

DMPD Emergency Mental Health Services

October 7, 2024

City of Des Moines





Not every emergency through 911 needs a response from Police Officers.

The Mobile Crisis Response Team and C.A.R.E. Team provide alternative resources to respond to the rising number of mental health emergency calls.

The teams' mission is:

To respond and serve **all people** in our community that are experiencing a crisis; advocating with **compassion, empathy** and **understanding**.

Mobile Crisis Response Model

The Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) has been serving Polk County since 2001

- Mental Health professionals pair with a law enforcement officer and respond to mental health-related calls when there is a criminal element, safety issue or safety is unknown
- MCRT is staffed by mental health professionals who are Broadlawns employees
- MCRT responds throughout Polk County but is officed in DMPD as 90% of calls are in Des Moines
- Once safety of a scene is established, MCRT members can conclude the call alone at their discretion



C.A.R.E. and MCRT's Lorna Garcia (DMPD Liaison) and Jennifer Sundquist (Broadlawns Team Lead)

Meet Our Mobile Crisis Response Team



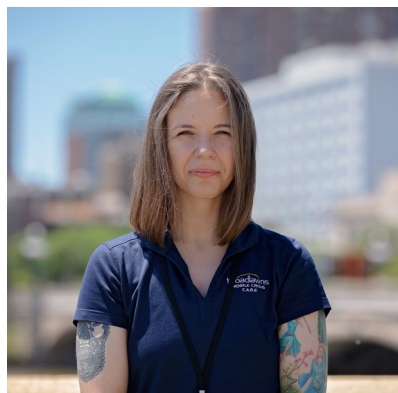
Laurie Jeffries



Carol Vignaroli



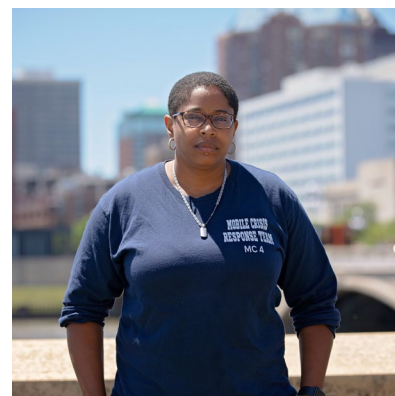
Carmaletta Hilton



Dani Harrison



Mary Wiemers



Candis Duke

Mobile Crisis Success Stories



“ I responded to a man with suicidal ideation one night. He was grieving but against going to the hospital. **We worked through an extensive safety plan together and coping skills.** 90 minutes later he called me saying he needed more help and was ready to go to the hospital. I returned and transported him and assisted him through the process.”

- Dani Harrison

“ I received a call from an elderly woman asking to be admitted to the hospital for extreme anxiety and panic attacks. I was able to talk her through coping exercises, **decrease her anxiety** and get her crisis stabilization services to start the next day. **She was grateful to get immediate help** without having to go to the emergency department.”

- Carol Vignaroli



Crisis Advocacy Response Effort (C.A.R.E.) Model

The C.A.R.E. Team has been serving Des Moines since 2021 and is based off a crisis response model from Austin, TX

- The City of Des Moines dedicates Local Option Sales & Services Tax revenue to fund this program
- C.A.R.E. is also staffed by Broadlawns employees and shares an office with M.C.R.T.
- Partnering with Broadlawns provides continuity of care for community members
- The C.A.R.E. program has two components:
 - **Non-law enforcement field response**
 - 7 days a week 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
 - **Mental health professional in the DMPD telecommunications center**
 - Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Roles of our mental health professionals:

- Triage calls
- Short-term crisis counseling
- Referrals
- Community resources
- Safety planning

Role of C.A.R.E. In The Field

- Routine welfare checks
- Mental health calls
- Follow-up phone calls
- Miscellaneous calls (child and parent disputes)
- Safe and discreet transportation to clinics, hospitals and service providers
- Provide creative solutions to overcome barriers to basic needs
 - Psychiatric medications pick-up, monthly injections, food pantries, etc.



Meet Our C.A.R.E. Team



Riley Fisher
(Pediatric Specialist)



Sabrina Welcher



Alex Bitting



Lori White
(Pediatric Specialist)



Rob Zlomke
(Telecommunications)

C.A.R.E. Success Stories



“ I was called out to a gas station where a 10-year-old non-verbal child with autism was lost. We struggled to communicate with him before **finding a way to communicate using drawings** to eventually help him find his home and return to his family safely. ”

- Sabrina Welcher

“ Through my communication, with people, **I let them know they matter** and that our team is here to **assist during their low times**. I feel success through making impactful connections – like a callback where I was able to help a struggling young adult find support groups for LGBTQ youth. ”

- Rob Zlomke



Since Our Last Update

- Hiring completed for remaining C.A.R.E. and MCRT positions
- MCRT is now staffed 24/7 (since fall 2023)
- No turnover since last update
- New DMPD dispatch greeting is introduced
 - “Do you need police, fire or mental health services?”
- Telecommunications supervisor roles were backfilled
- DMPD telecommunicators were given suicide intervention training



C.A.R.E. and Mobile Crisis Impact

Call numbers for Fiscal Year 2024

Total Calls

6,384

Responded to by
MCRT or CARE Team

Arrests

68

On calls with MCRT or
CARE presence (1.1%)

Transported

1,058

People to higher level
of care

Stabilized

5,258

In the community
(82.3% of all calls)

C.A.R.E. Specific Numbers

Call numbers for Fiscal Year 2024

Total Number of Calls

2,415

With a C.A.R.E response
in FY2024

Field Responses

1,073

By C.A.R.E. team members

Of those field responses,

744

Were calls without a
police officer

Calls handled

1,342

By C.A.R.E. crisis advocates in
dispatch – without a field response

Looking Ahead

The future of MCRT and C.A.R.E. is bright – this is where we're focusing our efforts

- **Deliver** compassionate service
- **Grow the program** to increase availability and scope of services
- **Promote successes** to increase awareness of services
- **Foster positive relationships** with community
- **Collaborate** with DMFD's Mobile Integrated Healthcare program

Uncertainties

These areas require attention moving forward and may require changes to our service

- **Designing Program Expansion** to provide more mental health responses
- **Securing Funding** to expand service delivery in Des Moines

QUESTIONS?



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THANK YOU