



THE
STEPPING UP
I N I T I A T I V E

September 8, 2025

Minutes

Attendees: Abena Bediako, **HEART**; Michele Easter, **Duke Psychiatry**; Roshanna Parker, **JSD**; Wendy Jacobs, **Durham Board of County Commissioners**; 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**; Doretta Walker, **Judge**; Helen Trip, **Durham County EMS**; Tonya VanDeinse, **UNC School of Social Work**; Laylon Williams, **Alliance Health**; Angela Winchester, **Department of Adult Correction-Community Supervision**

Crisis Intervention Team Updates-Laylon Williams

Laylon provided updates on the CIT program, its history, Durham's CIT team expansion, specialized trainings, and behavioral health trends affecting crisis response work.

Background & Presenter Role:

- Justice Specialist at Alliance Health, formerly Criminal Justice Specialist, title updated to reduce stigma.
- Certified CIT International Coordinator and Train-the-Trainer.

History and Purpose of CIT (Memphis Model):

- Developed after the 1987 fatal shooting of Joseph Robinson in Memphis, TN.
- Officially launched in 1988, expanding into a national 40-hour training model focused on crisis safety.

Durham CIT Program Overview:

- Established in 2007 with partnerships from NAMI Durham, Durham Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and behavioral health agencies.
- A total of 1,442 first responders have been trained, representing numerous justice and behavioral health partners.

Local Behavioral Health Trends:

- Significant increases in Durham population (2021–2024).
- Increase in mental health needs among college students; 30% rise in counseling utilization post-2020.
- Nearly 14,000 veterans in Durham County, representing important CIT considerations.

Specialized CIT-related Trainings:

- Veteran CIT (V-CIT): 16-hour training for veteran first responders.
- Detention Center Mental Health Training: 32-hour curriculum tailored for detention officers.
- 911 Telecommunicator Training: 16-hour curriculum supporting crisis triage and HEART diversion pathways.

Discussion focused on data needs: number of detention officers trained, turnover impact, and tracking CIT training outcomes.

Members also inquired about early data from the 911 Telecommunicator training and its effect on diversion to HEART and other crisis pathways.

Next Steps & Follow-Up Items

- Laylon will provide additional CIT training data, including breakdowns for detention staff and telecommunicators.
- Committee will continue identifying system gaps and strengthening cross-agency crisis response collaborations.

Meeting Schedule

The Stepping Up Initiative Committee meeting schedule for 2026 was reviewed and approved.

Subcommittee Updates

- **Access to Care**
 - **Forensic Community Support Team**-The team was informed that effort is being made to finalize the FCST contract with Alliance Health.
 - **Mental Health Court/Mental Health Court Expansion Initiative**-Tonya is finalizing the report for the MHCEI grant.

Upcoming SUI Meeting Dates for 2025 Meetings

- November 10, 2025