

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

Fiscal Year 2024 Report

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's guardian, 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.

The LCT is not a venue to review a single agency's program plan and cannot guarantee admission to any recommended facility or program. It does not have any authority or responsibility over other agencies or facilities and does not directly control any funds for placements or community-based services. Meetings occur on a regular, usually weekly basis. The LCT functions 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 also maintain a directory of all community-based resources in the jurisdiction, organize training for LCT members and present information and resources to groups of stakeholders about the LCT.

Membership

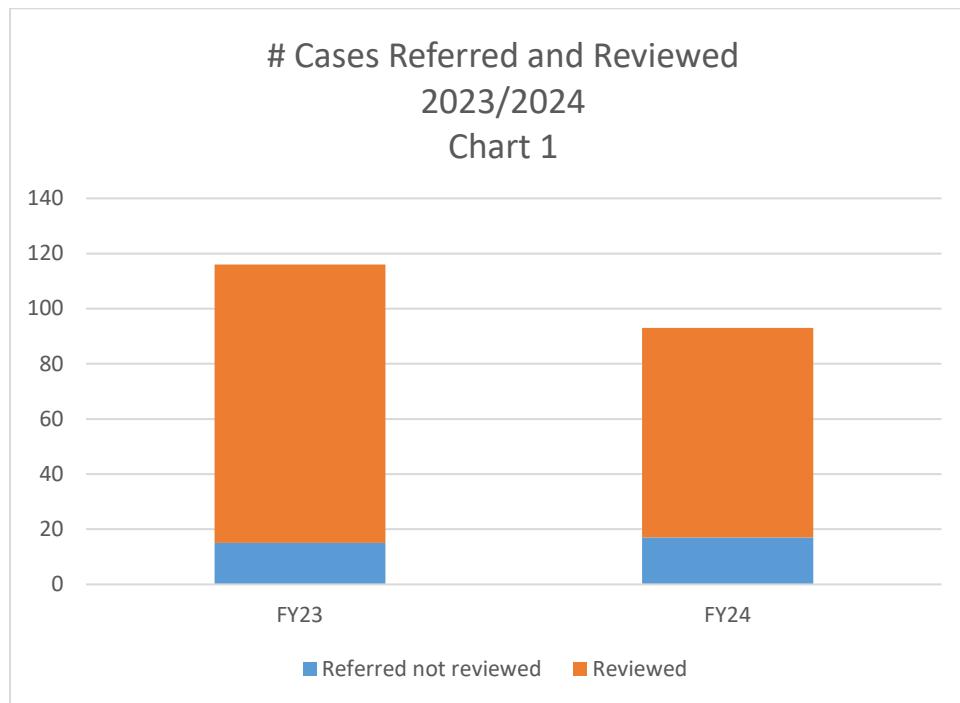
LCT Members are expected to attend all meetings and if they are unable to attend, they should notify the LCT Coordinator in advance and send a designee whenever possible. The parent or guardian must be in attendance. LCT includes at least one representative from the following agencies:

- 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
- Office on Mental Health / Core Service Agency of Harford County

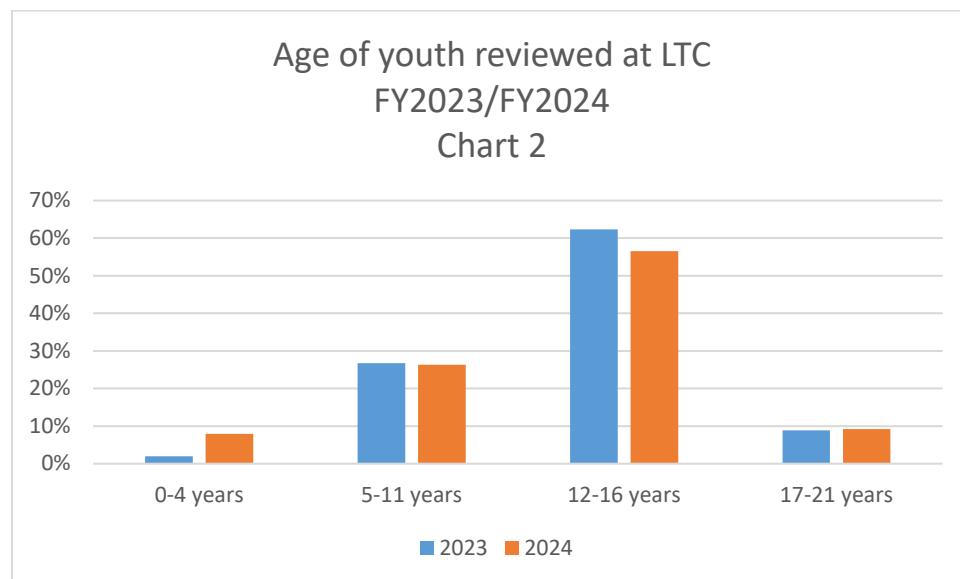
All records or information shared at an LCT meeting is confidential and will not be re-disclosed without the consent of the guardian.

