



THE  
**STEPPING UP**  
INITIATIVE

November 10, 2025

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Abena Bediako, **HEART**; Tabatha Brafford, **Carolina Outreach**; Michael Cao, **Duke**; Antoinette Carter, **Durham County Sheriff Department**; Kelli Egnaczka, **JSD**; Michele Easter, **Duke Psychiatry**; Roshanna Humphrey, **JSD**; O'Shauna Hunter, **United Way Greater Charlotte**; Wendy Jacobs, **Durham Board of County Commissioners**; Eric Johnson, **Alliance Health**; Patricia Knaudt, **Jail Mental Health**; Lao Rubert, **Local Re-entry Council**; Nicole Schramm-Sapyta, **Duke Institute for Brain Science**; Renee Shaw, **JSD**; Mike Sstrom, **City of Durham- Criminal Legal System Task Force**; Selma Smith, **Carolina Outreach**; Tonya VanDeinse, **UNC School of Social Work**; Doretta Walker, **Judge**; Laylon Williams, **Alliance Health**; Angela Winchester, **Department of Adult Corrections-Community Corrections**

- **Street Psychiatry Outreach Program (Mecklenburg County)**-O'Shauna Hunter
  - Community-driven plan addressing the full spectrum of housing from homelessness to stable housing.
  - Involves over 250 cross-sector stakeholders including government, nonprofits, healthcare, and individuals with lived experience.
  - Focused on launching and evaluating innovative pilot programs.
  
- **Four Pillars of the Initiative**
  - Focuses on supporting individuals on their journey to housing stability.
  - Includes navigators with flexible service spending accounts.
  - \$1.5 million grant to be awarded for pilot implementation.
  - Aims to prevent homelessness through critical home repair, legal services, rental assistance, and a strike fund.
  - Includes emergency repair programs, homeowner education, eviction representation, and financial assistance.
  - Over \$3 million awarded to two agencies for rental assistance.
  - \$1.5 million allocated for critical home repair and homeowner education.
  - Focuses on increasing housing stock.
  - Includes a countywide Housing Trust Fund and property provider recruitment.
  - \$1.5 million awarded to Housing Collaborative for landlord recruitment and retention.
  - Added in January 2024 in response to city ordinances affecting unhoused individuals.

- Includes street outreach, non-congregate shelter development, and health & human services (street psychiatry).
  - \$13 million investment from city and county for shelter; \$10 million targeted for private fundraising.
- Street psychiatry pilot launched in September 2025, already served over 20 patients.

- **Accessing the Cost of Incarceration to Families in Durham**-Michael Cao

- Focused on the impact of incarceration on families in Durham.
- Based on in-person surveys at Durham County Jail in Spring 2024.
- Highlighted the socio-economic and emotional toll on families.
- Emphasized the need to include families in criminal justice reform efforts.

- **Key Discussion Points**

- Importance of cross-sector collaboration in addressing housing and homelessness.
- Need for re-entry housing and support for individuals with criminal records.
- Sustainability and long-term funding for pilot programs.
- Potential for expanding the initiative to other regions like the Triangle area.

- **Subcommittee Updates**

- **Access to Care**
  - **Forensic Community Support Team**- Continue to address contractual issues.
  - **Mental Health Court/Mental Health Court Expansion Initiative**- Tonya continues to complete the assessment.

### **Upcoming SUI Meeting Dates for 2026 Meeting**

- February 9, 2026-1:30 pm