

Austin CARES Program Implementation Update

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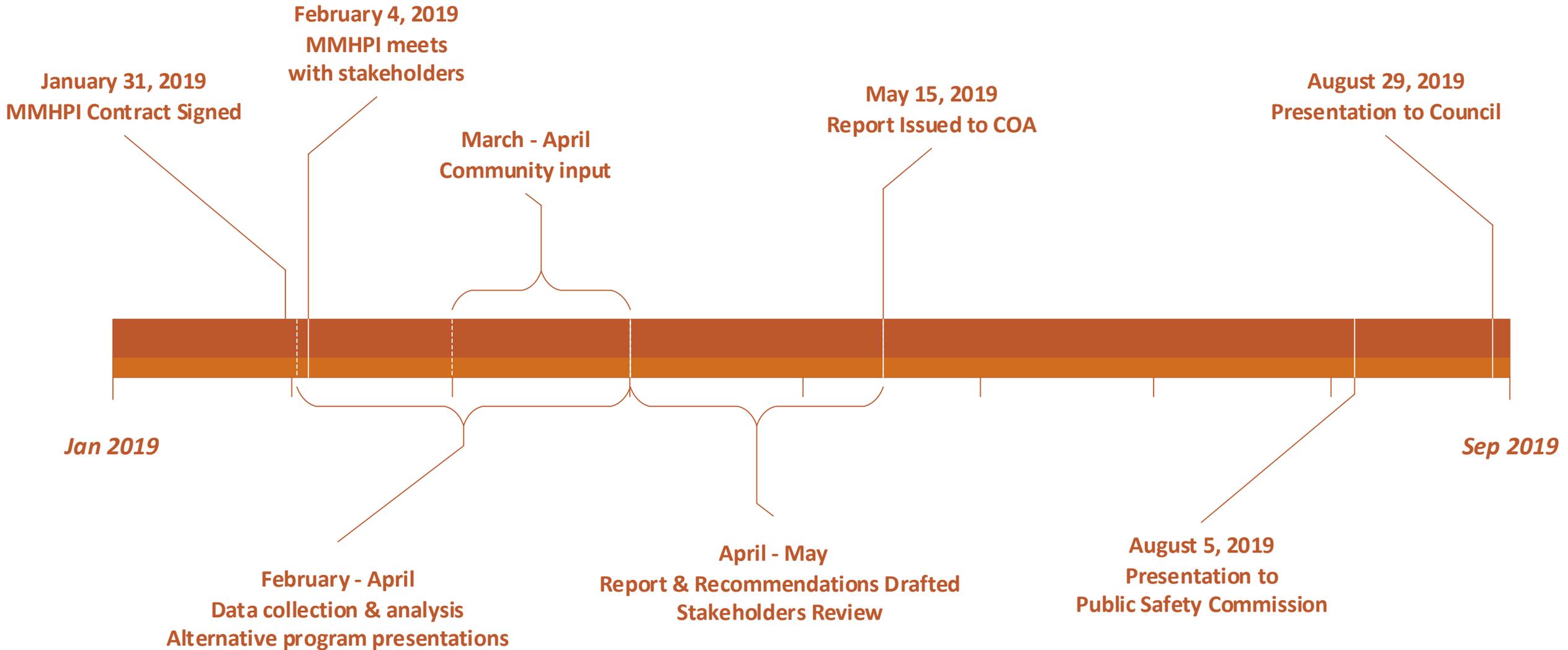
BJ WAGNER, MEADOWS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY INSTITUTE



Earlier Work

- Current implementation efforts directly informed by the six recommendations from the Meadows report released in May 2019
- Input from various stakeholders were collected in 2019:
 - NAMI of Central Texas & other advocacy groups
 - Integral Care
 - Austin Police Department
 - Austin Travis County EMS
- Information & best practices from other programs:
 - Houston & Harris County
 - Baltimore
 - San Antonio

