

Overview

The Crisis Care program provides law enforcement with 24/7 access to behavioral health professionals who can assist in responding to people experiencing a mental health crisis, ensuring these first responders have access to the resources they need to help people with mental illness, regardless of where they live. The Crisis Care program utilized connected tablet technology to connect behavioral health professionals with law enforcement to assist with de-escalation, stabilization and safety assessment during crisis situations regardless of the location; whether it is on the side of the road or in a living room. Importantly, the support does not cease following the initial crisis response. Crisis Care's unique model ensures individuals who were in crisis are connected to local mental health resources for follow-up care.

How does the Crisis Care program work?

- On-site law enforcement calls the crisis response team at Avel eCare to request a safety assessment.
- Law enforcement provides the individual in crisis with a tablet for a video session with the crisis response team.
- The response team initiates a video session with the individual by using the tablet. The crisis response team completes a safety assessment and follows up with law enforcement by phone or continued video session to discuss recommendations and also follows up with the identified community mental health center.

When would law enforcement call Crisis Care team?

- Individuals who are psychotic (e.g. delusional, hallucinating, off medications)
- Suicidal statements
- Inability to care for themselves (e.g. not showering, eating)
- Homicidal statements

How are existing community mental health centers involved?

- During the implementation process, the local community mental health center is, along with law enforcement, to identify any gaps in crisis response.
- Crisis Care is intended to address gaps, not replace existing services. In addition, the involvement of community mental health centers in the planning process is integral because Virtual Crisis Care connects individuals to these centers for follow-up care.

“By utilizing Crisis Care through Avel eCare, we’ve noticed significantly different outcomes than what we usually see. It’s less disruptive for the subject of the call, less stressful for the officers, and less costly for the agency. We need all the help we can get to maximize our resources and treat those experiencing mental health crises. Telemedicine is a simple, effective way to accomplish that goal.”

Butte County Sheriff Fred Lamphere