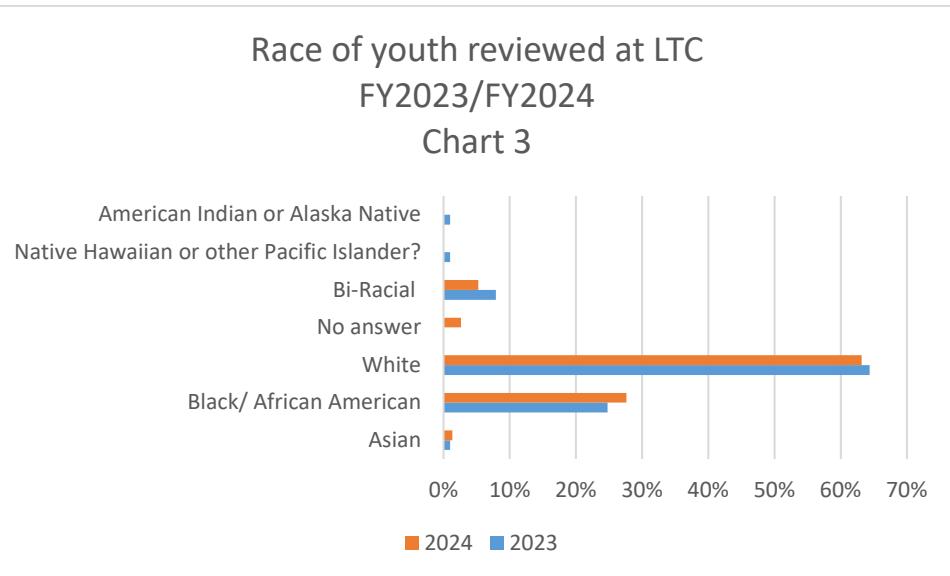
Statistics & Data

This report includes demographic and descriptive data from completed referral forms, which are filled out by parents/guardians and member agencies. During Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, July 2023-June 2024, the LCT received 93 referrals and 76 of these referrals were reviewed by the LCT. There was a reduction in referrals and reviews at the LCT compared to FY 2023. In FY 2024 18% of cases referred were not reviewed by the LCT.