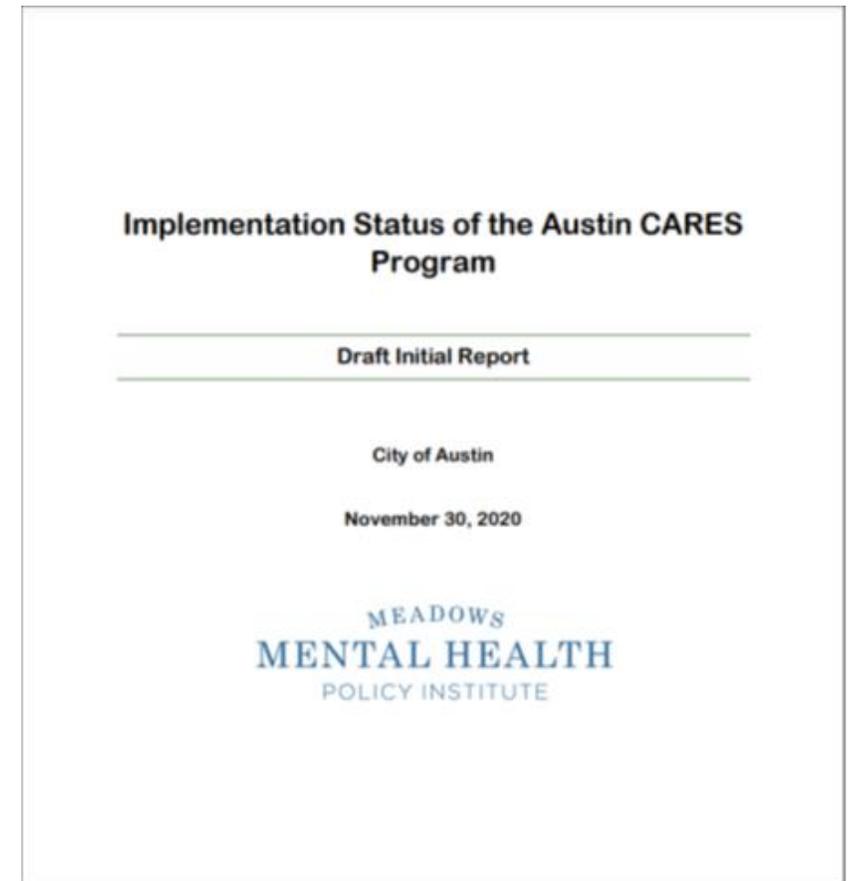
Meadows Report Timeline: 2019



Austin CARES Program Implementation

Timeline

- **October 2020**
 - Council approves contract with Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI)²
 - Stakeholder group convenes
 - MMHPI begins mapping implementation process
- **November-December 2020**
 - MMHPI provides 1st draft of implementation plan
 - MMHPI & stakeholders review, begin assigning tasks & deadlines



Recommendation #1

“APD Chief’s Mental Health Program and Response Advisory Function Developed Within the Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (BHCJAC)”

Action(s) Taken:

- APD engaged BHCJAC to begin establishing roles that meet the spirit of Meadows Recommendation #1

Next Steps:

- Update the BHCJAC Charter to adopt this function
- Create a uniform reporting format
- Develop advisement format

Recommendation #2

“Mental Health Training for Call Takers”

Action(s) Taken:

- All APD call takers participated in an 8 hour Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course for general mental health knowledge
- MMHPI and APD are reviewing curriculum for adoption including:
 - Mental health dispatch training courses in use in Texas and national departments.
 - Nationally recognized Emergency Mental Health Dispatch Training³
- MMHPI and APD are conducting focus groups with officers to determine information they find useful to improve outcomes related to mental health crisis calls

Next Steps:

- Develop call taker training, update training policy, begin training cycle & collect data on efficacy

Recommendation #3

“Mental Health Integrated Dispatch”

Action(s) Taken:

- Integral Care Clinicians embedded in APD call center part-time (Dec. 2019) & EMS call center (Oct. 2020) for the purpose of call transfer only
- Implemented 4th option in 911 script for mental health “Do you need police, fire, EMS or mental health services?”

Next Steps:

- Implement triage process that identifies when a clinician should be added to a call that was not originally selected as a request for mental health services
- Develop call consult and triage policy placing the clinician on the call before the call taker makes a mental health decision
- Develop policies that provide guidance to the clinicians’ advisement activities for responding officers or those on scene with a client
- Update software to allow clinicians more operability and assist in collecting data on activities

Recommendation #4

“Sustainability of EMCOT, Including Telehealth Expansion”

Action(s) Taken:

- Austin City Council allocated funds for the addition of essential personnel at Integral Care and the purchase of hardware
- Limited deployment of iPads to CIT only units with limited use

Next Steps:

- APD will develop policies & procedures for telehealth and iPad equipment accompanied by intensive training
- APD, EMS, Integral Care will develop a collaborative joint policy and use statement
- All medics and officers in the identified districts will be trained alongside their Integral Care partners

Recommendation #5

“Develop a formal collaboration with APD Crisis Intervention Team and Community Health Paramedic Program”

This step is pending further City discussions on the bandwidth of the current CIT team, the necessity or reassignment of officers from the HOST team to a law enforcement role within CIT or alternative steps.

Recommendation #6

“Community Outreach in Collaboration with NAMI Central Texas”

Action(s) Taken:

- MMHPI has connected with NAMI to review material and translation needs

Next Steps:

- Create community engagement calendar and event plan in the identified districts, provide overview and briefing to officers assigned to these specific areas, and complete printing and distribution of materials to APD

Questions?

