

GPD, Pitt Sheriff team up with mental health professionals to respond to sensitive calls



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GREENVILLE, N.C. (WITN) - Law enforcement officers with two local agencies will soon be teaming up with mental health professionals to respond to sensitive calls for service.

The Greenville Police Department is teaming up with mobile crisis counselors from Integrated Family Services and Trillium Health to create a co-response approach to suicidal or mental health-related calls.

Chief Mark Holtzman says the Pitt County Sheriff's Office will also be joining the effort.

While mental health professionals have previously been available on an on-call basis, they will soon be responding alongside officers to provide mental health expertise and to help safely resolve situations.

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Holtzman says the partnership will be the first of its kind in eastern Carolina and hopes it will provide better resources and support for people experiencing a mental health crisis. "Police officers are always going to respond. We're always going to come and serve our community. What we're going to do is we're going to reach out to our partners in mobile crisis, call them immediately, and ask them to join us at the home."

<https://www.witn.com/2020/08/28/gpd-pitt-sheriff-team-up-with-mental-health-professionals-to-respond-to-sensitive-calls/>



Mona Townes, behavioral health specialist says, “The culture of law enforcement and the culture of behavioral health are two different cultures. Two different languages. Two different priorities. However, what our hope is is to be that bridge.”

The partnership is still in the early stages of development. Holtzman also emphasizes mobile crisis counselors are available to the general public to call directly in addition to the police department.

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