CHESS HEALTH

ABOUT PUEBLO COUNTY DETENTION FACILITY

The Behavioral Health team at the Pueblo County Detention Facility is committed to facilitating successful re-entry into the community through opportunities in education, counseling, physical and mental health, and personal development programs. Like the majority of facilities in Colorado, Pueblo County Jail receives funding through state legislative initiatives and has some discretion as to how those funds are allocated.

By providing support for a variety of issues – such as housing insecurity, employment assistance, and other social determinants – staff from Pueblo County Jail seek to engage with individuals for a full year after their release from the facility.

PUEBLO COUNTY'S CHALLENGES

Leaders in Pueblo County found that many formerly incarcerated individuals needed more specific support than could be provided through community health centers, including behavioral health support resources tailored to their specific needs for re-entry and ongoing substance use disorder recovery. In addition, leaders sought to forge partnerships with law enforcement to keep individuals out of the system when possible through diversion programs.

The pandemic only increased challenges for case managers, who had no secure or compliant method for reaching individuals besides phone calls.

THE SOLUTION

Pueblo County implemented the Connections app for individuals being released from the facility. Through the app, licensed counselors, certified addiction counselors, peer recovery support specialists, and other Pueblo County staff can communicate consistently with individuals to support their re-entry into the community, and even remind them about events or supports specifically tailored for their needs.

RESULTS

Macaluso reported being able to connect with 100% of the targeted population in October 2021 – something that was significantly supported by the utilization of the Connections app. Future measurement plans include comparing message activity in the app to positive outcomes.

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According to Marco Macaluso, Program Manager of Jail Based Behavioral Health Services: **"We're consistently able to be present for them throughout their transition. By being encouraging and responsive, we're truly able to support healthier, more connected people."**