

Research to Action: A guide for developing LEAD in Allegheny County

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Thursday, December 19, 2019





Agenda

- Presentation by JoEllen and Kat - 30 minutes
- Panel discussion - 30 minutes
- Small group discussions & report out - 30 minutes
- Discuss next steps - 15 minutes
- Networking and informal debriefing - 15 minutes

Why we're here

- 5-month project to do preliminary research on Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)
- Key questions:
 - What do stakeholders think about LEAD?
 - How could Allegheny County develop a LEAD program?
 - Which communities want to participate in the initial LEAD pilot?



THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

HOWARD HEINZ ENDOWMENT • VIRA I. HEINZ ENDOWMENT



Who we talked with

Presentations to:

50+

Local elected officials, police chiefs & municipal managers

In-depth interviews with:

9

Local elected
officials

9

Police chiefs

8

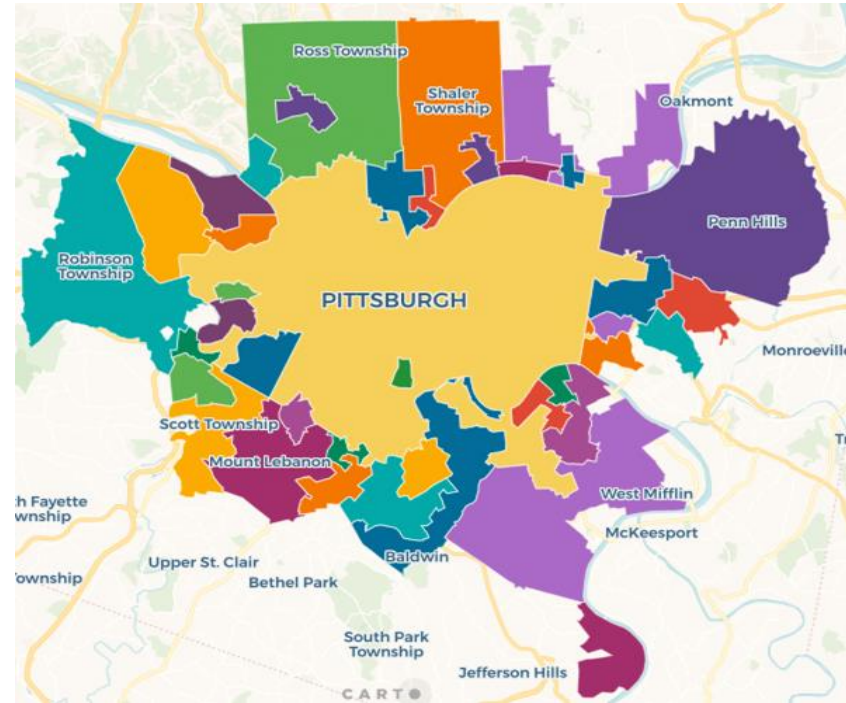
Municipal
managers

30+

Other
Stakeholders

Why you're here

- We interviewed you or someone you know during this project
- We need your collaboration & input as we move forward
- CONNECT has modeled this collaboration for 10 years and is providing this convening space





Allegheny County is complex

130

Municipalities



109

Police Departments

1.2 million

Residents




75.3%

Live outside Pittsburgh



Too Many People with Behavioral Health Issues are in the CJ system

- 75% of people in the Allegheny County Jail have mental health or drug and/or alcohol issues, and 48% have both
- People with mental health issues are more likely to be victims
- At least 81% of people in the jail are being held for non-violent crimes
- Nearly 1 in 10 people who died from opioid-related overdoses in Allegheny County in 2017 were released from jail less than a month before they died



