



The Hope Health Alliance, Inc.

PROPOSAL FOR PEER ENHANCED EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES **“PEERS”**

The Hope Health Alliance (HHA), a non-profit organization, proposes a pilot program to provide technical and staffing assistance for behavioral health emergencies and follow-up care across rural and frontier Montana.

HHA will collaborate closely with local fire, ambulance, law enforcement agencies, health departments, and healthcare facilities to operate a program which will decrease the use of emergency rooms, decrease time of police officers at the scene, decrease higher levels of care such as hospitalization, and increase community-based treatment.

The pilot program would manage behavioral health related 911, crisis/warm line, and other professional referrals such as those from law enforcement and primary care providers. Certain patients, as determined by local protocol, will be directed to a mobile behavioral health program consisting of Certified Behavioral Health Peer Support Specialists (CBHPSS) cross trained as an Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT).

Crewmembers will immediately respond to the location of any patient. Safety will be made the top priority through substantial training. Any scene deemed unsafe, at any time, will be immediately vacated and law enforcement will be requested.

If the patient requires a higher level of behavioral health care, the on-call therapist (or local hospital) will be contacted. Upon collaboration with the therapist, the team will continue treatment or dispatch the local transporting EMS agency. The team will follow local protocols for when to contact the on-call therapist or the local emergency department for online medical control.

Once on the scene, a primary medical assessment is conducted by the responder. After completing the immediate medical portion of the call, the responder will play the crucial role of peer supporter.

In their peer support role, the responder will:

- Review necessary history with the patient
- Review, or create, written plans such as:
 - safety plans
 - recovery plans
- Provide helpful dialogue to guide the patient through their situation
- Help the person make follow-up actions / appointments as needed
- Provide referrals as needed for community providers and resources
- Document the call and all elements of the plan(s) established

Telemedicine will be a component of the PEERS program and it's treatment on the scene, and during follow-up appointments with Peer Support Specialists, therapists, and medication providers.