



# A Call to Action and What Needs to Happen Next: The Focus on Mental Health and Jails

National Dialogues on Behavioral Health

Kati Habert

Council of State Governments Justice Center

November 11, 2015

# Overview

---

**The scope of the problem**

---

**Challenges in the field**

---

**Stepping Up: new initiative to promote widespread reform**

---

**Recommendations**

---

# Overview

---

**The scope of the problem**

---

**Challenges in the field**

---

**Stepping Up: new initiative to promote widespread reform**

---

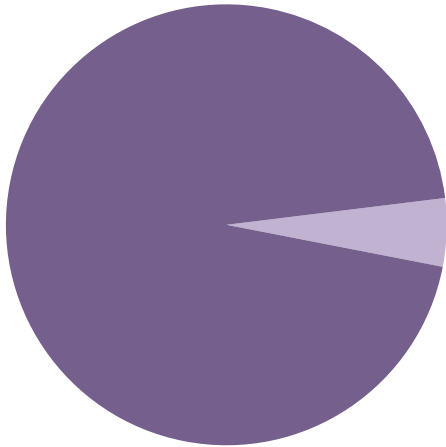
**Recommendations**

---

# The growing number of people with mental illnesses in local jails is a national crisis

General Population

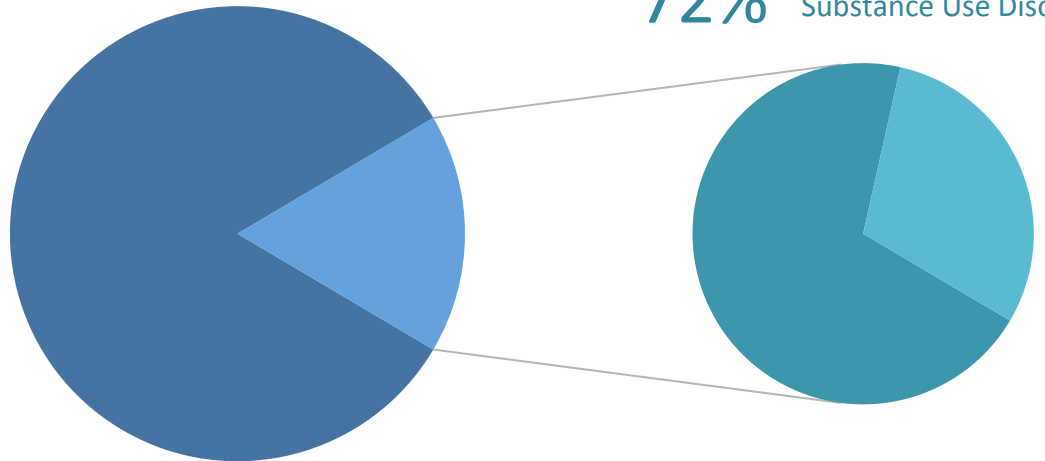
5% Serious Mental Illness



Jail Population

17% Serious Mental Illness

72% Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder



# Factors driving this crisis



**Disproportionately higher rates of arrest**



**Longer stays in jail and prison**



**Limited access to health care**



**Disproportionality higher recidivism rates**

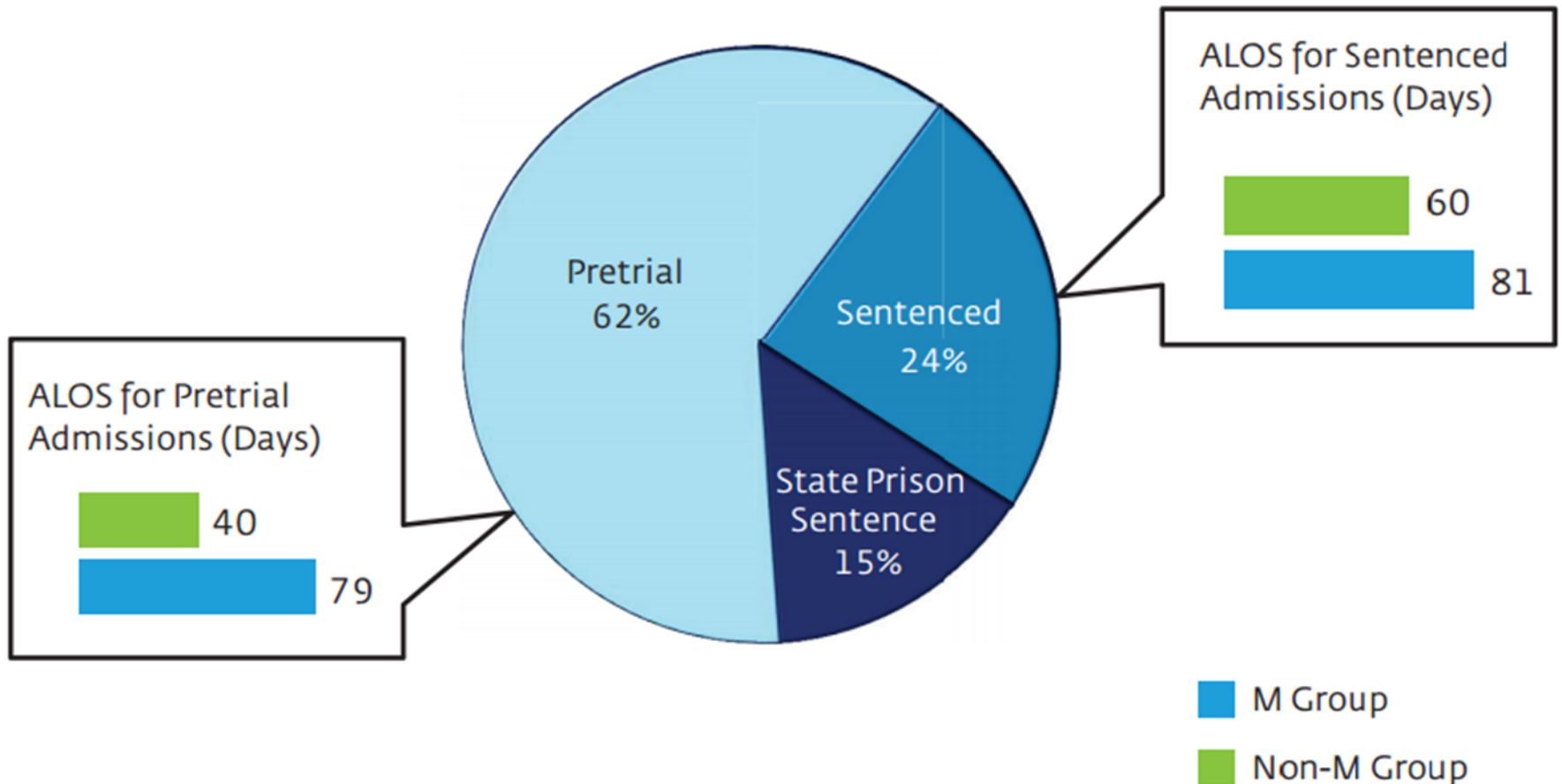


**Low utilization of EBPs**



**More criminogenic risk factors**

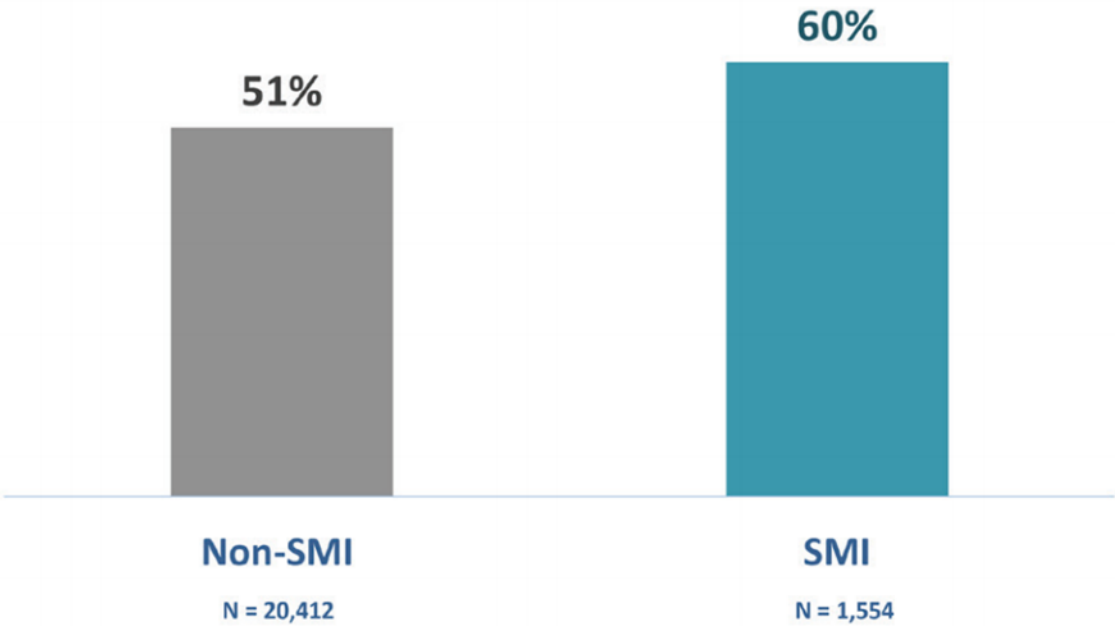
# Average length of stay in jails



Source: The City of New York Department of Correction, 2008 Department of Correction Admission Cohort with Length of Stay > 3 Days (First 2008 Admission)

