

Utah Behavioral Health Crisis Response Project

Guy Dansie, MPA
Utah State EMS Director

Senate Bill 53, 2021 General Session

- Senator Daniel Thatcher and Representative Steve Ellison have developed the foundation for behavior crisis response
- Key elements include expertise from the University of Utah, development of 988, and coalition building with stakeholders
- SB 53 created a “first responder” license for behavior crisis response similar to EMS licensing for EMTs to support “boots on the ground” for crisis response

Keys to Passing SB 53

- Sen. Thatcher worked closely with the Utah Department Health and the Utah Department of Human Services
- The creation of a crisis technician supports 988 and MCOTs
- The needs was clearly illustrated by several tragic events including the shooting/death of a young autistic teenager in Sen. Thatcher's community

Keys to Passing SB 53

- Sen. Thatcher and Rep. Elison are very passionate legislators who tells meaningful stories
- Their vulnerability and influence helped the bill pass without opposition
- Link for the bill:
<https://le.utah.gov/~2021/bills/static/SBo053.html>

Where Do We Start?

- We used the State EMS Committee as an initial place to allow “buy-in” with stakeholders
- We created an ad hoc stakeholders group for all interested parties
- Input was openly discussed and shared
- Direction was needed from higher education and mental health authorities

Where Do We Start?

- Lack of funding
- Lack of local infrastructure
- Coordination between mental health resources and new first responders
- Local support/buy-in to the concept
- 988 and 911 coordination
- Education criteria, development, and training resources

Preparation and Timing

- CMS announced a notice of funding opportunity while we were working on our implementation
- The funding fits very well with our project
- Utah has been awarded \$382,601 per year for three years, and possibly up to five years
- Funding allows Utah an opportunity to assess local needs, create meaningful training, and provide training for new crisis response technicians

Moving Forward

- Local assessments with all response stakeholders
- Evaluation for effectiveness
- Provide pilot courses with State and local instructors
- Develop continuing education criteria
- Provide on-going courses and renewal courses
- Improve local response by supporting 911 and 988 functions and MCOT operations

Questions? Input?

- Please feel free to contact me about any of the ideas presented or to share experiences
- Thank YOU!!!

Guy Dansie, MPA

Utah State EMS Director

gdansie@utah.gov

801-560-1544