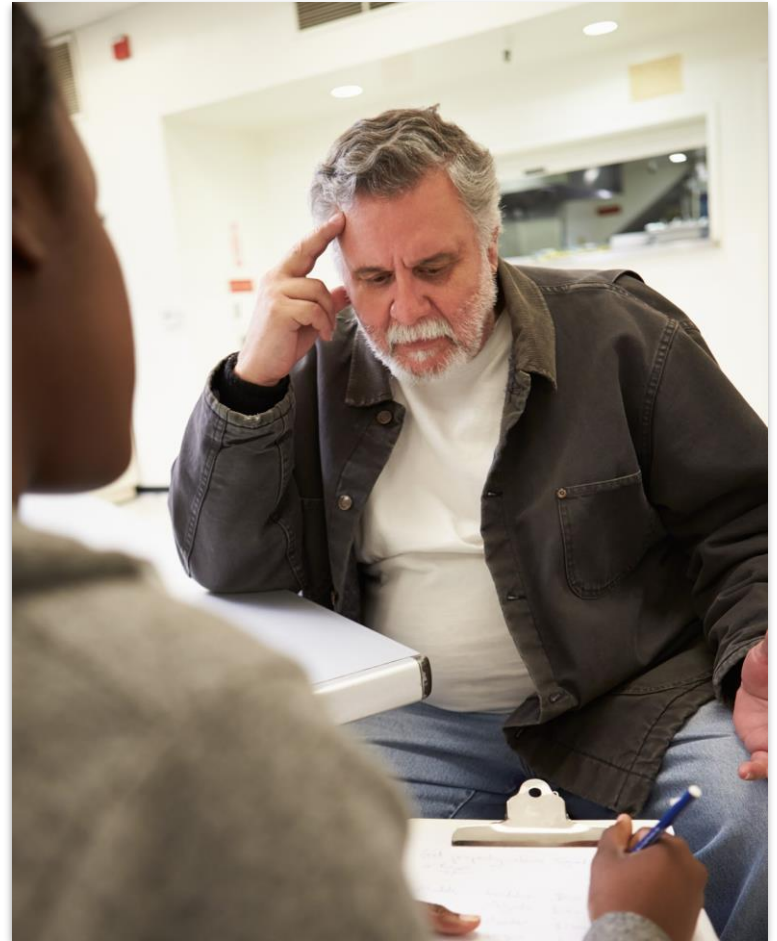
“Everybody assumes that drug use is the number one criminal driver, but it’s even in the top four. Mental health is not the number one factor either. People with mental health disorders are more likely to be victims, more likely to be incarcerated longer because they have mental illness.” - Criminal justice stakeholder




“Low-level arrests are making it hard to focus on serious crimes”

- Police are doing *a lot* of social work
- Increased incarceration isn't making us safer
- # of officers ≠ less violent crime in Allegheny County
- It's expensive - 42 cents of every property tax dollar goes to criminal justice
- From police to probation, stakeholders want earlier interventions

“Can someone be successful long term with a criminal record? You give them the resources, you’ve done your best to help them succeed on probation, but you still saddled them with a criminal conviction that will hinder their life long term - for the next 40 or 50 years.”





“Are we safer now than we were 20 years ago? Are there fewer people addicted to heroin than there were 20 years ago? We’re not winning.”

-Police Chief



“A high priority should be placed on expanding crisis intervention training for police and other law enforcement personnel and on diverting individuals who are suffering from mental illness or substance use disorders into effective treatment.”

- Allegheny County Institute of Politics 2016 Report



All stakeholders we interviewed were in favor of pre-arrest diversion

We could not find a single stakeholder who thought pre-arrest diversion was a bad idea (we tried)



What is LEAD?





What is LEAD?

Police connect a person to LEAD case managers for intake. Case managers:

- Complete intake assessment
- Work with participants to identify goals and needs
- Connect participants to supportive services





LEAD lowers recidivism rates

Seattle:

58%

Less likely to be
arrested

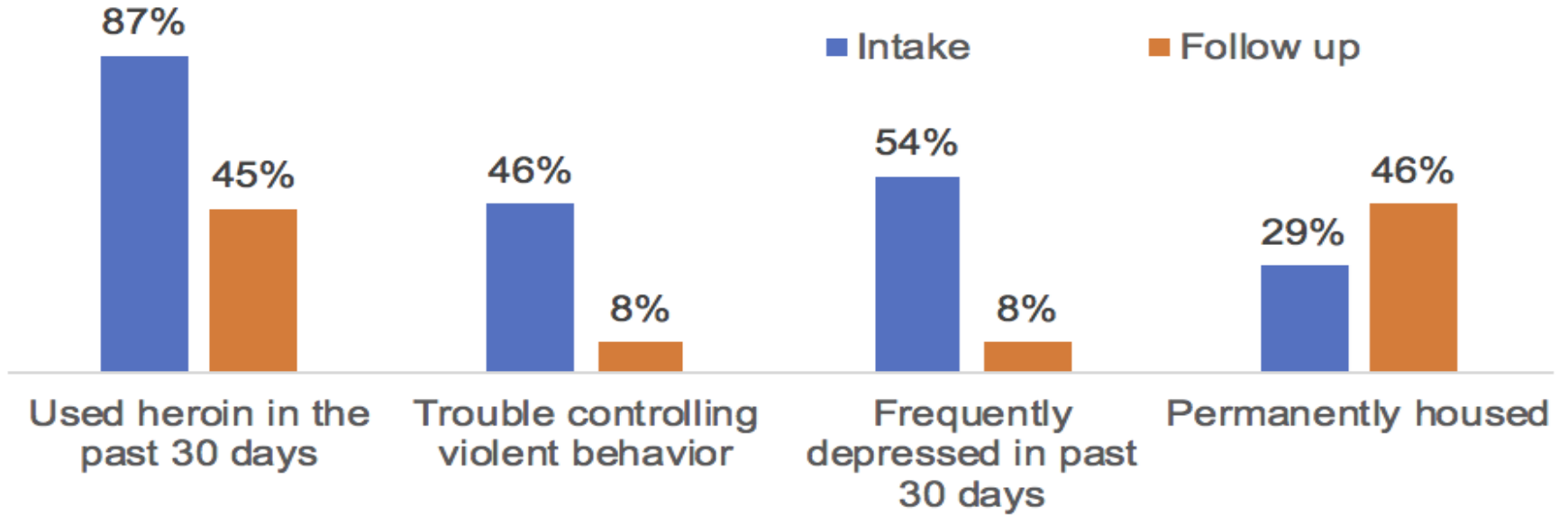
Santa Fe:

