

Scranton Area CIT Mission



The mission of the Scranton Area Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is to build a community partnership among police officers, community organizations, consumers and family members which provides police officers the understanding and skills to identify and manage situations involving mental health consumers in crisis.

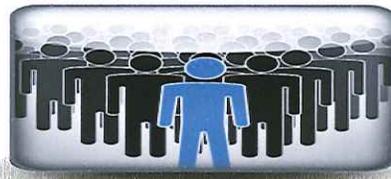


It doesn't matter who the person or organization is, its about building bridges and about responding in a way that protects the safety of the officer, and respects and protects the safety of the other person.

CIT is about doing the right thing, for the right reasons.

CIT Goals

- ◆ Increased Officer Safety
- ◆ Increased Consumer Safety
- ◆ Increased Community Safety
- ◆ Diversion of Persons in a Mental Health Crisis Away from the Criminal Justice System and Toward Treatment
- ◆ Establish a Relationship of Trust between Consumers, Families and Law Enforcement
- ◆ Provide Officers Other Options



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**LAW ENFORCEMENT,
MENTAL HEALTH
PROVIDERS,
FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND
CONSUMERS:**

**PARTNERS IN CRISIS
IN
LACKAWANNA
COUNTY**



What is the Crisis Intervention Team

The Crisis Intervention team, or CIT, is a pre-booking jail diversion program designed to improve the outcomes of police interactions with people in a mental health crisis. It is a community based collaboration of the local police departments, mental health consumers, family members and mental health providers in which police officers and other law enforcement personnel learn to recognize the behaviors of people in crisis and how they can interact with people in that crisis.

The hope is to keep persons with mental illness out of the criminal justice system for misdemeanor charges. Persons with mental illness are arrested more frequently and spend more time in jail than the average citizen. Jails are not mental health institutions and are not properly equipped to handle this population.

Traditional police methods, misinformation, a lack of sensitivity in the community and symptoms may cause fear and frustration for consumers and their families. Too often, officers respond to crisis calls where they felt at a disadvantage or were placed in a no-win situation.

CIT gives officers more options to help persons in crisis.



When & How Can CIT Help

A person experiencing a mental health crisis may already have a diagnosis of mental illness or they may be experiencing symptoms for the first time. Friends, family and community may recognize that it is a mental health crisis or they may be bewildered and frightened by the irrational and sometimes bizarre behaviors a person in crisis may exhibit. A crisis can happen to anyone at any time and having the ability to help a person when they are in crisis is a valuable tool.

When emergency dispatchers are notified of an incident that may involve a person in mental health crisis they assign that call to a CIT officer, if one is available. It is important that the emergency dispatcher has as many details regarding the incident as possible. They have been trained to recognize the signs of a mental health crisis and will relay pertinent information to the dispatched officer.

It is the responsibility of the person calling for assistance to provide as many details as possible. If the caller believes it is a mental health crisis they should ask for a CIT officer. This may increase the likelihood of a good resolution.

CIT officers are not counselors and they do not diagnose but they have been trained to recognize the signs of a mental health crisis.

They have been taught crisis de-escalation techniques that may help the person in crisis feel safer. They are familiar with the resources in the community that may help an individual and their family get through the crisis.

If you are involved in a mental health crisis that requires police intervention call 911 or your local police department

Tell them:

- ⇒ Nature of the complaint
- ⇒ How long person has been in crisis
- ⇒ History of mental illness/symptoms
- ⇒ History of violence
- ⇒ Medications the person may be on
- ⇒ Name and or number of treatment provider

When a CIT officer is dispatched they go immediately to the scene, assess the situation to determine the nature of the complaint and the degree of risk, intervene as necessary to ensure the safety of anyone involved, and then determine and implement an appropriate disposition.

The officer may resolve the situation at the scene, contact a treatment provider, provide a referral to treatment services, or transport the person directly to the local psychiatric emergency department for further evaluation.