# Recidivism rates

## Percentage of People with Behavioral Health Disorders Rebooked into Franklin County Jail within Three Years of Release\*



\*Analysis of 2010 Franklin County jail bookings

SMI identified using match to behavioral health service utilization data

# County officials are speaking up...



“Jails should not be de facto mental health treatment facilities, and using them this way does not improve public safety. There are better ways to address this national issue to ultimately reduce costs, improve lives and provide hope.”

-- Sheriff Susan Pamerleau,  
Bexar County, TX



“[There is] a growing number of mentally ill inmates housed in general population quarters as well as a[n] increase in suicides...A jail that can adequately treat those offenders is a better investment.”

-- Assistant Sheriff Terri McDonald,  
Los Angeles, CA



“The costs are high—to public safety, to the budget and to the lives of our residents—and we are committed to connecting people with mental illness to care and treatment instead of needless incarceration.”

-- Commissioner Marilyn Brown,  
Franklin County, OH



“We’ve known for some time that we needed better data on where the gaps are in how we identify, assess, track and treat those folks who wind up in jail as the facility of last resort.”

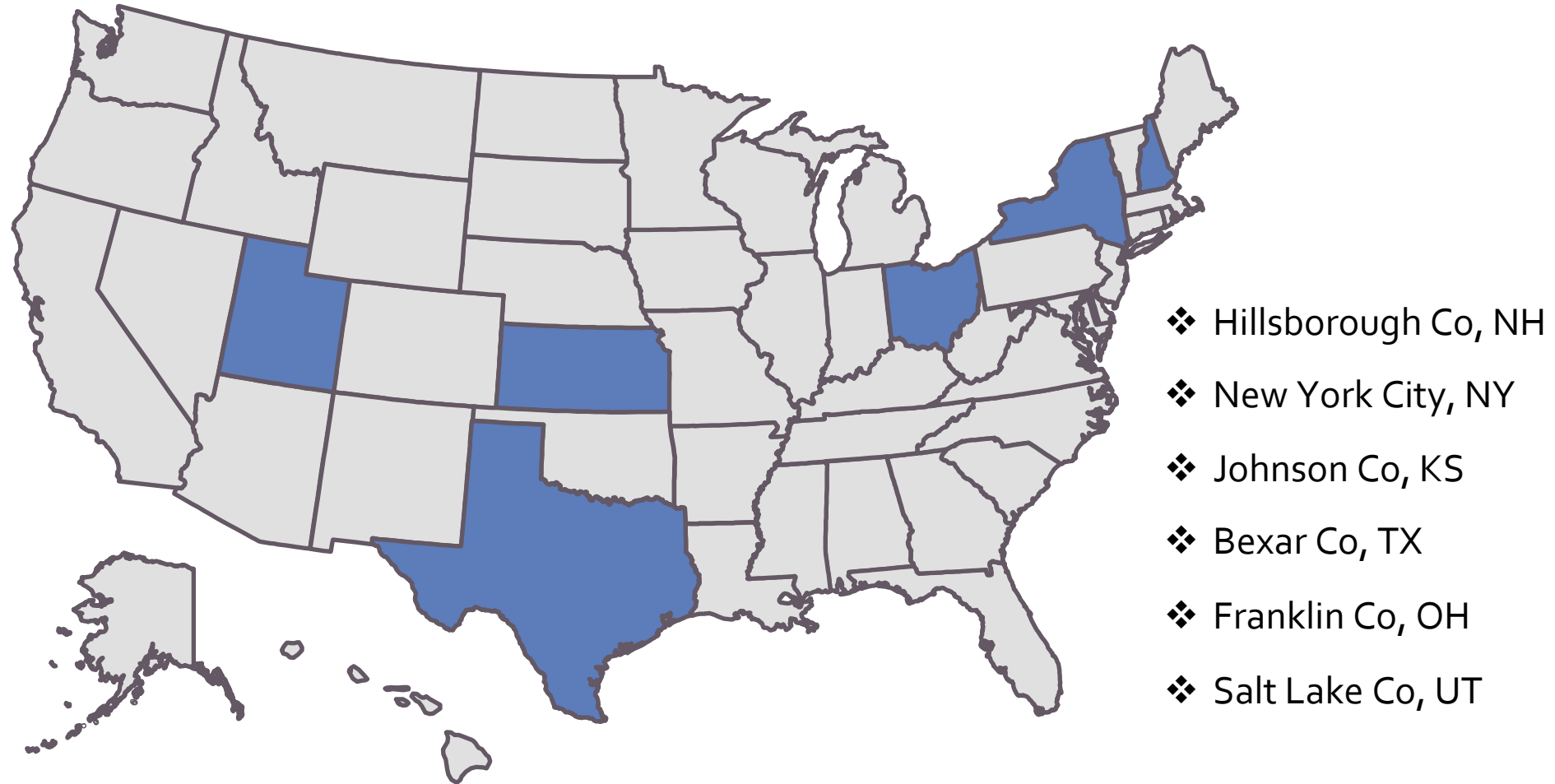
-- County Mayor Ben McAdams,  
Salt Lake County, UT

