



FRONT LINE INITIATIVE

POLICE & BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

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Town of Tyngsborough- Finance Committee
Town of Tyngsborough- Select Board

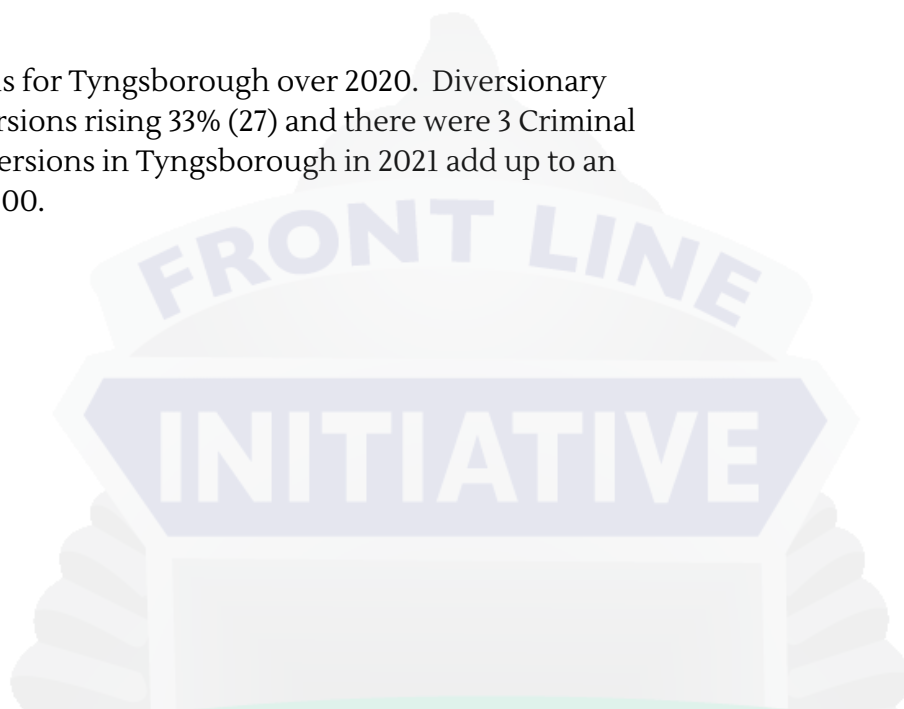
RE: Front Line Initiative Annual Report

Distinguished Members,

Since 2019 the Front Line Initiative has served the citizens of Tyngsborough providing open access to care and support for those living with mental health and substance use. With the increased daily life stressors brought on by various national and global complications 2021 saw levels of need rise to an all time high both locally and nationally. The demand for access to behavioral health services is now higher than ever before. With the Police Reform Law enacted in Massachusetts we began to see a shift statewide to a heavier need for co-response between police and clinicians as well as a greater need for police training. Tyngsborough Police department has served as a model department locally and nationally for its work in bringing behavioral health to the forefront of its community policing model. 2021 has seen many changes to the Front Line programming however the mission has remained the same. We continue to serve our five communities and now beyond as we expand our work into Middlesex County.

In 2021 the Front Line processed 2,185 behavioral health referrals from law enforcement, community members, and schools. Of the nearly 2,200 referrals received in 2021 The Town of Tyngsborough made up 4.3% of the referrals (94). Of the 94 referrals from Tyngsborough 97% are from Law Enforcement, 2% are Community Walk-Ins, 1% are School Referrals. In 2021, of the referrals for Tyngsborough the Co-Response Clinician was utilized on scene in 15%.

2021 saw a 16% increase in referrals for Tyngsborough over 2020. Diversionary outcomes rose in 2021 with ER Diversions rising 33% (27) and there were 3 Criminal Justice System Diversions. These diversions in Tyngsborough in 2021 add up to an estimated tax payer savings of \$115,500.



The Front Line Initiative has historically worked in three key areas: Prevention, Crisis Response and Recovery. 2021 saw the addition of a Education/Training as a new division of programming. Since 2019 the Front Line has been awarded 7 new grants to expand programming and has increased funding from \$175,000 annually to over \$1million. Staffing has risen from 2 full-time staff members in 2019 to 13 full and part time staff members by early 2022. This growth includes the expansion of Youth Prevention Education (new part-time project assistant), 2 full-time regional Co-Response Clinicians the addition of a full-time Recovery Support Co-Response Clinician and a Clinical Services Program Manager, build out of the Middlesex Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) this includes Program Manager, 2 full-time Regional Coordinators, and a part-time administrative assistant. This expansion also included the addition of Brene Brownie McSnuggles the Front Line Animal Assisted Co-Response Therapy Dog.

