

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors authorized the court-ordered Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program for individuals with mental illness who meet the criteria established by Laura's Law. The Department of Behavioral Wellness launched the AOT pilot program in January of 2017, and hired Harder+Company Community Research to conduct an external evaluation of the early implementation and initial outcomes. This report presents findings from the first three quarters of program implementation, January to September 2017.



Key Findings

36 people were referred to the AOT program in the first nine months of 2017. On average, the program received 4 referrals per month. Of those 36 referrals:



Half were from family members, such as parents and children.

67% were under the age of 45.



75% of people had a dual diagnosis.

Half were homeless.



On average, AOT staff reached out to referred individuals 2 times a week.

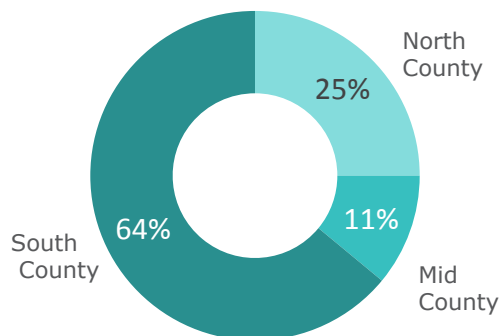
42% of individuals referred to the AOT program voluntarily accepted treatment within the first 6 weeks.

AOT engagement efforts are reducing the number of negative life events for participants.

Referral Trends

The number of referrals decreased during the third quarter compared to the first and second quarters. Most referrals continued to come from South County communities. Referral rates should be monitored to determine whether the decline in referrals observed this quarter is reflective of needs being met or the need for additional outreach to make potential referrers aware of the AOT program.

AOT Referrals by Region



AOT Referrals by Month

Total Referrals: 36
Avg # Referrals/Month: 4



Who is participating in the AOT program? Two-thirds (64%) of the people referred to the AOT program were male. AOT participants ranged in age from 19 to 68 years, and had an average age of 40. At the time of referral, approximately three-fourths (75%) had a dual-diagnosis, half (50%) were homeless, and less than half (44%) were on probation. More than half (56%) identified as Caucasian, and a quarter (25%) identified as Latino or Hispanic.

Characteristics

Gender

64%
Male



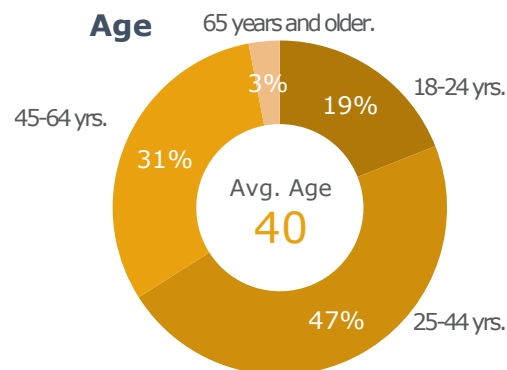
Engagement Efforts

How successful is AOT engagement? The individuals served by AOT are typically hard to reach; they are often homeless, transient, and many experience both substance abuse and mental health concerns.

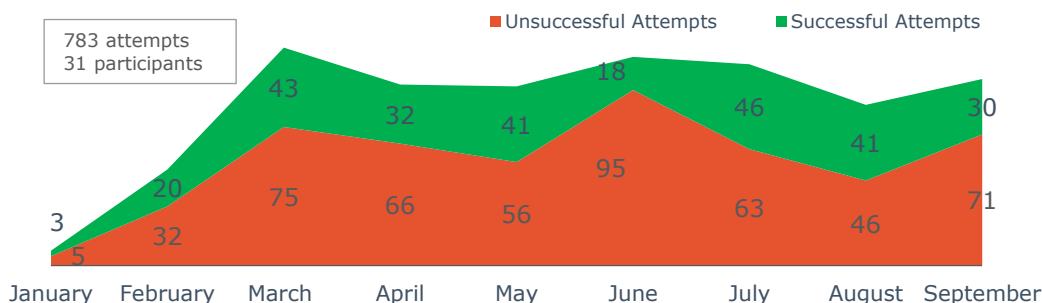
AOT caseworkers aim to contact all referred clients 3 times a week, with the goal of having individuals accept voluntary treatment. Data show a high level of engagement between caseworkers and referred individuals:

- AOT staff reported **783** engagement attempts (average 2 attempts per week).
- Approximately less than half (45%) of referred individuals have been contacted 3+ times a week (findings include people in the AOT program for over 1 week).
- On average, the AOT team had a 3.5:10 rate of successful contact of referred individuals.

Age



AOT Engagement Efforts by Month



Race/Ethnicity

56%	Caucasian/White
25%	Latino/Hispanic
8%	Multiracial
6%	Asian
6%	Black/African-American

Engagement Outcomes

42%	Accepted voluntary treatment
22%	Continue to attempt to engage
0%	Settlement Agreement
0%	Court Petition Filed
0%	Court Ordered to Treatment
36%	Closed*

What was the result of AOT engagement efforts?

Engagement outcomes data show that two-fifths of people referred to AOT (42%) have accepted voluntary treatment and have not needed court intervention thus far.

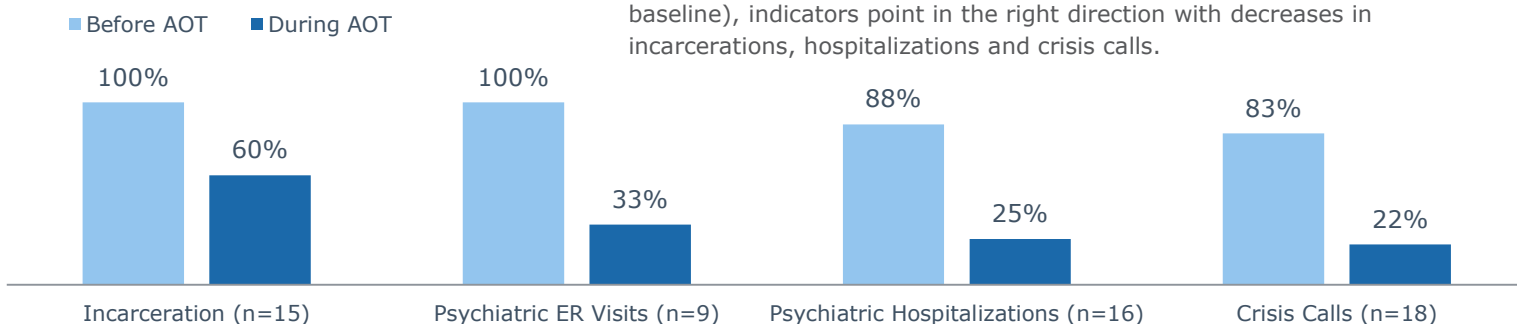
*Unable to locate/Already connected to services/Did not meet AOT criteria

Other Characteristics

75%	Dual diagnosis
50%	Homeless
39%	Probation

AOT Outcomes

Significant Life Events



What has changed for AOT participants? The goal of AOT is to improve access and adherence to intensive behavioral health services in order to avert relapse, repeated hospitalizations, arrest, incarceration, suicide, property destruction, and violent behavior. While early data about the success of AOT in meeting these goals is limited (based on the number of participants who disclosed experiencing each event at baseline), indicators point in the right direction with decreases in incarcerations, hospitalizations and crisis calls.