## Jails are the wrong place to treat mental illnesses



...and taking the lead in implementing this approach

County Justice and Behavioral Health Improvement Projects



# Results are being realized

**NYC:** Created Court-based Intervention and Resource Teams (CIRTs) to provide client advocacy, community-based supervision, and case management services to people with mental illnesses

**Bexar County:** Implemented a 24/7 process to screen people for mental illness prior to magistration to inform release decisions

**Franklin County:** Developed policies and procedures to more quickly identify and link people with mental illnesses to care

**Salt Lake County:** Committed to implementing universal screening for mental illness, substance use disorders, and pretrial risk when booking individuals into jail

# Overview

---

**The scope of the problem**

---

**Challenges in the field**

---

**Stepping Up: new initiative to promote widespread reform**

---

**Recommendations**

---

# Remaining Challenges



**Shared goals and increased dialogue, but different understanding of and emphasis on research**

**Need to have added impact of local policymakers**

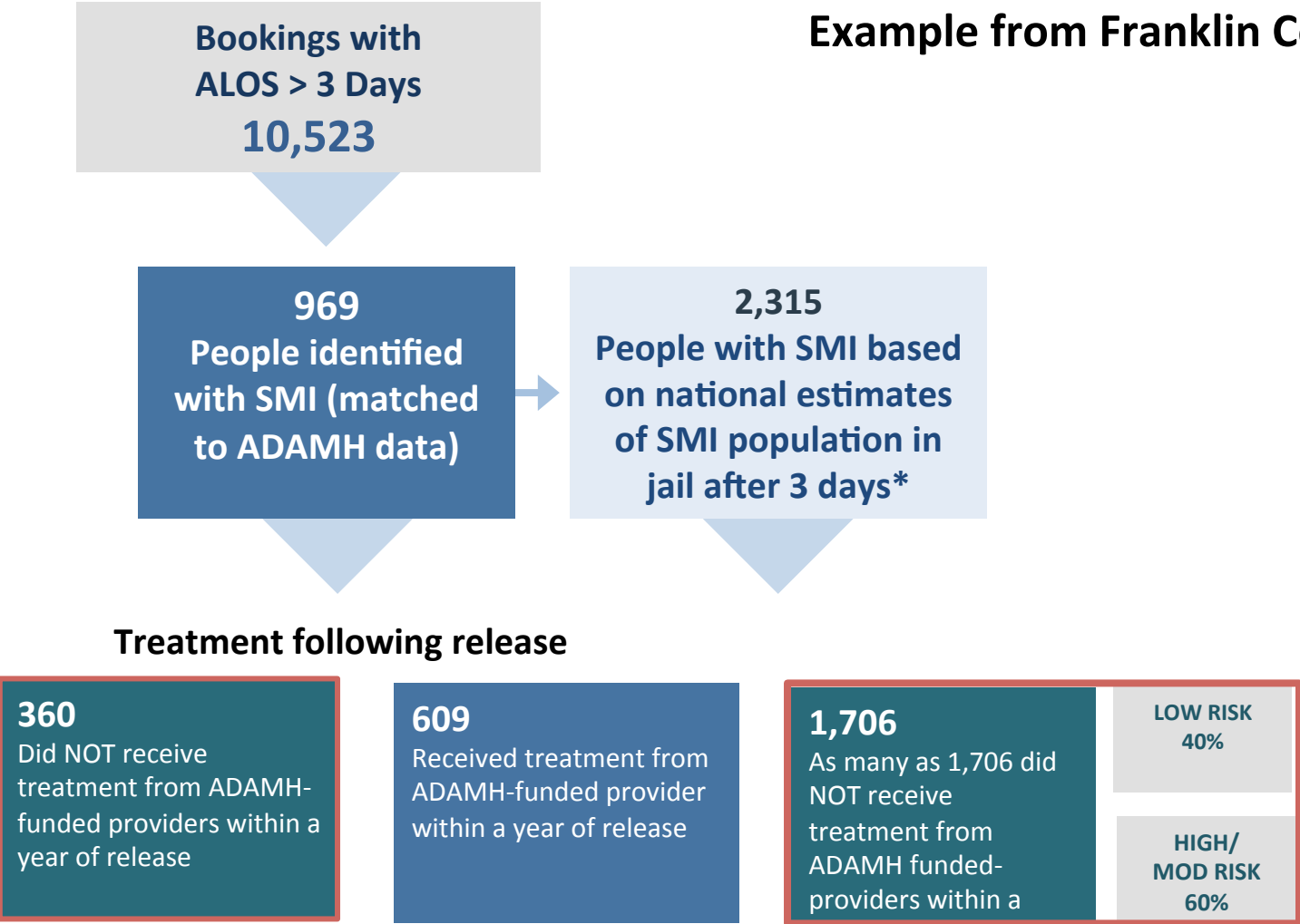
**Counties and states are interested in further investments but aren't sure how to proceed**

