



# County of San Diego

**NICK MACCHIONE, FACHE**  
AGENCY DIRECTOR

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**  
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 206, MAIL STOP P-501  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2417  
(619) 515-6555 • FAX (619) 515-6556

**PATTY KAY DANON**  
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

April 28, 2023

**TO:** Supervisor Nora Vargas, Chairwoman  
Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Vice Chair  
Supervisor Joel Anderson  
Supervisor Nathan Fletcher  
Supervisor Jim Desmond

**FROM:** Nick Macchione, Agency Director  
Health and Human Services Agency

## **SEVENTH UPDATE ON MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM PROGRAM**

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken several actions to enhance crisis response efforts including the establishment and subsequent expansion of the Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) program which is designed to help people who are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis by dispatching behavioral health experts to emergency calls instead of law enforcement, when appropriate.

Subsequent to the pilot rollout in January 2021, the Board approved recommendations on April 6, 2021 (9) which further affirmed a commitment to strengthen MCRT services. The attached report represents the seventh update to the Board on overall MCRT program progress.

For questions, please contact Dr. Luke Bergmann, Director, Behavioral Health Services by email [luke.bergmann@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:luke.bergmann@sdcounty.ca.gov), or by phone at 619-563-2700.

Respectfully,

**NICK MACCHIONE**  
Agency Director

Attachment A: Update on Mobile Crisis Response Team Program, April 28, 2023

c: Helen N. Robbins-Meyer, Interim Chief Administrative Officer



## County of San Diego

### Update on Mobile Crisis Response Team Program

April 28, 2023

**BACKGROUND**

Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) services are designed to help people who are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis by sending a team of behavioral health experts to emergency calls instead of law enforcement, when appropriate, who are dispatched primarily by calls made to the Access and Crisis Line (888-724-7240). Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) can also refer calls they receive to MCRT. Further program details and Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the County of San Diego (County) [MCRT website](#). The information below has the latest data points and represents the seventh update to the Board of Supervisors on overall MCRT program performance.

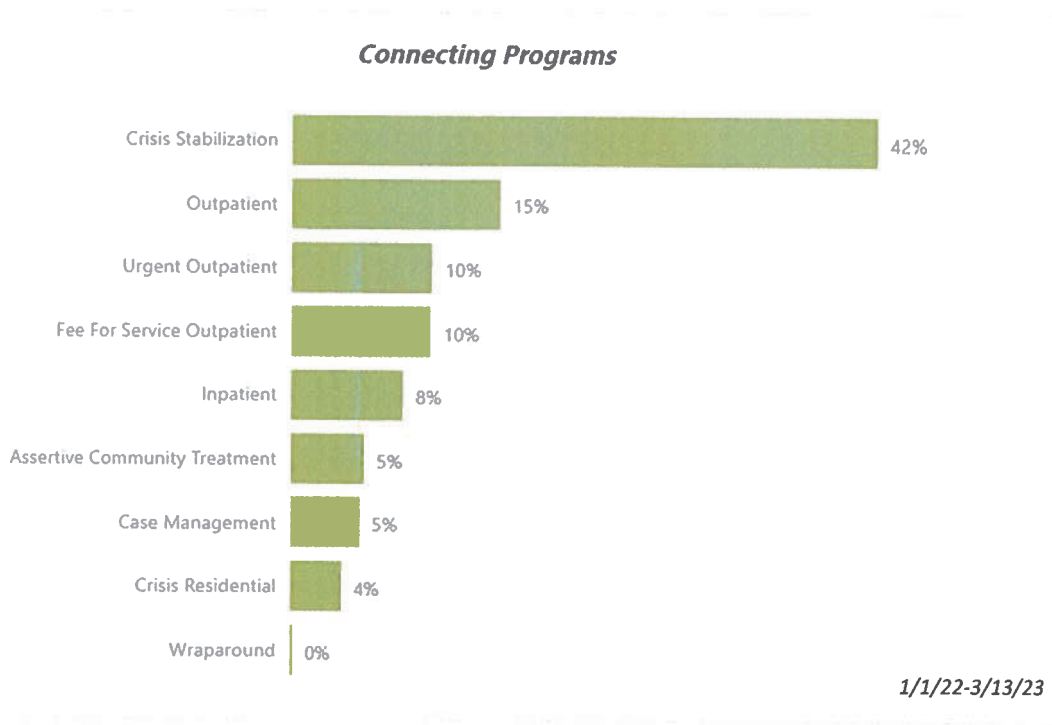
**MCRT Key Data Points**

Since the MCRT program launched in January 2021 through March 13, 2023:

- MCRT has responded to nearly 4,600 calls referred through the Access and Crisis Line (ACL) and LEAs. Of the nearly 4,600 calls responded to, 1,356 referrals were received directly from LEAs.
- Of the individuals who received an MCRT service:
  - Approximately 47% were stabilized in the field with referrals to ongoing care and without the need for additional transport, reducing the need for law enforcement services and utilization of more expensive, and acute services.
  - Approximately 16% of clients self-reported that they were homeless at the time of assessment.
- Approximately 14% either refused a service or had left the location by the time MCRT arrived. On these occasions, MCRT still provided resources to the individual or family members who may be receptive to services in the future.

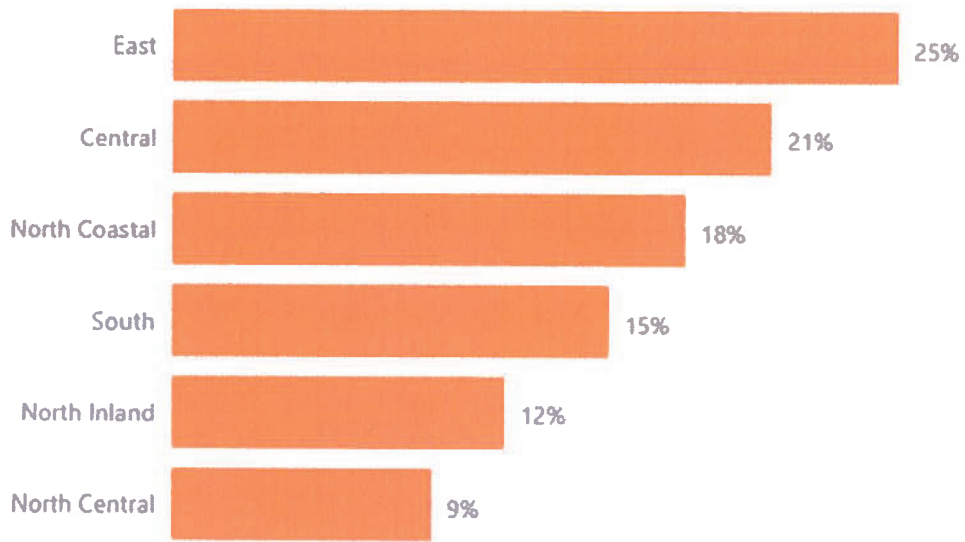
The MCRT program was rolled out in phases throughout 2021 and was serving clients countywide at the end of 2021. The charts below reflect countywide MCRT data from January 1, 2022 – March 13, 2023.

- Nearly 48% of individuals served were successfully connected to treatment either immediately, or within 30 days post initial contact. The table below reflects clients who were connected to the following services:



- The table below indicates locations where clients were served:

**MCRT Response by Service Region**

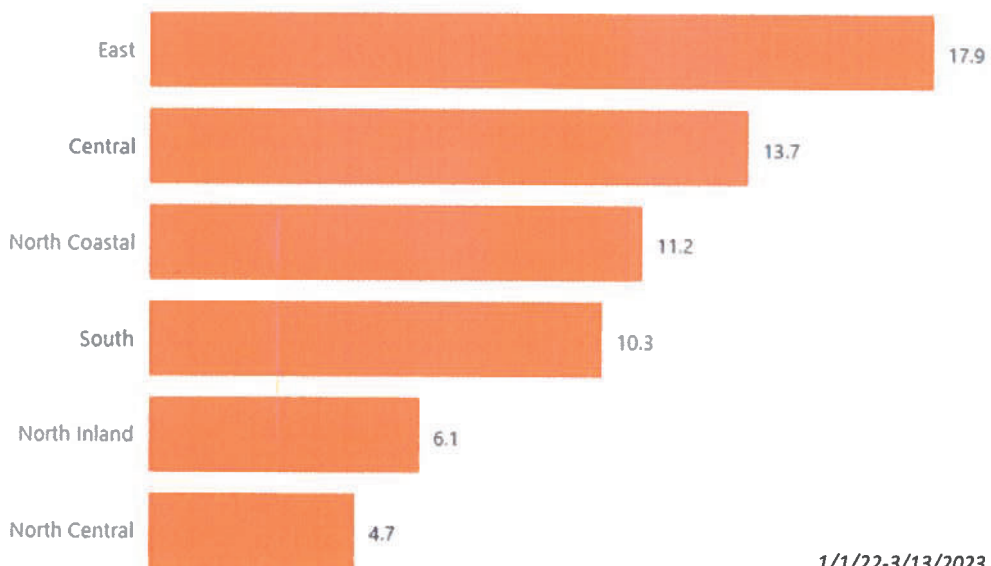


1/1/22-3/13/23

*\*Note: data methodology has been updated to reflect where MCRT was dispatched to and provided a service to a client.*

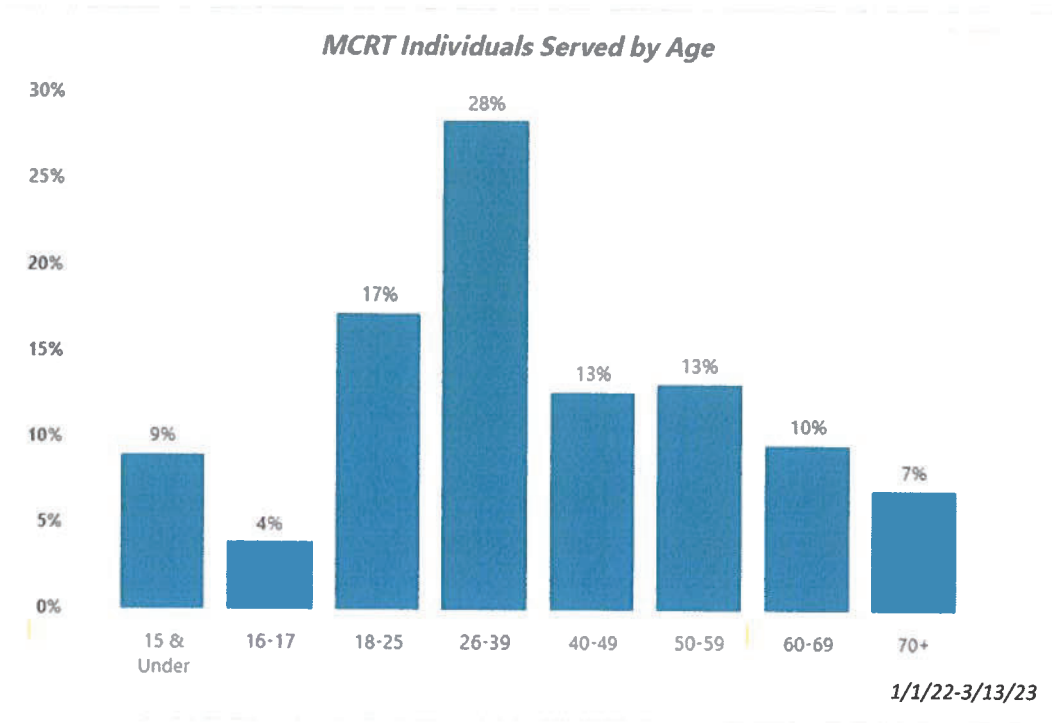
- The table below represents the rate of clients served, by region:

**Rate of MCRT Clients Served per 10,000 Population, by Region**

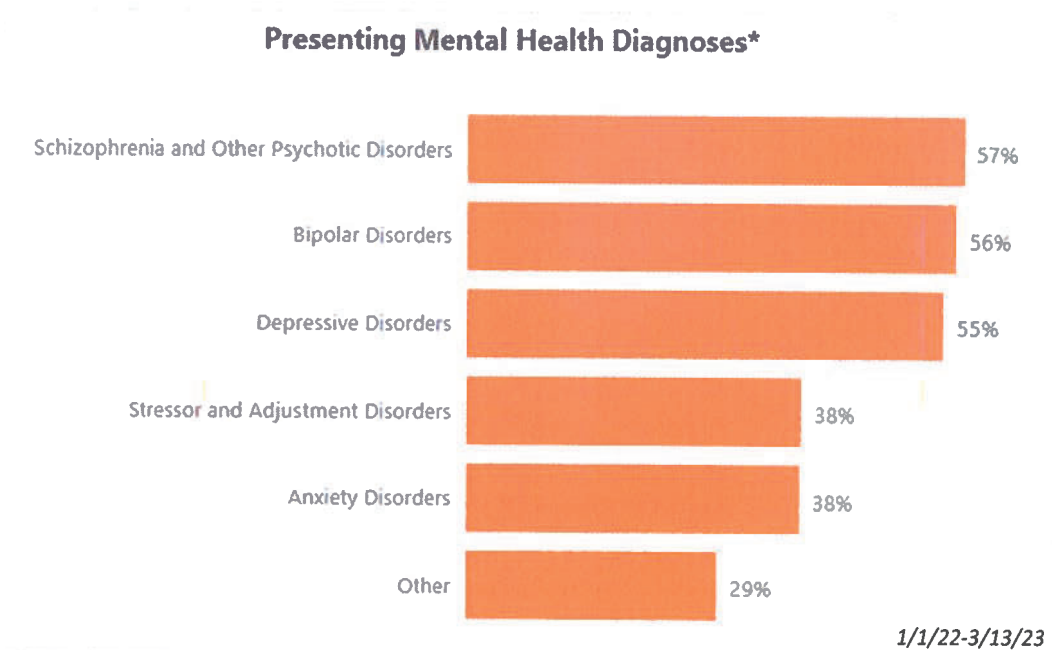


1/1/22-3/13/2023

- The table below provides a breakdown of MCRT services by age. A majority of individuals (28%) receiving services were between 26-39 years of age; youth and transition age youth collectively represented 30% of those served:



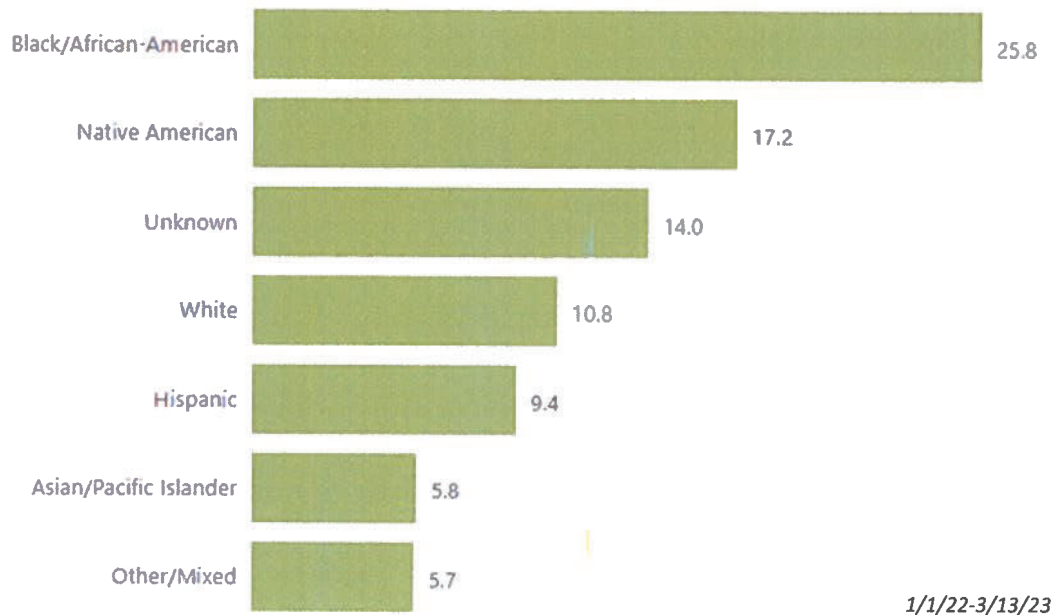
- For those served by MCRT who are also connected to the BHS system of care\*, the top three presenting mental health diagnoses were: Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders, Bipolar Disorders and Depressive Disorders. (Please note, a client can have multiple presenting mental health diagnoses.)



