

# **BHAT**

# **Mental Health Court**

# **Subcommittee Meeting**

Thursday, November 2, 2023

# Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Mental Health Court
3. Updates & Next Steps
4. Discussion
5. Next Meeting

# Introductions

- Shan Chen
- Kristin Voto
- Alexis Higdon
- Carolyn Cullison
- Aniko Renee
- Jess Jolly
- Dan Slade
- Chris Shea

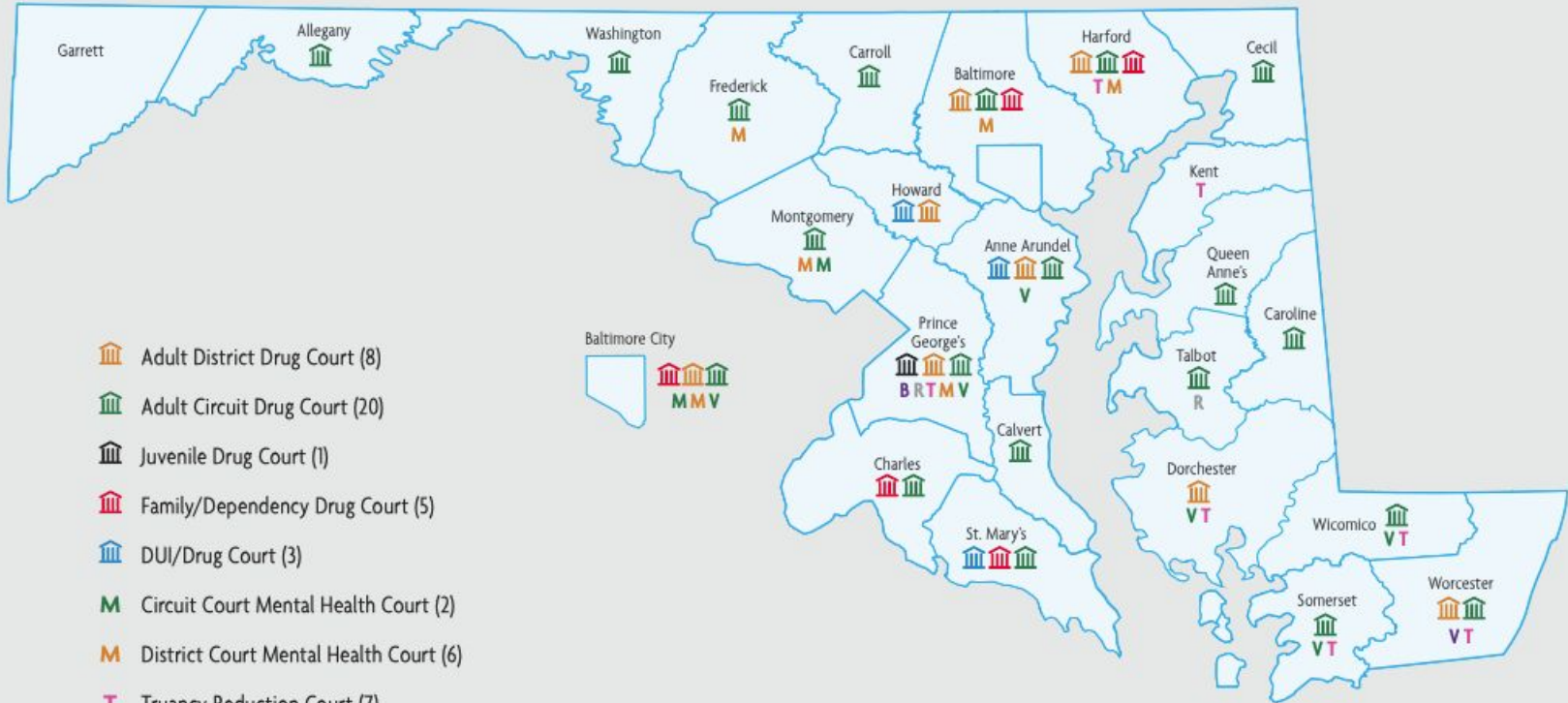
# Mental Health Court








- A Mental Health Court is a specialized court docket established for defendants with mental illness that substitutes a problem-solving approach for the traditional adversarial criminal court processing.
- Participants are identified through mental health screening and assessments and voluntarily participate in a judicially supervised treatment plan developed jointly by a team of court staff and mental health professionals. (Justice Center, Bureau of Justice Assistance)
- The overarching goal of the Mental Health Court is to decrease the frequency of participants contacts with the criminal justice system by providing participants with judicial leadership to improve the social functioning, employment linkage, housing needs, treatment, and support services of participants.
- Mental Health Courts rely on individualized treatment plans and ongoing judicial monitoring to address both the mental health needs of offenders and public safety concerns of communities. These courts also seek to address the underlying problems that contribute to criminal behavior, and to assist with the avoidance of recurring correctional visits, as well as to overall lower the recidivism of this population.

Source: [Maryland Courts - Problem Solving Courts](#)

# Mental Health Court (continued)

## Operational Problem-Solving Courts in Maryland



-  Adult District Drug Court (8)
-  Adult Circuit Drug Court (20)
-  Juvenile Drug Court (1)
-  Family/Dependency Drug Court (5)
-  DUI/Drug Court (3)
-  Circuit Court Mental Health Court (2)
-  District Court Mental Health Court (6)
-  Truancy Reduction Court (7)
-  Re-Entry Court (2)
-  Veterans Court (7)
-  Back on Track (1)



# Updates & Next Steps

- SMCHD's Epidemiology department shared their data breakdown on numbers received from MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, SMCSO and Detention/Rehabilitation centers
  - Click here to access the spreadsheet of responses
- Carolyn reached out to SAMHSA's list of organizations throughout the country. Many of her emails were returned, however she did receive a response from Texas and Georgia, which had a lot of MHC. For Albany GA, 3 former participants of mental health courts now work on an advisory committee.
  - Recommended to check out CSG Justice Center, Bureau of Justice Assistance and Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program for funding assistance
- Kristin and Maryellen will be working on the updated 2023 Mental Health Court Report over the next couple of months
  - Maryellen will be out of office for the next few weeks
- Dan can speak with the States Attorney for Calvert County as well as the judge that runs their MHC to get more information.

# Discussions

- The team had a discussion on the infrastructure around mental health courts and the turnaround time from when an individual is sentenced by a judge, to entering the MHC program.
- According to the St. Mary's County State's Attorney office, we currently do not have the staffing needed in St. Mary's County to support a MHC.
- How can we advocate as a local health improvement coalition for further support or funding on MHC?
  - Writing an advocacy letter?

# Next Meeting

- Thursday, December 7th from 9:30-10:00 AM.