**Existing services and specialized responses only reach a small fraction of those in need**

**Prioritizing investments**

# Existing services and specialized responses only reach a small fraction of those in need

**Example from Franklin County, OH**



\*Extrapolated from national data on jail populations

# Prioritizing investments

- **Difficult to pinpoint target population and scope of challenge**
- **Definitions need to align**
- **Need to understand what services are funded under current billing options**
- **Capacity of services and workforce development**
- **Tracking and measuring results is difficult**

# Overview

---

**The scope of the problem**

---

**Challenges in the field**

---

**Stepping Up: new initiative to promote widespread reform**

---

**Recommendations**

---

# A national initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails

## THE STEPPINGUP INITIATIVE



TOOLKIT

NEWS & UPDATES

THE PROBLEM

THE PEOPLE

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Take Action Now

APF American Psychiatric Foundation  
Research. Education. Impact.

NACD National Association of Counties  
The Voice of American Counties

JUSTICE CENTER  
The Council of State Governments  
Collaborative Approach to Public Safety

Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails

Take Action Now





# Major partners rally around a common goal

## County elected officials



## Behavioral health



## Law enforcement



## Other experts



## Individuals and families



# Goals of the Stepping Up initiative

- Build national momentum
- Demonstrate how counties can achieve impact
- Cultivate state leadership
- Promote peer learning across counties

# Build national momentum

## Four launch events held in May 2015

Washington, DC (below)

Miami-Dade, FL; Johnson County, KS; Sacramento, CA (right from top to bottom)



