






**Sebastian County Mental Health  
Criminal Justice Coordinating  
Committee Report**


**July 6, 2016**


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- Team Selected to attend Stepping Up National Summit held April 18 in Washington D.C.
    - Annie Hendricks, Circuit Judge
    - Dan Shue, Prosecuting Attorney
    - Bill Hollenbeck, Sheriff
    - Jim West, Director of Western Arkansas Counseling and Guidance Center
    - David Hudson, County Judge


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- Focus of the Summit:
  - Jails should no longer serve as de facto psychiatric facilities.

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- The DC Summit was designed to give attendees and other stakeholders a clear understanding of what constitutes a comprehensive, system-level plan that, when implemented, will reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jail, and provide the services needed by them in an appropriate setting.


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- The number of people with mental illnesses in jails is three to six times higher than that of the general public.

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- As a result, local budgets are strained by jails spending two to three times more on people with mental illnesses than they do on people without those needs. The exorbitant cost to taxpayers to arrest, adjudicate, segregate, and supervise these individuals is having little-to-no impact in terms of public safety or public health.

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- At the DC Summit, county teams engaged with criminal justice and behavioral health experts, along with fellow county representatives from across the country, to consider the latest research and strategies and learn from the challenges and approaches other jurisdictions have experienced.

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- The Summit Team worked on site to develop and evaluate plans to reduce the housing of the mentally ill in the county jail, to develop an action plan, set priorities to take action and to measure progress on the plan.



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- Key Points to our action plan:
    - Implement CIT Training for Law Enforcement
    - Implement a CIT Treatment Facility for diversion of the mentally ill from booking into jail
    - Survey and Develop Local Service Delivery Partners to provide and support Treatment
    - Implement Mental Health Court
    - Define “mental illness” to include co-occurring substance abuse disorders as well as serious mental illness

- County leaders should ask and answer the following 6 questions:
- 1. Is our leadership committed?
- 2. Do we conduct timely screening and assessments
- 3. Do we have baseline data?
- 4. Have we conducted a comprehensive process analysis and inventory of services?
- 5. Have we prioritized policy, practice, and funding improvements?
- 6. Do we track progress?



**DANIEL SHUE**  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
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April 27, 2016

Honorable David Hudson  
Sebastian County Judge

Re: Sebastian County Mental Health Court

Dear Judge Hudson:


I am writing this letter in support of a team effort to create, establish, and maintain a Mental Health Court in Sebastian County. The team that has been assembled (Circuit Judge Annie Powell Hendricks; Sheriff Bill Hollenbeck; Jim West; yourself, and I) has already begun work regarding the target population, the types of cases to be accepted (misdemeanor and/or felony), program duration, and the treatment options. Judge Hendricks and I are aware of Administrative Order #14 and the broad authorization of mental health courts by the Supreme Court of Arkansas; however, we both feel strongly that enabling legislation by the Arkansas General Assembly will help clarify not only jurisdiction, but also give important guidance with defining eligibility and other core terms. The team members each have an understanding that incarcerating non-violent, mentally ill people in the Sebastian County Detention Center continues to result in unproductive jail stays, no treatment for the underlying mental health issue, and preventable recidivism. I believe it is in our power to change this scenario and I am personally committed to doing so.


SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Shue", written over a horizontal line.

DANIEL SHUE  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DS:js

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- **As a follow up to the DC Stepping Up Summit, Sebastian County held a Mental Health Summit May 25 – 26 in Fort Smith.**

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- Fort Smith Mental Health Summit: Briefing by Leon Evans from San Antonio regarding the CIT law enforcement and CIT Diversion Treatment programs implemented with success in that city, reducing jail population, arrests and recidivism from low status offenders that need treatment and do not do well in jail, resulting in significant savings in the criminal justice system.


- Fort Smith Mental Health Summit follow up Actions:
  1. Evaluate Medicaid Waiver/Review Coverage for CIT Treatment Facilities
  2. Brief State Legislature and Governor and request Support
  3. Draft State Legislation for Mental Health Court
  4. Evaluate State Legislation for a fee and/or court cost to offset Mental Health Court and CIT Treatment
  5. Support the Council of State Governments Arkansas Prison/Jail Study pending recommendations
  6. Develop procedures and methods to partner with local treatment agencies to implement a CIT Treatment Center in Fort Smith



**“Smart Justice” Spending tax  
money more effectively and  
efficiently**

**Incarcerate the Dangerous and  
violent offender**

**Divert from Incarceration the Non  
Dangerous Non Violent Offender**

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- **Comments from Other Team Members**
  - **Question and Answers**