

## WHAT IS PROJECT OPEN DOOR?

Grant-funded through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Project Open Door is a law enforcement-assisted diversion pilot that teams York County and the York Opioid Collaborative (July 2019 - June 2021). An initiative to address the opioid crisis in this high-impact county, Project Open Door is a pilot envisioned to target low-risk offenders with Substance Use Disorder (SUD).

Project Open Door has two primary objectives:

- 1) Early and timely evaluation, referral, and placement into drug and alcohol addiction treatment for low-risk offenders or those at risk of becoming offenders, leading to ...
- 2) Diversion of low-risk offenders away from the criminal justice system.

## HOW WOULD PROJECT OPEN DOOR WORK?

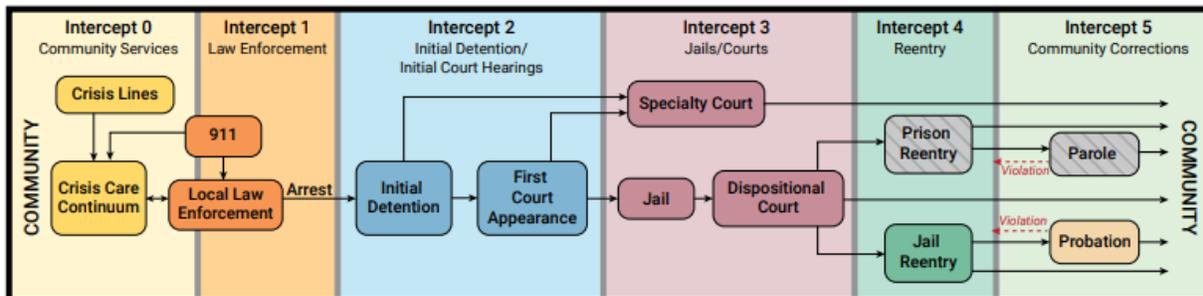
By intercepting individuals before they are booked and charged, Project Open Door seeks to delay or avoid charges if conditions of treatment and recovery are met.

Project Open Door aims to develop a Rapid Placement Capacity construct, whereby existing resources in the prison and probation system are leveraged, so individuals are aligned sooner with essential support and treatment options, preferably, before they become the custodial responsibility of the county judicial and correctional system. Project Open Door focuses on Intercept Levels 0 and 1 of the Sequential Intercept Model, a conceptual model developed to inform community-based responses to the involvement of people with mental and substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.<sup>1</sup> Project Open Door is informed by research, best practices and lessons learned from other jurisdictions, and listening sessions among both public health and law enforcement personnel in York County.

*Research indicates that the closer to the time of offense an individual is referred to treatment, the more successful their outcomes in treatment will be. Also, by over-involving low-risk offenders in the criminal justice system, their risk to recidivate increases with new criminal offenses.*

*Project Open Door is predicated on best practices gleaned from other law enforcement-assisted diversion (LEAD) efforts across Pennsylvania and the nation.*

The Sequential Intercept Model



### INTERCEPT 0 ACTIVITIES

**Mobile crisis outreach teams and co-responders**  
Behavioral health practitioners respond to people experiencing a behavioral health crisis or co-respond to a police encounter.

**Emergency Department diversion**  
Emergency department (ED) diversion can consist of a triage service, embedded mobile crisis, or a peer specialist who provides support to people in crisis.

**Police-friendly crisis services**  
Police officers can bring people in crisis to locations other than jail or the ED, such as stabilization units, walk-in services, or respite.

### INTERCEPT 1 ACTIVITIES

**Dispatcher training**  
Dispatchers can identify behavioral health crisis situations and pass that information along, so Crisis Intervention Team officers can respond to the call.

**Specialized police responses**  
Police officers can learn how to interact with individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis and build partnerships with the community.

**Intervening with super-utilizers and providing follow-up after the crisis**  
Police officers, crisis services, and hospitals can reduce super-utilizers of 911 and ED services through specialized responses.