# Build national momentum

## Getting out the word

### THE HUFFINGTON POST

Entries by The Stepping Up Initiative

#### San Antonio's Sheriff Personal Fight to Fix Broken System

(3) Comments | Posted August 11, 2015 | 2:44 PM

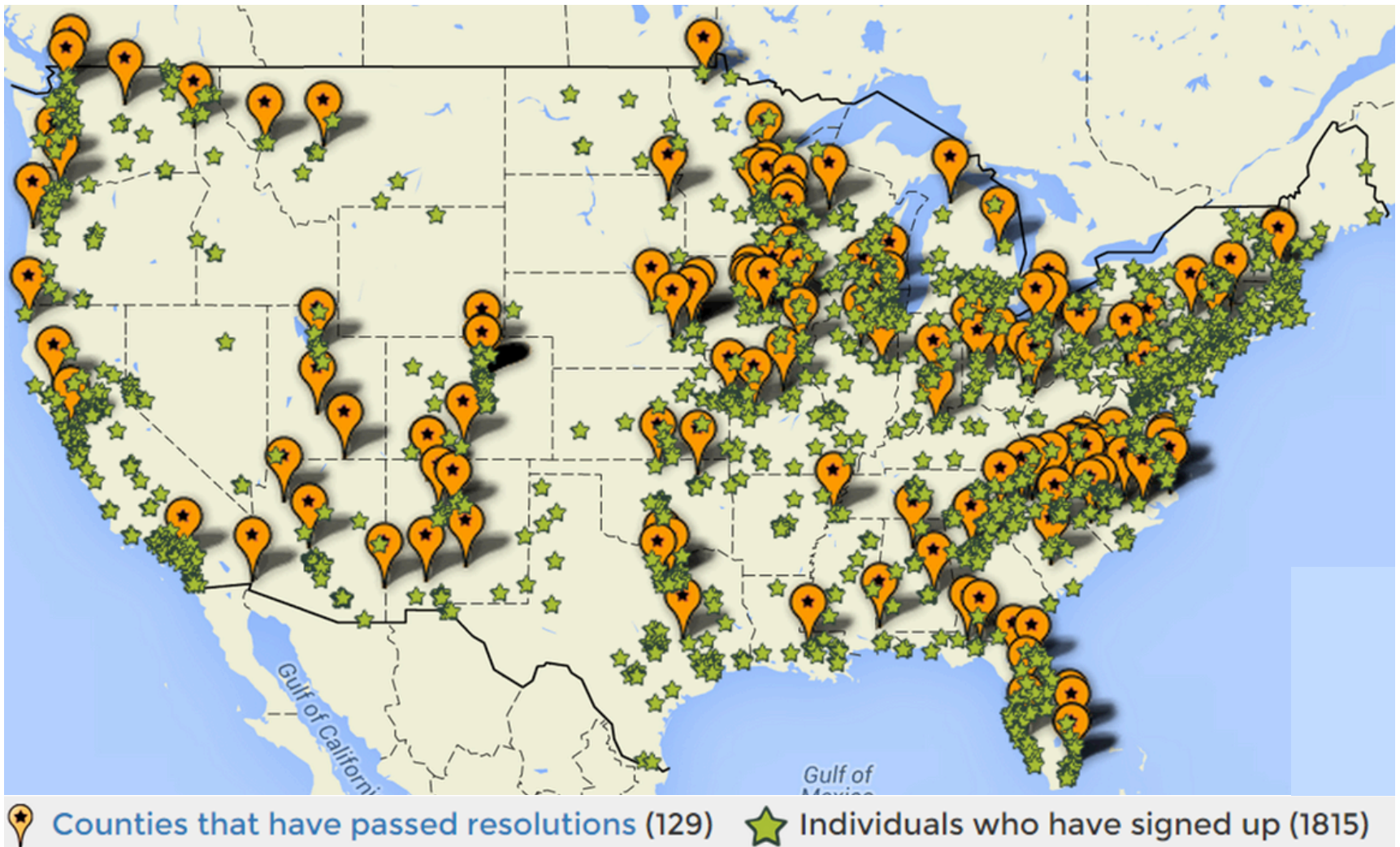


#### The Diane Rehm Show: New Efforts to Help People with Mental Illness Get Treatment Instead of Jail Time



# Build national momentum

Counties and individuals join call to action



**Over 50 million people reside in Stepping Up counties**

# Build national momentum

## Leveraging partners

### County elected officials



### Behavioral health



### Law enforcement



### Other experts



### Individuals and families



# Demonstrate how counties can achieve impact

## The six-step approach

### A Call to Action (6 steps)

1. Convene or draw on a diverse team
2. Collect and review prevalence number and assess individuals' needs
3. Examine treatment and service capacity
4. Develop a plan with measurable outcomes
5. Implement research-based approaches
6. Create a process to track progress

### Stepping Up Toolkit

<https://stepuptogether.org/toolkit>

**Planning guides keyed to  
6 action steps**

**Six webinars featuring experts  
and examples from the field**

**Curated resource library**

**New tools and resources  
(e.g., health policy guide)**

# Cultivate state leadership

## Providing a blueprint for states to take action

- Encourage counties to engage in Stepping Up and demonstrate state support for the initiative
- Promote universal screening of risk and behavioral health needs to inform decision-making
- Support implementation of best practices by counties through the dissemination of examples, provision of resources, and supporting policies and infrastructure
- Increase access to treatment by enrolling eligible people leaving jail and prison in health insurance and ensuring needed services are reimbursable
- Promote accountability through consistent data collection and reporting across counties