20%

decrease in new
arrests

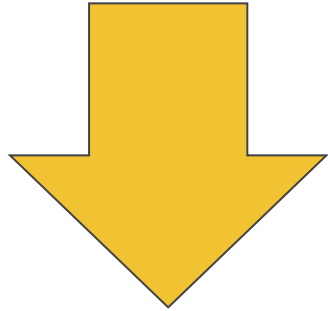


LEAD increases health and well-being

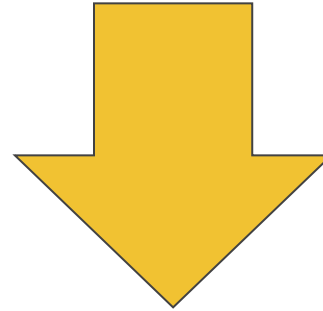




Decreases in Criminal Justice Expenses



Santa Fe:
\$1,558
savings per
person (17%)



Seattle:
\$2,100
savings per
person



HOPE Youth Diversion Program

In Pittsburgh's Northside, police are collaborating with Foundation of HOPE on a pre-trial diversion program targeted at youth ages 12-26. Youth and young adults who commit low-level crimes, such as possession or petty theft, are connected to community-based services as an alternative to incarceration.





**What do people think of
LEAD?**





“Our officers do want to work with people instead of just busting them, which is why I think LEAD would be a good fit because they want to work with people and help them for the most part. It's refreshing.”

- Local council member



Pittsburgh

+

18 Munis

Want to
Explore LEAD

77%

of survey
respondents said
LEAD would be
Beneficial or
Very Beneficial in
their community
(20% were unsure)



“Why no negative consequences?”

- Consequences don't deter people
- Consequences don't heal people
- Consequences can cause long-term harm

“If more negative consequences worked, then the person doesn't have an addiction.”

