



Memorandum

DATE: October 15, 2020

TO: Shoreline City Councilmembers

FROM: Shawn Ledford, Police Chief
Colleen Kelly, Recreation, Cultural & Community Services Director

RE: North Sound RADAR & Homeless Outreach

CC: Debbie Tarry, City Manager

In 2016 the Shoreline Police Department developed and initiated the RADAR program, Response Awareness De-escalation and Referral. It's a program to try and help officers avoid a misunderstanding with people suffering from a behavioral health issue (BHI) – mental illness and reduce use of force incidents.

Response Awareness – is information documented in a *response plan* that is initiated by a Shoreline police officer when they become aware of a high-risk individual living in the community. Shoreline Police has a standard operating procedure (SOP) on when a response plan will be initiated. The response plans are connected to an address in the police computer aided dispatch (CAD). Currently there are 25 response plans in the system for Shoreline Police. Response plans are only created for a small percentage of people contacted by police and the Mental Health Professionals.

De-escalation – when officers are dispatched to a call at an address with an associated RADAR response plan, the officer(s) will quickly review the information prior to contact. The response plan includes a photo, name, date of birth, access to weapons, de-escalation, and other at-a-glance information.

And Referral – is the partnership with the Mental Health Professionals (MHP Navigators). Police officers are not social workers, or mental health professionals. They are called to handle problems in society that over the years have become more prevalent and complicated. The MHP Navigators can assist in the field where people in crisis are the most visible and often the most in need. The MHP Navigators have the expertise and knowledge on how to connect people to the proper resources. It's an effort to help people get the help they need and reduce repeat calls for service. In 2019 the RADAR MHP Navigators and RADAR deputies made 160 outreach contacts in Shoreline.

Program History and Overview

RADAR is a tool, it's voluntary and will not solve every problem. It often takes multiple attempts for the police and MHP Navigator to build a relationship and trust with an individual to get them to be willing to accept some type of help. The Police and MHP Navigator partnership is key to the success of RADAR, it is key that the MHP Navigators are available to respond to Shoreline issues. The police typically know who in the community need help and all Shoreline officers can request MHP Navigator follow-up through the RADAR program. The MHP Navigator works in Shoreline with a RADAR deputy once a week, typically 4-6 hours.

Prior to the implementation of RADAR an advisory board was developed to work through the potential community and legal concerns. The RADAR advisory board had representative from the King County Prosecutor's Office (legal advice), OLEO (Office of Law Enforcement Oversight), NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), the ACLU and other representatives. Some of the concerns focused on the challenges that may occur with law enforcement gathering information for response plans with someone who may not have committed a crime and requirements related to confidentiality of health and medical information through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), public disclosure requests (PDR). There were several meetings over several months and policy and protocol were developed in the Standard Operating Procedure. RADAR was initially funded by King County Risk Management as they saw the value in developing a program that worked to reduce use of force incidents and law enforcement taking steps to try and avoid a misunderstanding from someone suffering from behavioral health issues.

In 2016, Shoreline received a Department of Justice (DOJ) grant that funded the RADAR program for four years. One of the goals of the grant was to create a program focused on addressing calls that are primarily related to mental illness that could be replicated with small to medium sized police agencies. In 2018 the cities of Bothell, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park and Kenmore partnered with Shoreline to expand the program and worked in a collaborative manner to make cost effective improvements. King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski worked with the five police agencies to secure MIDD (mental illness drug dependency levy) funding to support the program for 2019 and 2020. The King County Council supported funding the RADAR program and approved the MIDD funding. The five agencies executed a Memorandum of Understanding and changed the name to North Sound RADAR to reflect the partnership. In addition, the five cities received a Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC) grant to help support the program.

The City of Shoreline managed the DOJ grant, Bothell is managing the MIDD funds and Kirkland is managing the WASPC grant. The MIDD funding supports a RADAR Program Manager, Brook Buettner (MSW, LICSW, MPA), consultant Anura Shah (LICSW, MHA) and four part-time MHP/Navigators for North Sound RADAR.

