CSG Justice Center
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Examining the Intersection of Crisis Response and the Justice System in Pennsylvania:
Lessons Learned from Listening Sessions with Key Stakeholders

CJAB Annual Conference | April 22, 2025

Megan Davidson and Kate Reed

The Council of State Governments Justice Center

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.

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How We Work

- We bring people together.

- We drive the criminal justice field forward with original research.

- We build momentum for policy change.

- We provide expert assistance.

Agenda

I. Project Overview

II. Qualitative Process

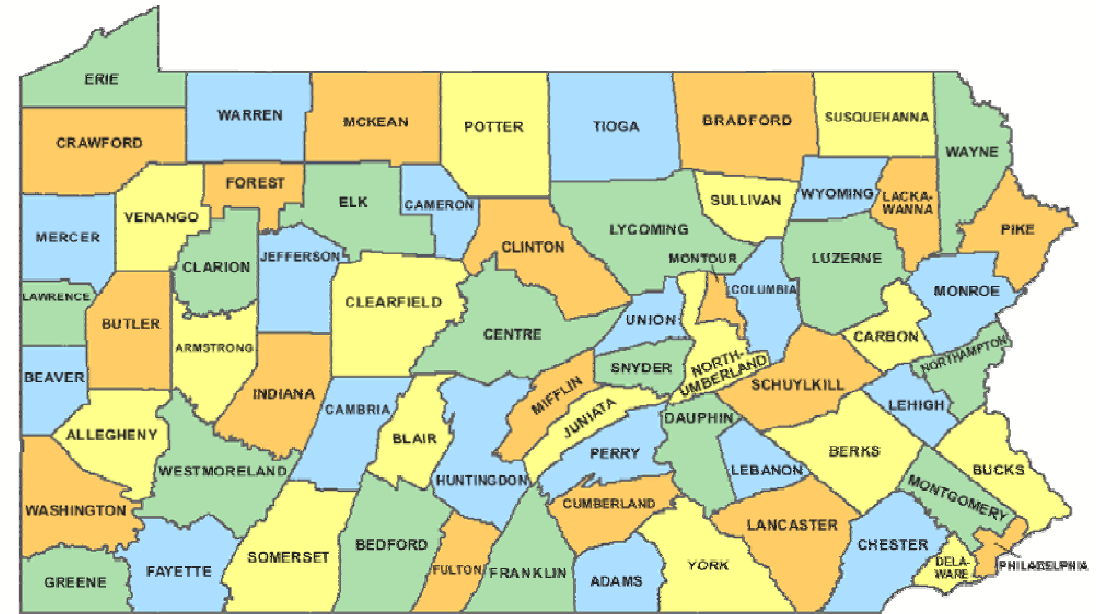III. Initial Findings

IV. Recommendations Snapshot: CIT Programs

V. Reflections and Feedback

VI. Next Steps

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Goals

1. Assess current infrastructure/landscape of crisis intervention services and infrastructure across the commonwealth, with a focus on understanding gaps and developing recommendations for sustainable funding mechanisms.

2. Evaluate current implementation of CIT and identify opportunities for expansion, enhancement, and increased data collection.

Key Activities

Conduct landscape review of crisis infrastructure and CIT programs.

Identify key stakeholders and hold listening sessions.

Prioritize meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.

Synthesize information into a written report.

Develop and disseminate an action plan.

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Phased Approach

Phase 1: Planning and Information Gathering

(April 2024–Sep. 2024)

Phase 2: Data Collection and Synthesis

(Oct. 2024–June 2025)

Phase 3: Action Planning

(July 2025–Dec. 2025)

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Information Sources

September 2024–February 2025

14 listening sessions

250+ registrants

50% attendance

33 CIT survey responses

5 individual stakeholder interviews

10+ meetings with 911/988, researchers, and state leaders

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Guiding Questions for Qualitative Analysis

What are the gaps in crisis infrastructure in Pennsylvania?

How is CIT defined in different locations in Pennsylvania?

What are the challenges to CIT implementation and enhancement?

What's going well with the interaction between the justice and crisis systems?

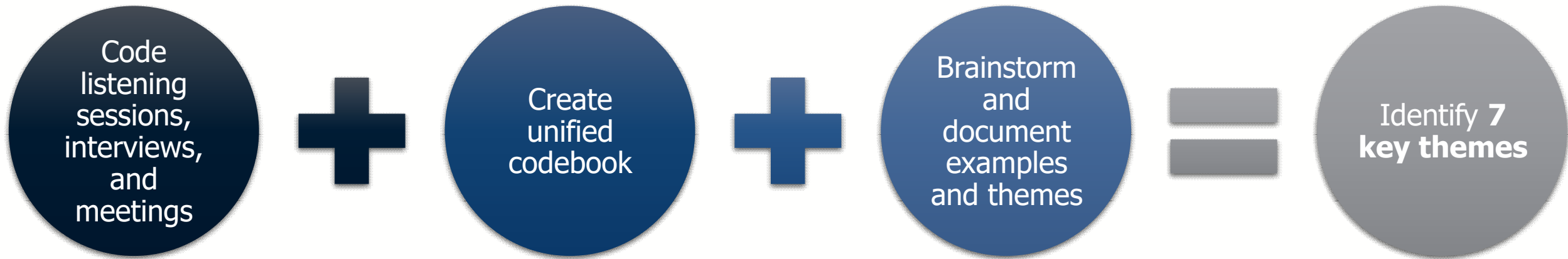To what degree are counties following the Memphis model?

