



## **A Conversation with Toronto Deputy Police Chief Mike Federico**

**March 28, 2014**

1. Police encounters with those who are emotionally disturbed
  - a. The police are always looking for places to refer and effectively divert individuals away from the criminal justice system
    - i. Housing supports are need
    - ii. Helping the community establish a stable sources of income
    - iii. Family struggles because of a lack of resources
    - iv. Families become victims of mental health issues because they are unable to cope and are finding it difficult to find support for the individual in crisis
2. Reporting on the vulnerable sector for the next reporting period
  - a. Over 20,000 calls in 2011-2012
  - b. 8,600 apprehended under the Mental Health Act last year
  - c. Indicators are being developed - Referral rates etc.
3. MCIT expansion
  - a. The primary response team gets the call for service – they are the most available resource
  - b. Events that involve an assessment of the safety of the situation need the primary response team there before the MCIT comes in
  - c. Once the area is stabilized, MCIT comes in and nurse helps to do a triage into the appropriate stream of care
4. Use of Force
  - a. Those who suffer emotional disturbance are at no greater risk of being violent than the general population
  - b. When individuals are in a mental health crisis, sometimes use of force is needed when an individual is at risk based on their actions and behaviour
5. Police Training
  - a. Human rights training
  - b. the types of behaviours and conditions are discussed in training
    - i. major mental disorders, drug and alcohol addictions, and how they can be recognized
    - ii. discuss autism and other disorders
  - c. trained on signs and symptoms to recognize the behaviour to help officer determine if a criminal charge will be helpful

- d. police look at whether criminal justice system can aid the person's recovery not just whether they should be charged of an offense
6. Police Record Checks
    - a. The disclosure of mental health information includes suicide attempts and where there was harm done to others
    - b. Only disclosed to the employer or volunteer organization if they have a memorandum of understanding with the Toronto Police outlining the need for disclosing this information
  7. Various reviews happening in Toronto
    - a. If there are individual complaints the Office of the Independent Police Review Director will look into it
    - b. from systemic point of view there are reviews taking place by the Ombudsman and internally at the Toronto Police Service
    - c. having the safest outcome possible always the goal when interacting with individuals experiencing a mental health crisis – injuries before and after police encounters are tracked
    - d. in the case of serious injuries or lethal use of force - Special Investigations Unit conducts an investigation
  8. Conference that happened Toronto MHCC
    - a. Those with lived experience have an important voice and institutions must be influenced and impacted by this input
    - b. More than just feedback but a partnership and collaboration with persons with lived experience (PWLE)
    - c. We have PWLE on our mental health subcommittee
      - i. Mostly this has been focused on stigma but the focus will expand in the future
  9. Police Access Line – call centre being used

**Sample Questions from Audience:**

1. What constitutes a threat of harm? What are the police options in the event they encounter a threat of harm?
  - They probe to see if the person is making a credible threat of suicide
  - They assess if they are at risk and they believe they are suffering from mental disorder
  - Downstream consideration – is there a need for a psychiatric assessment
  - If there is threatening behaviour and the individuals is causing harm – the officer may need to take the person into physical control
2. How are police officers recognized for?
  - Written stories about brave police work
  - Having a dialogue – police leaders present in forums talking about social investment and how as an agency early intervention in a positive way ought to be recognized
  - The constant dialogue of mental health issues occurs in society