



Bridgeway Launches ARRIVE Together Program In Somerset County

Somerville, N.J., January 19, 2024 – Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services, New Jersey’s leading nonprofit behavioral health organization, has announced it will partner with the Franklin Township Police Department to launch a full-time ARRIVE Together program.

Franklin will be the first municipality in Somerset County to participate in the countywide Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation (ARRIVE) Together program. The ARRIVE co-response program pairs a police officer and a mental health professional working closely together to address mental and behavioral health emergencies as well as conduct community outreach.

Based on the success of a pilot program in Cumberland County, the New Jersey State Attorney General recently announced the ARRIVE Together program is now operational in all 21 New Jersey counties.

The Attorney General’s Office goals for pairing law enforcement officers with mental health clinicians include: safer outcomes when addressing behavioral health concerns, improved resource use, avoiding unnecessary hospitalizations, and helping improve trust between law enforcement and the community.

Franklin Township Public Safety Director, Quovella Maeweather, initiated the ARRIVE program. Nicole Crowley, the Clinical Supervisor for Bridgeway’s Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS) program is working with Officer Manny Rios of the Franklin Township Police Department.

“We’ve already seen the benefit of merging the roles of a mental health professional with a law enforcement officer on our mental health calls. We are constantly collaborating, strategizing, and challenging each other’s views. By offering feedback to one another, we want to make sure that we’re approaching each unique call with the most team-oriented and gentle approach possible. We look forward to working with the community hand in hand and day by day,” says Crowley.

About Bridgeway

For more than 50 years, Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services has helped New Jerseyans recover from conditions related to mental health conditions and substance use, with linkages and screening for co-occurring physical health conditions. Bridgeway delivers individualized around-the-clock crisis intervention, comprehensive outpatient services for the whole family, and long-term wrap-around support. Bridgeway services are available in ten northern New Jersey counties. For more information, visit <http://www.bridgewaybhs.org> or call 877-692-5664.

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Bridgeway’s Nicole Crowley (center) works closely with Franklin Detective Bobby Brown (left) and Franklin Officer Manny Rios (right) for the Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation (ARRIVE) Together program.

Every week we read about police officers responding to crises with Tasers, chokeholds, and more force than is necessary. The response from politicians has long been this is a mental health crisis that needs to be managed differently. **The result has been a wave of local police forces adding trained mental health specialists to their team to help the better manage these incidents.**

In New Jersey and countrywide, police departments have launched the Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation (ARRIVE) Together program. **Its goal is to minimize the use of force by police is to pair mental health specialists with police officers to help them manage mental or behavioral health crises.**

Two out of three police use-of-force incidents in New Jersey involve a person suffering from mental health issues or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, according to the New Jersey attorney general's office. More than half of all fatal police encounters occur in similar circumstances.

Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services has partnered with the Franklin police to implement ARRIVE Together. Our staff member Nicole Crowley works closely with Franklin Detective Bobby Brown and Franklin Officer Manny Rios in the first ARRIVE program in Somerset County. Nicole is the Clinical Supervisor for Bridgeway's Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS).

If you would be interested in talking to them about their experience in launching this program and how they work together to address these incidents, please contact Lisa Giannascoli at 908-635-7647 or lisa.giannascoli@bridgewaybhs.org.