



TO: Honorable Members of the City Council

FROM: Mayor Jesse Arreguín (Author), Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor)

SUBJECT: Develop a pilot program for 5-10 Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) persons who have required frequent interventions

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to develop a pilot program for 5-10 Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) persons who have required frequent interventions; aim is to improve their well-being and prevent or dramatically reduce calls for service; the pilot would implement a “friendship or care team” for each as described below to build trust, support, address loneliness; teams would be staffed with existing contracted outreach providers; teams would keep a brief daily log of their experience and calls for service would be tracked; pilot to be evaluated and report back to Council quarterly to determine efficacy.

BACKGROUND

Persons with SMI have been known to devolve into dangerous episodic behavior with tragic results--for themselves and their victims (a few extreme examples attached). Unfortunately, we have very few tools to prevent this behavior. This item asks that we pilot one potential avenue.

AOT (Assisted Outpatient Treatment) is a legal intervention tool involving a lengthy legal process and a court order at the County level.

AOT is not suggested here. Rather what is suggested is to use one feature of AOT: the outreach team.

The outreach team or a “buddy” team can be implemented immediately outside of any court process. The team’s role is to develop an ongoing relationship to hopefully prevent or dramatically lessen violent or problematic behavior. The team would attempt to build rapport, reach out on a regular (daily if possible) basis offering friendship, help, clothing, an ear, “whatever it takes” to calm and, if at all possible, guide a person toward services. The team would have access to a clinician for support and guidance. A log would be kept noting condition, responsiveness, effectiveness of communication, etc. The log would also note what works best, what could be more helpful. Along with records of calls for service, these notes would inform the evaluation of the pilot.

San Francisco's AOT program is a two-person team.¹

This item directs the staff to develop such a pilot program in concert with appropriate "others," implement contract modifications if necessary with existing service providers, develop guidelines for the teams, and determine the appropriate metrics to evaluate its efficacy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time.

CONTACT

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¹ <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oservices/mentalHlth/AOT/default.asp>