\*MCRT does not diagnose clients. Diagnoses are determined when clients are either identified as existing BHS clients, or subsequently connected to the BHS system of care, and provided a diagnosis by program.

- Client characteristics for rate of MCRT clients served are shown below:

***Rate of MCRT Clients Served per 10,000 Population, by Race/Ethnicity***



Although client race/ethnicity percentages tend to vary slightly across the county on average, there are some notable highlights per region including:

- Higher Asian/Pacific Islander client representation in North Central;
- Black/African American clients are more highly represented in Central and East;
- Hispanic clients more highly represented in South, where there were also far fewer White clients; and
- White clients were the majority in Central, East, North Central, North Inland and North Coastal.

In San Diego County, the rate of Black/African American clients served per 10,000 population is more than two times higher than the average rate. Additionally, the rate of Asian/Pacific Islander clients served per 10,000 population is almost two times lower than the average rate. The rate of Native American clients served per 10,000 population was more than three times higher than the average in East and Central regions.

***Stakeholder Engagement Update***

In February 2023, the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) Criminal Justice (CJ) Subcommittee co-chairs met with Oceanside Police Dispatchers to discuss the MCRT referral process by police dispatchers and the availability of outcome data. Through the various MCRT presentations and sources of information gathered over the past year, the CJ Subcommittee drafted their subcommittee report that includes program recommendations for MCRT. The recommendations were discussed with BHAB members and were presented formally for BHAB approval at the BHAB meeting on April 6, 2023. The Human Relations Commission continues to receive quarterly program updates most recently in January 2023.

In a parallel effort, the County continued community-based outreach and engagement through the Breaking Down Barriers program contract on a time-limited basis, which concluded on December 31, 2022. Breaking Down Barriers is a prevention and early intervention program providing outreach and education to reduce stigma around mental illness through trusted community partners.

During the time period of March 2022 through December 31, 2022, the program reached 15,239 community members through outreach events, presentations, community conversations, flyer dissemination, posters placed in community locations, outreach to local businesses and social marketing. In addition, the program and its partners distributed MCRT information at 383 community locations including libraries, food distribution centers, parks, businesses, resource fairs, organization and community meetings, and cultural festivals. The MCRT flyers used to support this effort were available in multiple threshold languages and were disseminated by the contractor, and can also be found on the [MCRT website](#). Stakeholders are encouraged to reference and print as needed for their individual outreach efforts.

### ***Media Campaign Update***

Feedback received through community engagement activities in recent months indicated a need for broader messaging to ensure awareness of existing services, including how to access MCRT services and other resources. Based on stakeholder input, the next phase of the campaign will include broader messaging to support public awareness of the County's existing San Diego Access & Crisis Line (ACL) in alignment with the new national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline given dispatch of crisis response services is triaged by ACL and emergency services dispatchers trained to deploy MCRT and other emergency responders when appropriate. Anticipated launch of this next phase is planned for Summer 2023.

### **CONTACT INFO**

For questions on this report please contact Dr. Piedad Garcia by phone (858-514-3191) or email ([Piedad.Garcia@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Piedad.Garcia@sdcounty.ca.gov)).