

Ernie Stevens:

Not everybody that calls 911 needs a police officer to respond. So, let's talk 988. Here's where people are calling to get mental health assistance. So this 988 is a transformative movement in America right now that's going to allow individuals with mental health needs to be able to call in to speak to a crisis line counselor in order to get a proper response. And really, what it does is it limits law enforcement's response to a call that they really don't need to be responding to in the first place.

Adam Wasserman:

The 988 and 911 cooperation or partnership I see is very vital because we're really two distinct parts of the same system, the crisis response system. We both play a different role, but a very key role. And 911 has been taking mental health crisis calls since its inception and will continue to do so because there will always be people that will want to call 911 or people who are seeing incidents happening that may involve mental health crises. They're going to be calling 911. So, we really are going to continue to be taking these calls. So we really have to have a system that's interoperable where we can share calls with 988, they can share calls with us, and just making sure that we're working together for the betterment of everyone.

Madyson Ganeles:

911 is typically the face of public safety. So many people call 911 just for behavioral health manner because they're not maybe quite sure what other route to take. And I think it's really important for law enforcement and public safety agencies to adjust the way that they're training their officers

Amin Shariff:

Ultimately, in order to provide the best care and service that we can to the community, we want that response to be as trauma-informed as possible and using the least restrictive method possible.

Sharon L'Herrou:

It is critically important to have all major stakeholders involved at the table for the 988 rollout. And law enforcement is a critical partner. So they have to be there because there are a number of instances where they may or may not need to respond. So we want to be able to have collaborative dialogue discussion ahead of time. We want to make sure that we have good protocols and good relationships for appropriate handoffs. So the idea is that if all of the stakeholders are at the table in advance, we can have everything lined up for a really, really smooth response to everyone who needs help no matter what situation they might be encountering.

Ernie Stevens:

My message to law enforcement leaders, if you're just now coming to the table when it comes to the talks with 988, I envy you. You're in a particular point where 988 is going to be extremely transformative in the way that we respond to mental health crisis calls. This is an opportunity for you as a leader of your organization to understand how 988 works and be able to determine what type of response is going to be needed from your officers if they need to respond at all. So, take the time to sit down with your collaborative stakeholders and get to know 988. Embrace this opportunity to be a trailblazer in your community.

Maureen Evans:

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So I would say to keep an open mind about the system. Give it time to work and give it a chance to work and utilize any interactions that we have in using the system as a way to learn to educate ourselves so that when we continue to deal with people in crisis, we can do all that much better on the next call.