Services, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services and Mental Health Specialist to discuss LCT services.
- Met with staff at Family & Children's Services, the ARC Northern Chesapeake Region and the Harford Family House to discuss LCT services.
- Presented at the Harford County Department of Social Services 2nd Thursday Presentation, Child Welfare Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings and Family Involvement Meetings; the Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC) Meeting; and Harford County Public Schools Special Education Designee Meeting (Elementary and Secondary grades).
- Provided information at the 14th Annual Child Protection Awareness Symposium; 2nd Life Matters Harford County Suicide Prevention Conference; 14th Annual Drug Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Symposium; and the 2018 Relatives Matter Conference.