

UNDERSTANDING CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP
SEPTEMBER 2019 RESOURCE SHARING

Crisis Intervention is the 24-hour emergency mental health service component of the Dauphin County Department of Mental Health/Autism /Developmental Programs. Mental health caseworkers provide short-term counseling, outreach, referral, and other services to individuals experiencing an emotional crisis or having difficulty coping with a personal problem. The program provides walk-in, mobile, and telephone services.

While the main focus of Crisis Intervention consists of intervening in mental health related crises, the program also assists in a wide range of psychosocial crises including those related to abuse of drugs and alcohol, family conflicts, youth and geriatric crises, and problems of basic need (food, shelter, etc.).

So, what exactly is a crisis? In general, it is defined by the person experiencing it. Anyone can experience a crisis. Certain situations may cause someone to have feelings of extreme helplessness and hopelessness, to feel overwhelmed or unable to cope, or to feel on the verge of losing control. A person having feelings like these is experiencing a mental health crisis.

Crisis Intervention personnel help with a wide array of crises. Some common issues include the following:

- ***Overwhelming anxiety or anger***
- ***Depression/suicidal thoughts***
- ***Drug or alcohol abuse***
- ***Disturbances in personal relationships***
- ***Marital, family, and school conflicts***
- ***Trauma related stress reactions***
- ***Behavioral crises involving children or older adults***
- ***Paranoia, confusion, upsetting thoughts, or mood disturbances***

Any individual who is having a crisis may call. In addition, family, friends, police, and other agencies or professionals may call for assistance with an individual who may be experiencing a crisis. The program's caseworkers provide a full range of services and are available 24-hours a day/seven days a week by calling the main phone number (717) 232-7511 or toll free at 1-888-596-4447. Walk-in services are also available at 100 Chestnut Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

Then, based upon the current situation, services will be tailored to meet the needs of each person. A typical intervention may include some or all of the following:

- ***Evaluation of the initial request for service***
- ***Psychosocial assessment/crisis counseling via phone or in person***
- ***Information and referral***
- ***Outreach (when necessary, caseworkers will go to the individual)***
- ***Brief supportive/follow-up services***
- ***Arrangements for inpatient psychiatric hospitalization, outpatient services etc.***
- ***Referrals to other community agencies such as the Case Management Unit (CMU), Child Protective Services, Area Agency on Aging, etc.***

Whether calling for yourself or with concerns about someone else, please know that the program adheres to all confidentiality laws while striving to provide services in the least restrictive environment. No problem is too small or too large for our assistance, so, when in doubt, please call to discuss your concerns!