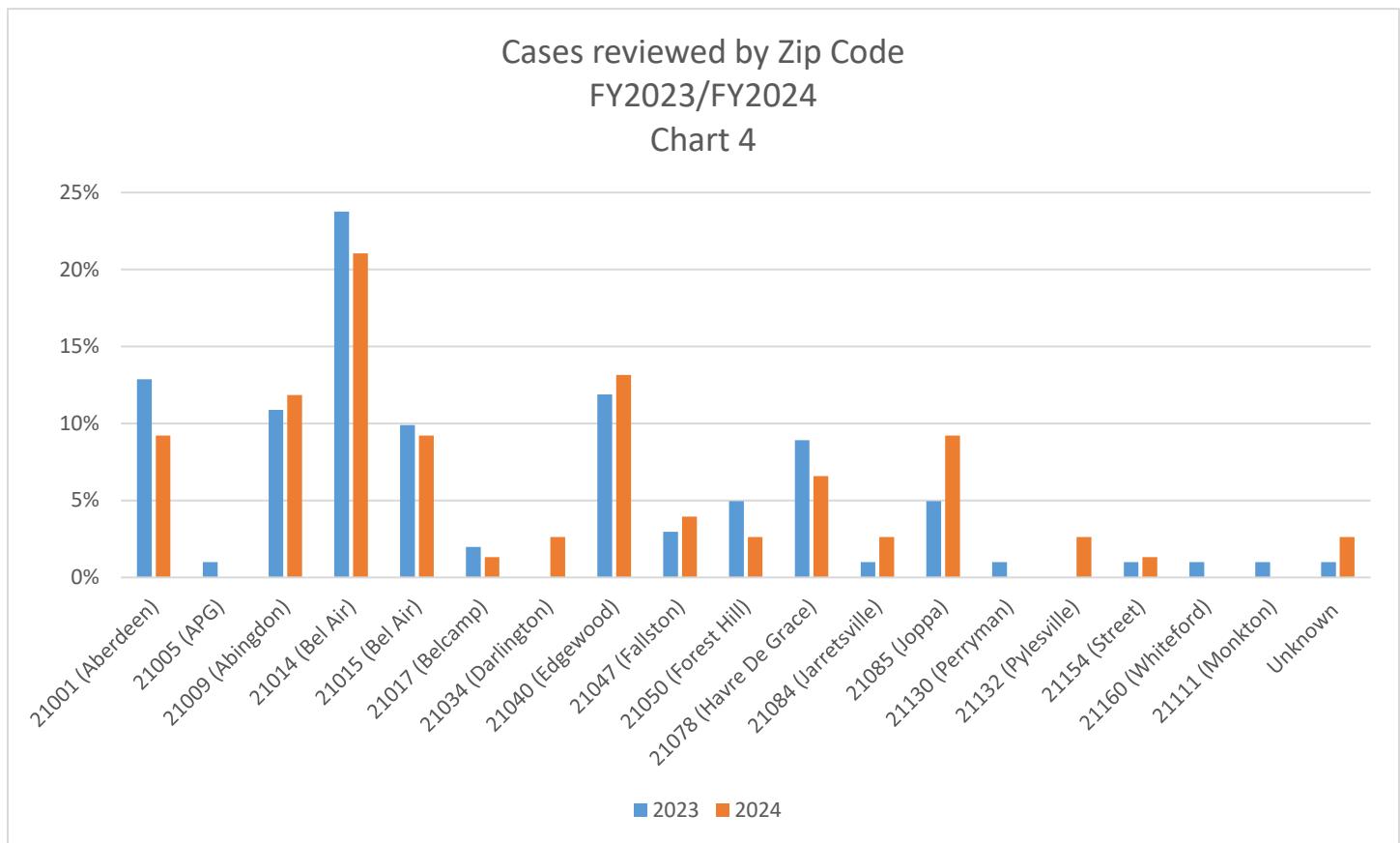


Of the 76 youth, 60.5% identified as male, 38.2% identified as female and 1.3% identified as LGBTQIA+. Chart 2 provides a breakdown of age of the youth (at the time of referral to the LCT); and Chart 3 provides a breakdown of the race of the youth.





In 2024 49% of referrals came from zip codes in Census Tracts where the percentage of children living in poverty was over 30%. Chart 4 provides a breakdown of the zip codes where youth resided at the time of the LTC.



Case Types

Prior to December 2023 the LCT reviewed three types of cases: (1) technical assistance and resources, (2) review and approval for the Teen Diversion Program, and/or (3) review and approval for a Voluntary Placement Agreement request. In December 2023 the Teen Diversion Program was disbanded. This loss of a resource did not result in a need for more voluntary placement agreements. See Chart 5 for the breakdown of case types per month

1. 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.