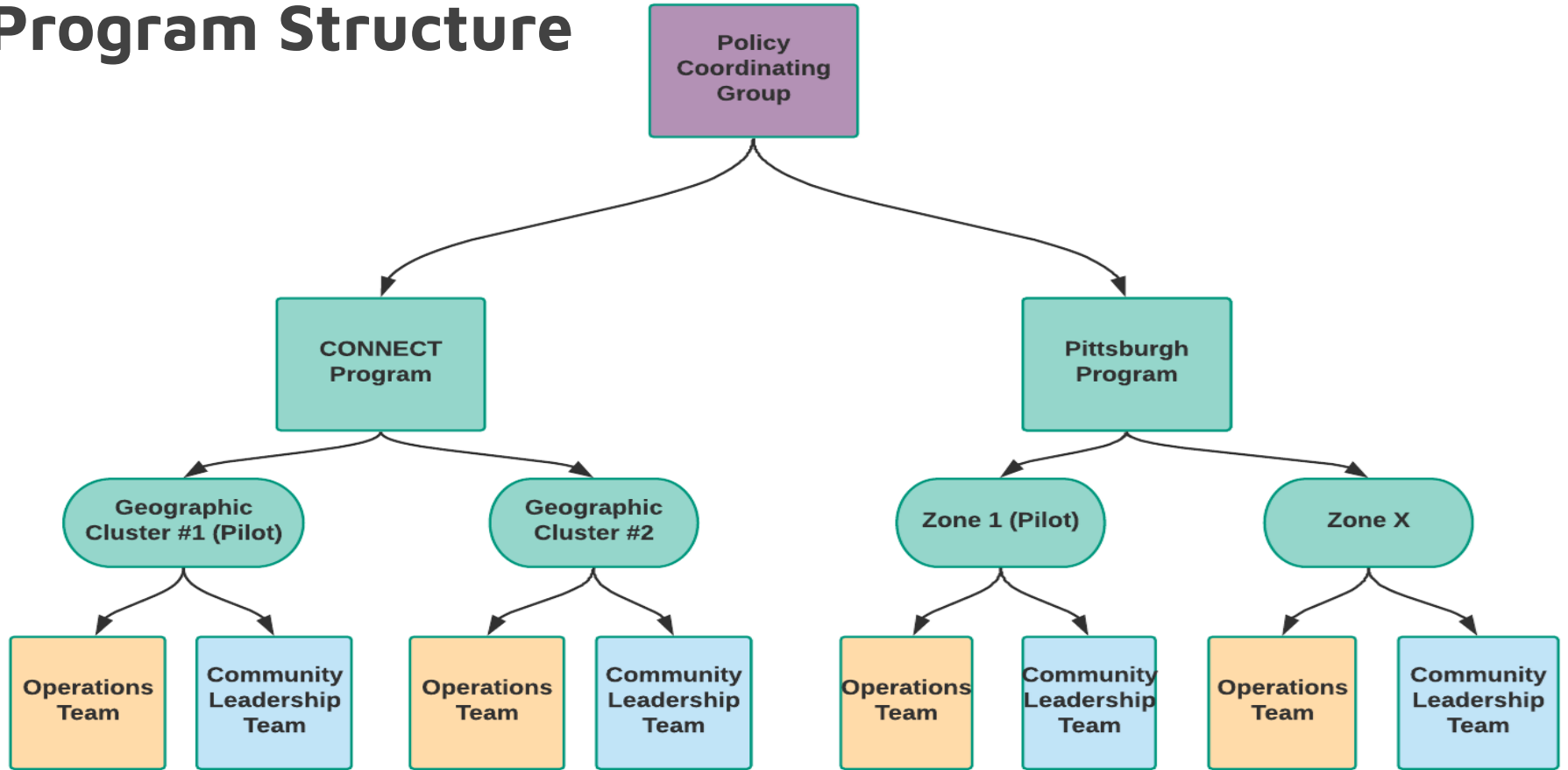
- *Harm reduction expert*



What we recommend



Program Structure





Incorporate local input on eligibility...

- **Which offenses? At a minimum, people are usually diverted for drug possession, petty theft and sex work.**
- **What about past convictions?**
- **A limit to how many times a person can be diverted?**
- **What about people on probation?**



What police want

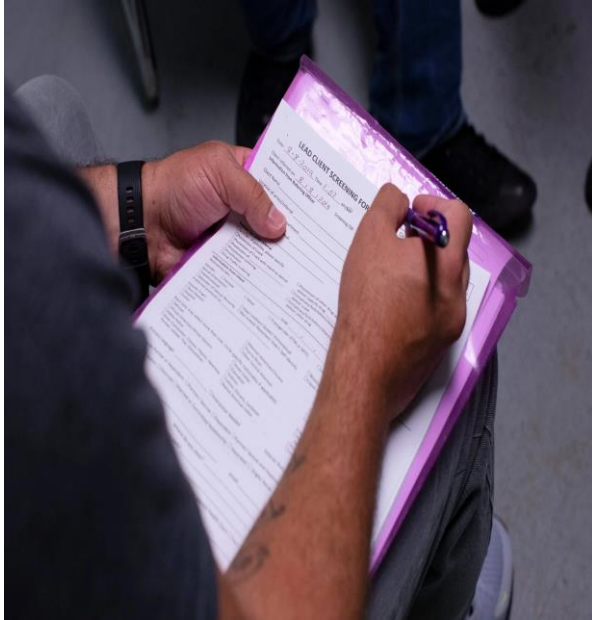
- **A simple referral process that saves time**
- **Diversions count the same as arrests for promotions, etc.**
- **Strong support from police command staff**
- **Overtime for LEAD activities - offset less overtime for court cases**
- **Relationship between police and case managers**
- **Updates on participant outcomes**
- **“Another tool in the toolbox”**



Other Recommendations

- Treat community members like experts
- Ensure the social service system can handle referrals
- Consider the needs of sex workers when designing the program

Referrals & Case Management



- Use a “warm hand-off” process
- Case manager traits
 - *Mobile*
 - *Trained in harm reduction and trauma-informed care*
 - *Able to build relationships in the community*
- Case management options
 - *County-wide case management agency*
 - *EMS agencies*
 - *Local case management agency (e.g. Foundation of Hope in Zone 1)*



Municipal LEAD Roadmap

Stage 1 - Exploring

14 Communities at this stage

Stage 2 - Building Support

4 Communities at this stage

Stage 3 - Developing

Pittsburgh Bureau of Police

Stage 4 - Implementing

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Panel Discussion - 30 minutes

The background is a solid orange color. In the top-left corner, there are three vertical bars of varying heights, each composed of several overlapping semi-transparent orange circles. In the bottom-right corner, there are four vertical bars of increasing height from left to right, each also composed of several overlapping semi-transparent orange circles.

Small Group Discussions - 30 minutes