What suggestions do stakeholders have about improving the crisis system?

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Qualitative Coding

Code listening sessions, interviews, and meetings **+** Create unified codebook **+** Brainstorm and document examples and themes **=** Identify **7** key themes

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What are some key themes that come up for you?

Key Themes

Infrastructure & Legislation/ Regulations

Workforce

Leadership & Collaboration

Training

Innovation & Capacity Building

Funding

Data

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Infrastructure and Legislation/Regulations

- OMHSAS crisis regulations
- Mental Health Procedures Act
- 988 standard operating procedures
- Routing crisis calls
- 911 and 988 transfer liability

Photo by Olha Ruskykh via Pexels

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Workforce

Recruitment and retention

Qualified candidates

Utility and use of peers

Officer wellness

Crisis staff supports and resources

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Leadership and Collaboration

Photo by Alexas Fotos via Pexels

- Leadership buy-in
- Partnerships with community and people with lived experience
- Perception of 988
- Crisis line collaboration
- Crisis response type identification
- Law enforcement experiences with local mobile teams and hospitals

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Training

Expanding topics and audiences	Dispatch and emergency responder training	Opportunities to practice training principles
Logistics of training availability and attendance	Standardized training curricula for co-response	Behavioral health and justice system cross-training

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Innovation and Capacity Building

Community involvement

Creative marketing strategies

Preventive services and crisis services for youth and aging populations

988 functionality and regional 988 call centers

Alternatives to police transport for mental health commitments

Telehealth and other technology

Positive experiences with new walk-in centers

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Innovation and *Capacity Building*

Input from people with lived experience/expertise

Resource education

Available supportive services and/or follow-up services

Support for peer-run warm lines

Sobering centers and peer-run crisis respites

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Funding

- More money!
- State crisis funds
- Insurance parity
- Medicaid reimbursement rates
- Sustainability, innovative funding models, and alternative payment strategies
- Grant use
- 988 surcharge legislation

Photo by Reynaldo #brigworkz Brigantty via Pexels

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Data

State-led data governance → Compelling data reporting → Privacy and information sharing laws → Cross-agency data and info sharing → Coding calls and capturing outcomes → Public-facing dashboard and transparency → Data accuracy and quality

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CIT Progams: Initial Findings

CIT Programs

- Commitment to CIT
- Positive impact on communities
- Dedicated county CIT committees
- Doorway to more behavioral health and law enforcement programming
- Expanding CIT training to other justice partners
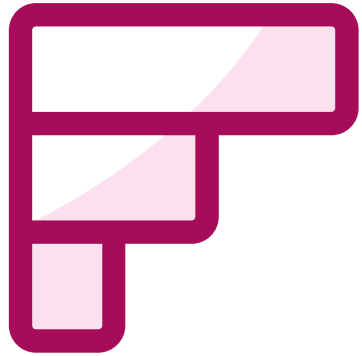
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CIT Programs

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- Law enforcement staffing and buy-in
- Strengthening connections between CIT coordinators
- Program fidelity and standards
- Train-the-trainer opportunities
- CIT-specific funding needs

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What themes are most important to you? (1 is most important, 7 is least important)

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Recommendations Snapshot: CIT Programs

Infrastructure

- Build CIT program infrastructure at the state level.

- Establish statewide CIT steering committee to oversee program training, policies, coordination, and expansion.

- Formalize CIT coordinator connections and increase opportunities to collaborate.

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Recommendations Snapshot: CIT Programs

Standardization and Certification

- Draft statewide CIT program standards in collaboration with the CIT steering committee.
- Develop and implement protocol for CIT program certification in Pennsylvania.
- Develop statewide guidance for addressing specialized training needs.
- Standardize ongoing and refresher CIT training courses and requirements.

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Recommendations Snapshot: CIT Programs

Data

- Develop statewide CIT program data collection and reporting.
- Build public-facing dashboard for statewide CIT training and program visibility.

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Recommendations Snapshot: CIT Programs

Funding and Legislation

- Work with legislators to advocate for state-appropriated CIT funds.
- Develop 988 surcharge legislation and use funds for CIT-related programming.

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Reflections and Feedback

Overall reflections and feedback?

What is missing? What would you add?

What is mischaracterized or misunderstood?

What efforts are underway that aim to address any of the themes/examples?

What are your recommendations?

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We'd Love to Hear from You!

Submit additional thoughts
and feedback by June 1:

https://bit.ly/4jsnEBz

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Next Steps

Incorporate feedback from CJAB Conference.

Continue researching promising practices across the country.

Finalize recommendations and written report.

Develop and implement action plan with PCCD, OMHSAS, and MHJAC.

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Thank You!

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