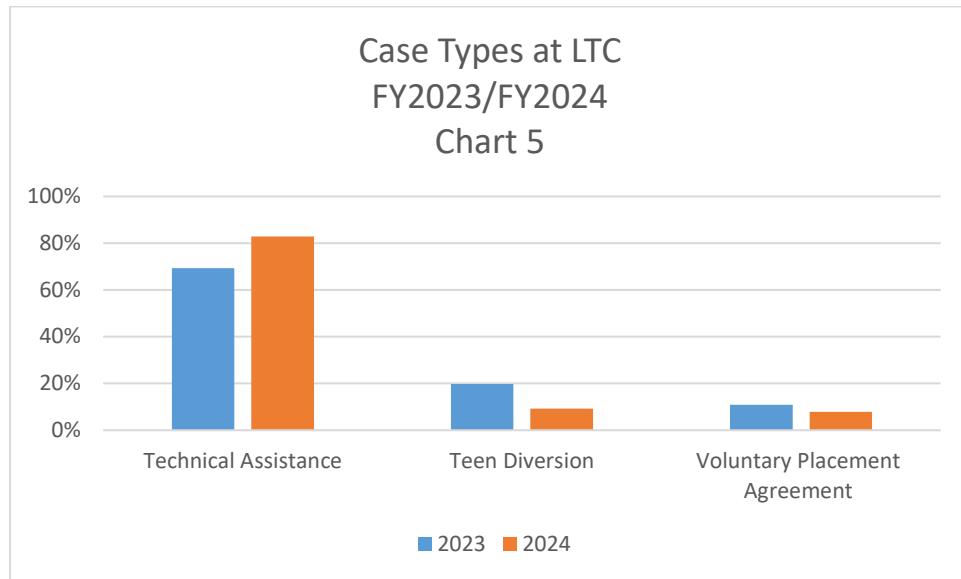
2. Teen Diversion Program (July – December 2023)

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 13-17, 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 LCT serves as the mechanism that reviews and refers youth to the Program. An application and intake packet must be completed by the parent / guardian of any youth referred to the program; and all applications are reviewed by the Teen Diversion team for final determination of appropriateness and acceptance into the program.

3. Voluntary Placement Agreement

In Maryland, children enter out-of-home care for a variety of reasons and under several circumstances. The Voluntary Placement Agreement Act was enacted to provide a voluntary out-of-home placement for a child with a documented, developmental disability or mental illness to provide treatment for the child related to the disability that they are unable to receive at home. The placement could include a Residential Treatment Center placement or a Diagnostic Center placement.

