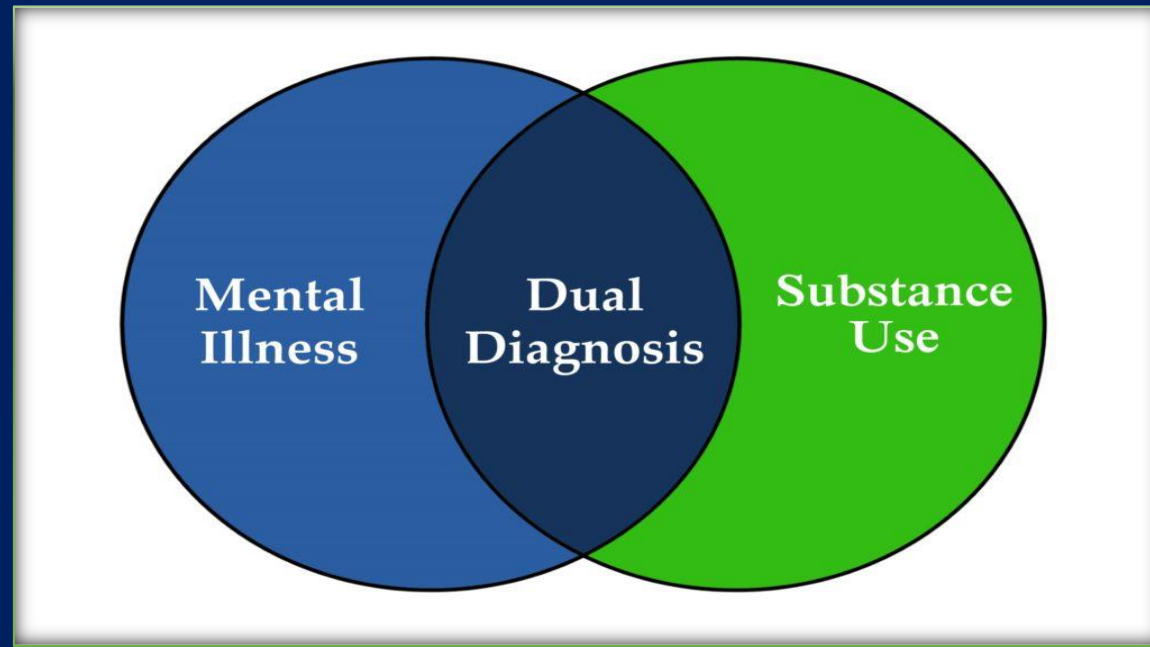




# The Living Room Wellness Center



Sheriff John Idleburg  
State's Attorney Eric Rinehart  
Law & Judicial Committee Update  
July 25, 2023



The Living Room Wellness Center seeks to remedy the overutilization of emergency rooms and jails by providing peer support specialists that aid individuals in crisis to deescalate, gain stabilization, and return to their optimal level of functioning in the least-restrictive environment. Individuals who commit low-level offenses because of a mental health or substance use crisis can receive stabilization services **instead of** being incarcerated.

# LRWC: Organization

- **Joint operation** between Sheriff's Office, Independence Center, and Lake County State's Attorney's Office
- Original Committee included Chair Hart, Sheriff Idleburg, Judge Nerheim (as SA), Clerk Vega (as COS to Sheriff), Bill Gentes of LCOI, Bruce Johnson of NICASA, Donna Jo Maki (from CAO at the time)
- Center launched in August 2021 with added institutional support from Lake County Health Department, MacArthur Safety & Justice Challenge, Healthcare Foundation of Northern Lake County
- Funding into 2023 & 2024 comes from Independence Center, MacArthur Grant (with Sheriff as lead agency), and US DOJ/BJA Grant controlled with SAO as lead agency
- Standing intra-agency working group includes these groups

# LRWC: Training for Law Enforcement

- *350 officers have been trained throughout Lake County*
- Introduce **goal** of LRWC: reduce the overutilization of jails and emergency rooms for situations fueled by a mental health crisis
- Describe LRWC and its services
- Review protocol:
  - Must be voluntary on participant's part
  - Use is at officer's discretion
  - Only low level, misdemeanor offenses
    - No offenses of sexual nature
    - Domestic incidences require extreme caution
    - Not eligible if individual has outstanding warrant
- Steps for bringing to the LRWC



## **The Living Room Wellness Center**

The Living Room Wellness Center at the Independence Center provides a safe, comfortable, inviting environment where skilled Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSS) provide crisis intervention referrals and other needed services for individuals experiencing a crisis stemming from mental illness and/or substance use disorder. The Living Room is an alternative to the emergency room or jail.

### ***The following services are offered:***

- Crisis Intervention
- Referral/linkage
- Shower facilities
- Recreational activities
- Healthy snacks/ refreshments
- Comfort room to rest or relax
- Self-assessment and self-advocacy
- Person-centered crisis/safety planning
- Transportation Services

**1-888-707-1614**





***Assess*** that individual is experiencing a mental health crisis and/or crisis due to substance use. No crime has been committed OR the crime is a low level offense that would be considered a misdemeanor. The offense is not: a violent crime, including domestic battery; violation of an order of protection; DUI, or a sexually related offense. If criteria is met, LRWC can be an appropriate option instead of jail.

***Conduct*** Criminal/Questionable History (CQH) reveals record free of active warrants.

***Explain*** and inform person in crisis of the LRWC as option/ describe their services.

***Obtain*** **voluntary** participation in LRWC program. Also obtain:

**A** - Consent to search, following department policy

**B** - Consent to transport.

***Notify*** staff of Living Room Wellness Center that you will be bringing someone for assessment and services. You can reach them by calling **1-888-707-1614**

***Hand-off*** warmly to staff of LRWC. After providing staff with necessary documentation, return to the road.



# Lake County Police Drop-offs

2022

2023

Quarter 1

12

30

Quarter 2

21

35

Quarter 3

24

Quarter 4

29

Total for 2022

86 (unique incidents)

# Usage by Department 2022

COAST	24%
North Chicago	22%
Waukegan	29%
Gurnee	10%
Libertyville	8%
Vernon Hills	2%
Lake Forest	2%
Mundelein	1%

\* Percentages are rounded to nearest whole number



# Most Frequent Reasons for Police Drop-offs

- Residents in distress
- Mental Health concerns
- Trespassing
- Disorderly conduct
- Undomiciled persons
- Intoxication
- Domestic issues

# Strategies Moving Forward

- Expand community engagement efforts
- Continue adding municipalities that are receiving training
- Offer “refreshers” for departments that have received training)
- Build on relationships with local hospitals to gain inroads in reducing overutilization of emergency rooms
- Maintain sustainability beyond grants