<sup>1</sup> The Sequential Intercept Model was developed over several years in the early 2000s by Mark Munetz, MD and Patricia A. Griffin, PhD, along with Henry J. Steadman, PhD, of Policy Research Associates, Inc.

## WHAT IS PROJECT OPEN DOOR'S APPROACH?

Project Open Door will leverage the Sequential Intercept Model to:

- 1) **DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PICTURE** of how people with mental and substance use disorders flow through the criminal justice system;
- 2) **IDENTIFY GAPS, RESOURCES, AND OPPORTUNITIES** at intercepts 0 and 1 for adults with mental and substance use disorders; and
- 3) **DEVELOP PRIORITIES FOR ACTION** designed to improve system and service-level responses for adults with mental and substance use disorders.

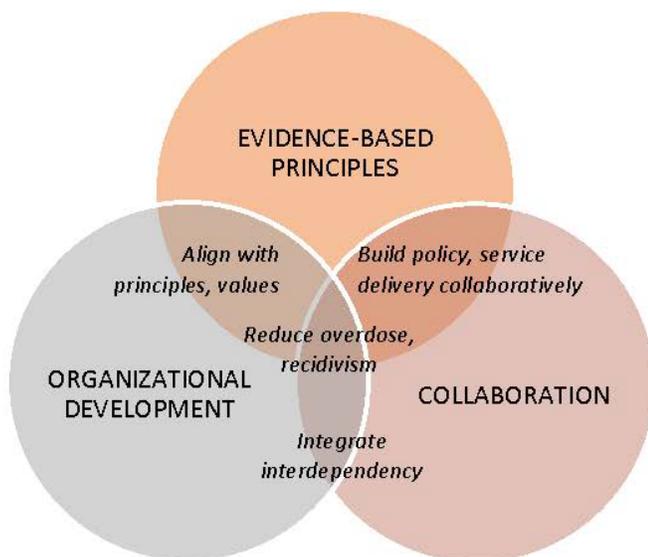
## WHAT IS PROJECT OPEN DOOR'S FRAMEWORK?

Project Open Door will be structured as an integrated model for the implementation of evidence-based policies and practices involving diversion of low-level-offenders with substance use disorder. Both research on effective corrections practices and practical approaches will be developed with critical stakeholder input.

Project Open Door's three chief components, identified above, will rely and be constructed on:

- 1) **EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES**, borrowing from success-proven public health and public safety assessments to determine viable candidates for diversion;
- 2) **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**, which will be integral to the planning process that maps out make-sense policies and practices tailored for York County; and
- 3) **COLLABORATION**, by leveraging synergies and input among key York Opioid Collaborative stakeholders.

### Project Open Door Framework



*According to conservative estimates, every dollar invested in substance abuse and addiction treatment programs saves \$12 in costs incurred by drug-related crime, criminal justice involvement, and health care expenses. (National Institute of Drug Abuse)*

*Project Open Door would divert more people with substance use disorder into treatment and away from the justice system.*

While Project Open Door will create a pilot “infrastructure,” at Intercepts 0 and 1, the York County Community Action for Recovery and Diversion (CARD) initiative seeks to break down existing silos in the judicial system to expand capacity, create more opportunity, and leverage resources, thereby saving money and reducing recidivism with early intervention into necessary treatment services.

The Project Open Door pilot is among essential first steps. The overarching goal is to reduce overdose deaths and over-involvement of low-offending/low-risk/high-need individuals in the criminal justice system by rapidly connecting them to essential services to advance and sustain their recovery.

For additional information about Project Open Door, contact York Opioid Collaborative Executive Director Brittany Shutz at [bshutz@yorkopioidcollaborative.org](mailto:bshutz@yorkopioidcollaborative.org) or York County First Assistant District Attorney at [TJBarker@yorkcountypa.gov](mailto:TJBarker@yorkcountypa.gov).