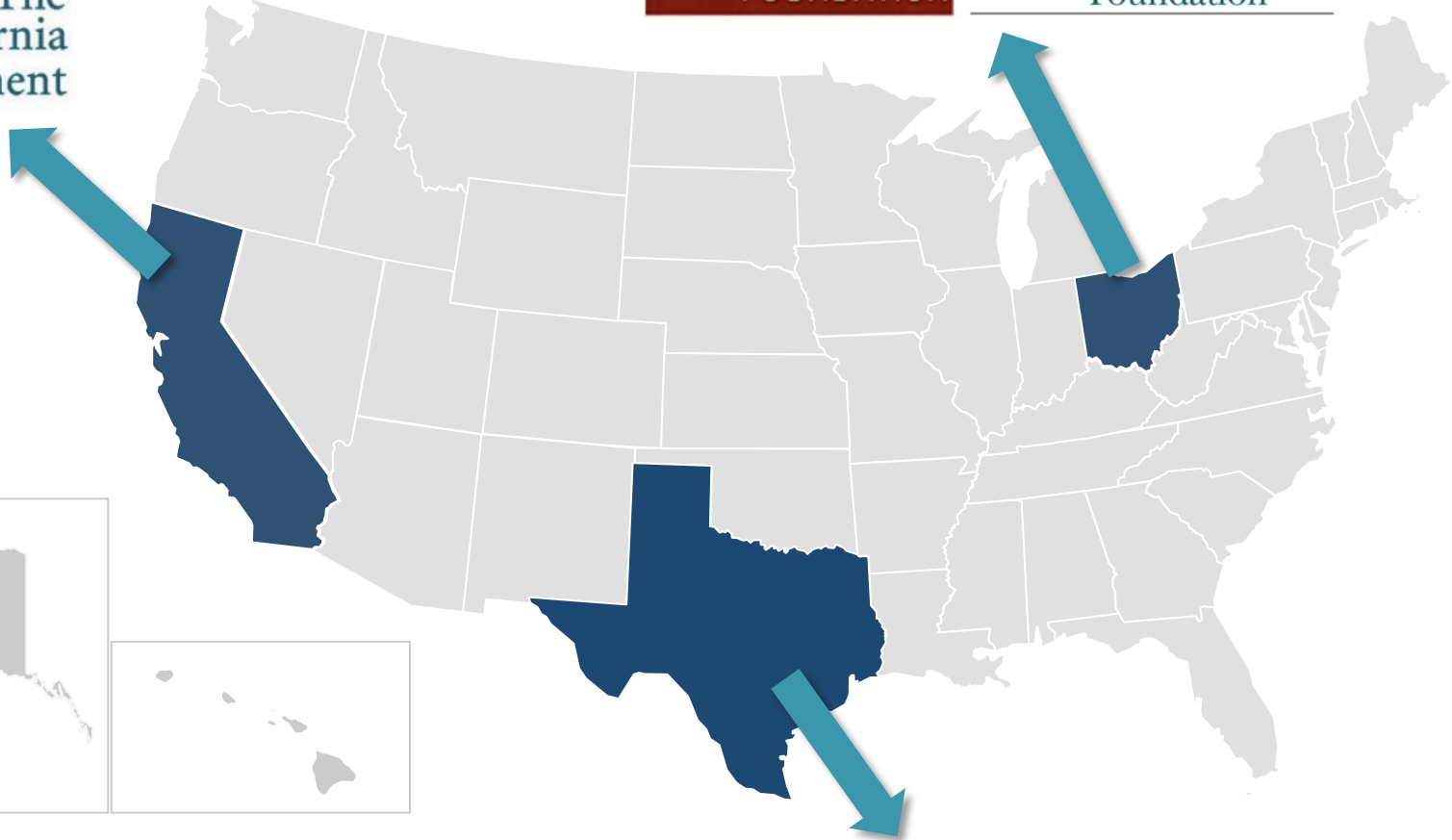
# Cultivate state leadership

Working in states to enact change

 The  
California  
Endowment

THE GEORGE GUND  
FOUNDATION

 The  
Margaret Clark Morgan  
Foundation



The Meadows  
Foundation

# Cultivate state leadership

## Emerging strategy in California

THE  
**STEPPING UP**  
INITIATIVE

May 7, 2015  
Sacramento, CA



### Coordinate with state associations and government officials to:

- Provide NRRC materials to interested county leaders and line staff
- Increase commitment among county leaders to goals of Stepping Up initiative
- Improve CA county capacity to measure key indicators related to prevalence, enrollment, access, and engagement



# Promote peer-learning across counties

## 2016 National Summit

### National Stepping Up Summit

April 17-19

Mayflower Hotel, Washington DC

Approximately 50 county teams, composed of representatives from law enforcement, corrections, behavioral health, and public officials, will come together to:

- **Interact** with national experts
- **Learn** from experiences of other counties
- **Build** upon their county plan
- **Identify** opportunities for technical assistance

AMERICAN  
PSYCHIATRIC  
ASSOCIATION  

---

FOUNDATION



# Overview

---

**The scope of the problem**

---

**Challenges in the field**

---

**Stepping Up: new initiative to promote widespread reform**

---

**Recommendations**

---

# County leaders need to focus on system-level outcomes

1.

## Reduce

the number of people with mental illness booked into jail



**You need early identification and clinical assessment before they are intake into booking or jail**

2.

## Shorten

the length of stay for people with mental illnesses in jails



**You need pretrial release early to treatment with MH PR Bond conditions**

3.

## Increase

the percentage of people with mental illnesses in jail connected to the right services and supports upon release



**You need well developed “warm hand-off” processes and treatment capacity**

4.