The MIDD funding for North Sound RADAR has been re-approved for 2021/2022. The consultant was used to ensure the navigator program was developed properly and within the legal parameters for documenting contacts with people with BHI that are not involved in criminal activity. The consultant also made sure our policies reflect that the navigators are not care providers and don't have a patient client relationship. The MHP Navigator

role is to help identify issues, connect people in crisis to available services and assist on a crisis call if available. The Program Manager coordinates with the MHP's and police agencies to schedule Navigator time between the five cities and manages the data and outreach efforts. NORCOM Communications developed a system for the five police agencies to store and access the response plans and for the MHP's to track the navigator outreach efforts and contacts. Additionally, the NORCOM system allows for each agency to check to see if there is a Navigator on duty with another agency. For example, if Shoreline has a Navigator riding with an officer doing follow up contacts and there is a crisis call in Kirkland, the Shoreline officer will drive the MHP Navigator to Kirkland to assist and vice versa between the agencies.

There are regular reviews and meetings with the five police chiefs and the program managers to discuss the RADAR program to continue to make improvements to the program and needs of the community. The work with North Sound RADAR and navigators is continuing during COVID with safety precautions implemented and a reduced number of outreach contacts for 2020.

The five cities continue to explore opportunities to improve the program and seek ways to have the Navigators take a lead role in non-criminal activity responses.

Other Resources

In addition to the North Sound RADAR 160 outreach contacts in Shoreline in 2019, there were seventeen times that the King County Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) was called to assist Shoreline PD that year. The MCT are MHPs that assist the police in Seattle and throughout King County as an alternative to jail and/or hospital when a subject has committed a low-level crime and is eligible and willing to accept services.

The winter shelters have been a good resource for Shoreline Police during the winter months when they meet people who need shelter. There have been a handful of times when Shoreline Police encounter a parent and their children and there is no shelter space available. We have used the police credit card to get them shelter and worked with various entities to try and find them shelter and other resources.

There are still many situations when Shoreline Police encounter an individual with a behavioral health issue, or mental illness, who does not have a response plan. That's why it's important for Shoreline Police to continue with Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), de-escalation training, less lethal options and partnering with MHPs and with other agencies that may have an MHP on duty.

Homeless Coordination

During 2019 and 2020, the City of Shoreline provided \$11,000 each year to Lake City Partners in support of direct outreach services to individuals experiencing homelessness in Shoreline. During this time, the Outreach Specialist, Stanley Machokoto, developed a strong working relationship with the City's Community Response Team (CRT). Inquiries regarding individuals that appeared to be experiencing homelessness were typically forwarded directly to Stanley for follow up. If he was able to contact the individual, he would work with them to explore how they might be able to access housing. While this connection was a good beginning, staff had started exploring how we might work toward developing a stronger connection between the Outreach Specialist and the Shoreline Police, with the goal of establishing a "service first" approach to individuals experiencing homelessness. Discussions about how to advance this concept were just beginning

when the Coronavirus arrived and shifted priorities on all fronts. We are now looking ahead to 2021 to pick-up on further exploring how we might expand our overall approach.

The Council recently approved an increase in funding, through the Human Service Allocation Plan to support the Outreach Specialist in Shoreline, so we believe this will ensure even greater access to Stanley's time. In addition to building a stronger partnership with Shoreline Police—including the RADAR Program, we will look to what other cities are trying and where they are seeing success. There is potential to create ongoing relationships with several key service providers, faith communities and community court. In addition to the Resource Center that community court provides, it can also provide leverage to encourage individuals to take positive steps forward to avoid negative consequences they would prefer to avoid.

While we can and should do more to strengthen our overall approach to those experiencing homelessness, the lack of affordable housing and critical treatment beds for those suffering with mental illness and/or substance use disorder remains a daunting barrier.