

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT relative to the status of the Therapeutic Van Pilot Program.

Recommendations for Council action:

1. CONCUR with the recommendations for future actions as detailed in the September 27, 2023 Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) report, attached to the Council File.
2. INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Fire Department to report in 45 days on how the recommendations detailed in the September 27, 2023 Board report, attached to the Council File, have impacted the Therapeutic Van Pilot Program.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None submitted by the Board. Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has not completed a financial analysis of this report. ot applicable.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

Summary:

On October 10, 2023, your Committee considered a September 27, 2023 Los Angeles Fire Commission report (Board) relative to the status of the Therapeutic Van Pilot Program. According to the Board, on October 13, 2021, Council approved the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) to enter into an agreement with the Los Angeles County (LAC) Department of Mental Health (DMH) to conduct a therapeutic transport pilot program. Additionally, on June 21, 2023, the City Council adopted a motion to extend the pilot from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. The purpose of the pilot is to determine the feasibility and safety of transferring care of a patient experiencing an isolated non-violent mental health crisis from the care of a responding LAFD paramedic or emergency medical technician (EMT) to DMH staff for transport to a Psychiatric Urgent Care Center (PUCC) or specialized mental health emergency room. Furthermore, the pilot tests the feasibility of DMH therapeutic vans being dispatched by LAFD Metropolitan Fire Communications (MFC) and responding out of LAFD fire stations.

Observations of the pilot thus far indicate that EMTs and paramedics can safely transfer care of a patient experiencing an isolated psychiatric emergency to DMH staff for transport to a PUCC in a finite number of instances. However, the Therapeutic Van's narrow focus of services combined with the Therapeutic Van staff's inability to conduct a medical assessment or provide emergency medical services is a limiting factor when responding to a 911 call for service.

In 2023, on average fewer than four patients each day meet the narrow criteria established for transport by a Therapeutic Van. While the LAFD encountered over 18,000 patients in 2022 where the provider impression (PI) was a behavioral or psychiatric crisis,

early observations of the pilot program indicate that in the vast majority of calls received for a mental health crisis, the patient is also experiencing a medical problem, drug overdose, or had associated violent behavior requiring law enforcement. A paramedic or EMT cannot transfer care to a Therapeutic Van in these instances. The Therapeutic Van may treat and transport LAFD patients experiencing a non-violent mental health crisis with or without suicidal ideation who do not require transport to a hospital emergency department and have no other medical complaints. During the next phase of the pilot, the LAFD and DMH will continue to work together in response to calls to 911 for psychiatric emergency services. However, the DMH staff will also explore proactive outreach to patients outside of calls to 911 for service. Also, the LAFD will explore the ability to expand the number of Advanced Provider Response Units (APRUs) to better respond to and evaluate patients experiencing a mental health crisis who require a higher level of medical clearance to allow transport to a PUC than an EMT or paramedic can perform.

After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to concur with the Board's recommendations for future actions as detailed on Page 6 of the Board report. Also, the Committee moved to recommend instructing the LAFD to report in 45 days in regard to progress made in implementing said recommendations. This matter is now submitted to Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Public Safety Committee

COUNCILMEMBER	VOTE
RODRIGUEZ:	YES
LEE:	YES
McOSKER:	YES
PARK:	YES
SOTO-MARTINEZ:	YES

ARL

10/10/23

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-