## Lower

rates of recidivism

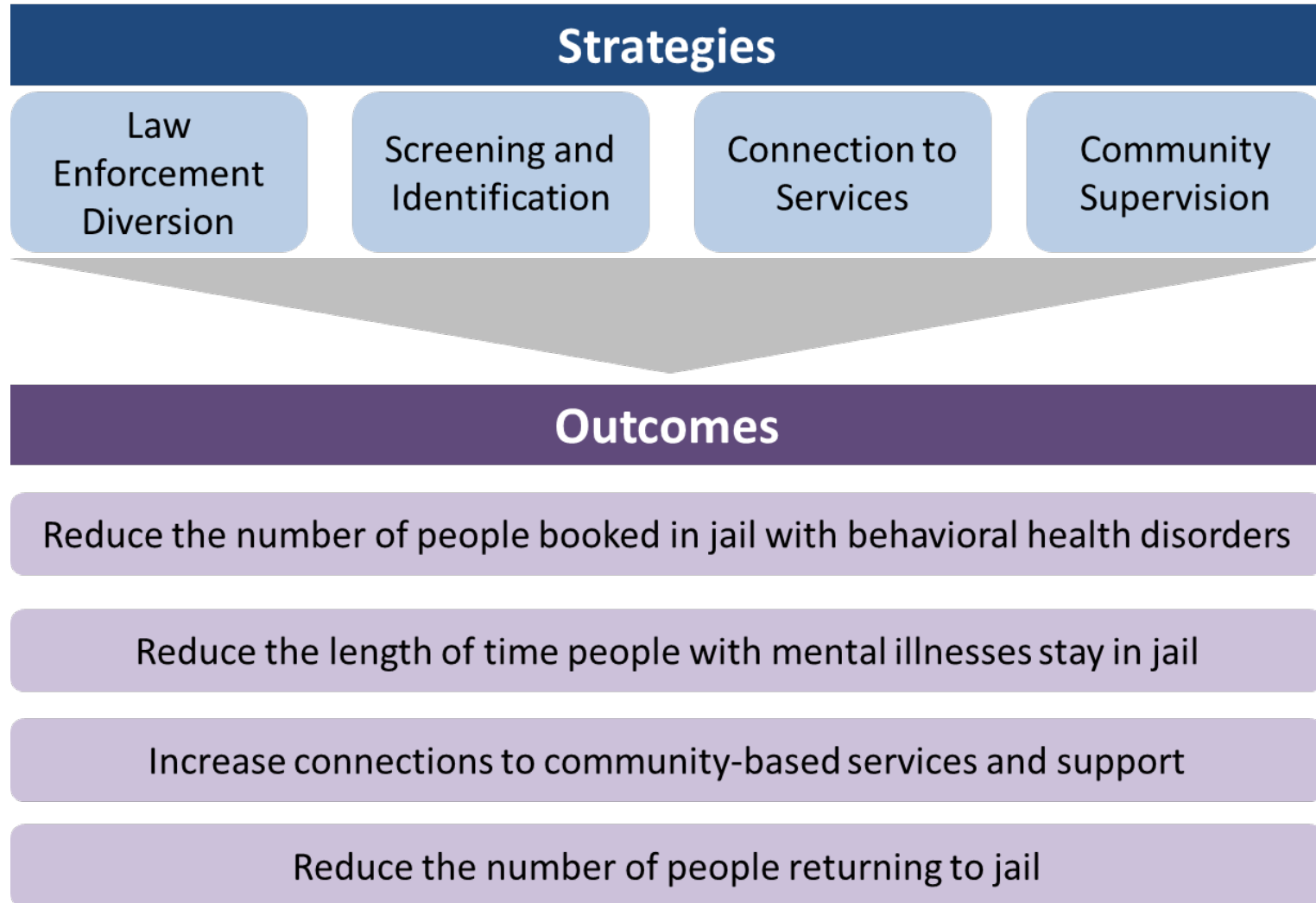


**You need effective connection to treatment with supervision conditions and dedicated program funding**

# Achieving these outcomes requires major changes to policy and practice

1. Maximize opportunities to connect people to treatment upon first contact with law enforcement
2. Conduct universal risk, substance use, and mental health screens at booking, and full assessments as appropriate
3. Get relevant information into hands of decision-makers in time to inform pre-trial release decisions
4. Use assessment information to connect people to appropriate jail-based services and post-release services and supervision
5. Ensure services and supervision are evidence-based and hold system accountable by measuring outcomes

# Strategies need to be geared towards achieving specific outcomes



# Thank you

**Kati Habert**

[khabert@csg.org](mailto:khabert@csg.org)

Stepping Up: [www.stepuptogether.org](http://www.stepuptogether.org)

Justice Center: <https://csgjusticecenter.org/>

NACo: <http://www.naco.org/>

APA Foundation: <http://www.americanpsychiatricfoundation.org/>