For FY23 the Front Line Initiative has seven (7) active grants that will cover the majority of the operating costs. These grants include: MASSCALL3 from Massachusetts BSAS, OD2a from Massachusetts BSAS/CDC, Co-Response from Department of Mental Health, CIT-TTAC from Department of Mental Health, Animal Assisted Co-Response from Greater Lowell Health Alliance and FY23 will be the final year of funding for the BJA Category 3 Expansion funding (due to close Sept 2022) from the Department of Justice.

Front Line Initiative anticipates a total operating budget for FY23 of \$1,051,431.20 (this is inclusive of current grants). Of this total funding \$837,103.80 covers salaries and fringe benefits, the remainder of the operating budget is utilized to cover program support, operation and development.

It is important to note that 2022 will mark the end of the BJA grant and therefore we have requested a total of \$138,000 in funding from the 5 communities that are part of the Front Line Initiative. We have requested each community contribute \$27,600. These funds will be utilized to continue to fund the Executive Director's role as well as programmatic operation of the Front Line.

The Front Line Initiative employees the following: Executive Director (salaried), Prevention Division Program Manager (salaried), Middlesex CIT-TTAC Program Manager (salaried), three (3) salaried Clinicians (Co-Response[2], Recover Support[1]), part-time Grant Coordinator (20hrs), and a part-time project assistant (15hrs). In 2022 the Front Line will be adding the following: two (2) salaried Regional Coordinators [CIT-TTAC], Clinical Services Program Manager (salaried), and a part-time administrative assistant (30hrs).

Annual program support and programming budget cover daily operating expenses as well as programming such as Mental Health First Aid Training for Officers, Crisis Intervention Training for Officers, community resources such as the Frontline.Crediblemind.com resource page, treatment transportation, emergency housing/food access, youth prevention, and community educational opportunities.

The Front Line Initiative has grown to become a statewide and national model program. 2021 saw the program honored by a Congressional visit from Congressman Seth Moulton who expressed interest in seeing the model expanded to other communities in his district and beyond. Additionally, the Middlesex County Sheriff has put forth the Front Line Initiative as a model program nationally. The Front Line Initiative has peaked the interest of the White House who in late 2021 requested information about the program with a copy of the presentation given to Congressman Moulton. The Front Line Initiative has been chosen for a feature in BJA Strategy Lab in 2022.

With the addition of the Middlesex CIT-TTAC in 2021 it grew the Front Line footprint beyond its five communities and allows for the opportunity to bring our modality to departments across the 60+ communities in our County.

Our Youth Prevention program under BSAS MassCall3 also pushes the footprint of Front Line as its work through the Prevention Partners of Northern Middlesex brings us into the additional communities of Wilmington and Westford as well as partnering with the City of Lowell. MassCall3 is currently in its planning and data review period to determine the depth of its work over the next 5-8 years. The focus has shifted in prevention to focusing on trauma and equity. In 2021 our prevention program provided Mental Health First Aid for Youth training to over 100 educators and community members and has received approval to provide training for an additional 200+ in 2022. Strong partnerships have continued to be built with Tewksbury Public Schools and community leaders to provide access to supports, educational opportunities, and youth based programming.

Our OD2a grant, also known as the RISE program, provides transportation assistance to support the communities of Tewksbury, Chelmsford, Dracut, Billerica, Tyngsborough, Lowell, Wilmington and Chelmsford. The program provided transportation through both Uber and Lyft during 2021, with a focus on supporting mental health and substance use recovery. Transportation support saw a significant resurgence in demand, a nearly 300% increase in monthly completed rides (19 completed rides in January 2021 to 68 completed rides in December 2021). Rides were most often requested for access to detox treatment, access to medical care, and out patient treatment. By offering this support we are able to keep participants in recovery, out of crisis and out of the criminal justice system.

Our newly added Middlesex CIT-TTAC provides access to training for officers and community members across the County. In 2021 we offered a pilot Crisis Intervention Team training for nearly 30 officers in Chelmsford. Trainings are planned to ramp up in 2022.

2021 was a productive year of growth and development for the Front Line Initiative and our partners. We believe that 2022 will continue to see unprecedented growth both in needs from the communities we serve as well as growth in program offerings. The Front Line Initiative is launching its Animal Assisted Co-Response program with Clinician Brownie (puppy) later in 2022 as field training is completed. Additionally the launch of the ActOut LGBTQIA+ Youth Film Festival and Conference in May of 2022, and the full launch of the Middlesex CIT-TTAC. We know that 2022 will bring increased access to resources, programming, and the Front Line Initiative will continue to grow as an evidence-informed national best practice.

As the Executive Director it is my honor to make myself available to the Town, this committee, the distinguished members, and Chief Columbus if needed for any additional assistance I might offer.

Sincerely,



Matthew C Page-Shelton, M.F.A, M.Ed., LMHC
Executive Director
The Front Line Initiative