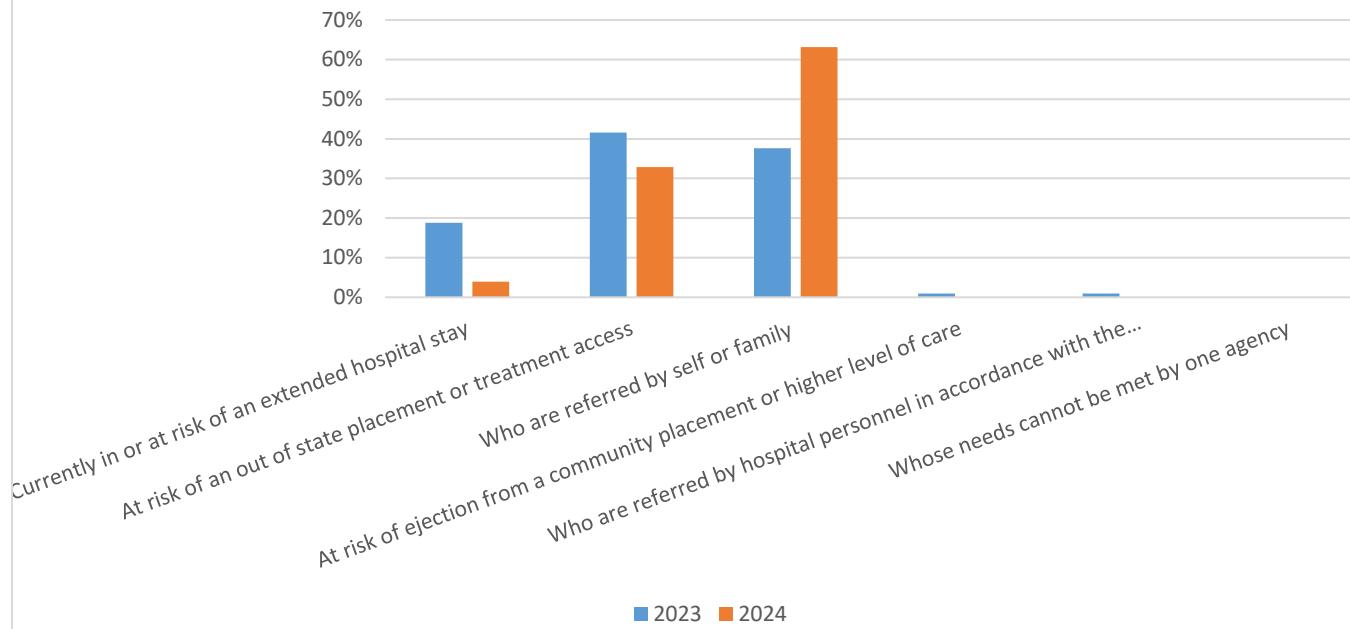


Categories of review

Families can be referred to the LCT by member agencies or families may self-refer. For GOC reporting there are 6 categories

1. Currently in or at risk of an extended hospital stay
2. At risk of ejection from a community placement or higher level of care
3. At risk of a community/ RTC/psychiatric/ out of state placement or treatment access
4. Whose needs cannot be met by one agency
5. Who are referred by hospital personnel in accordance with the Universal Hospital Discharge Planning Protocol
6. Who are referred by self or family

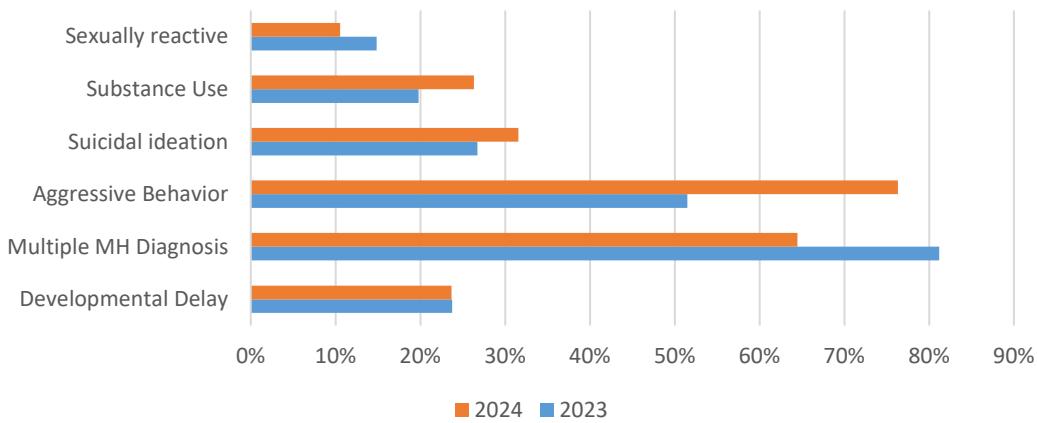
Category of review
FY2023/FY2024
Chart 6



Presenting Concern(s)

Families come to the LCT with different needs and often with multiple presenting concerns. Of the 76 youth reviewed in FY2024, the top presenting concerns were aggressive behavior, multiple mental health diagnoses and suicidal ideation. There are other presenting concerns that arise at LCT, but only those most prevalent are included here. In 2024 there was an increase in families presenting with concerns relating to aggressive behaviors, suicidal ideation and substance use. Concerns relating to aggressive behaviors presented in 76% of all cases in FY2024 this is up from 51% in FY2023. See Chart 5 for a breakdown of the top presenting concerns that were discussed.

Presenting Behaviours at LTC
FY2023/FY2024
Chart 7



Technical Assistance and Resources

After assessing a youth's needs, the Local Care Team collaborates, with the family, to identify relevant programs and services that could provide support. These resources may include therapeutic, health, educational and vocational services, crisis intervention, safety planning, family/peer support, recreational opportunities and more.

Outreach

The LCT Coordinator dedicates time to outreach efforts within the County engaging community stakeholders to raise awareness about the LCT and the services it offers.

In 2024 there were a total of 44 outreach efforts which included community events, advisory councils and boards, and school events.