



# Massachusetts Councils On Aging

## Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams - EMHOTs Fact Sheet, March 2019

### Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams

Five regional Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams **cover 48 communities** in Massachusetts. Based in Amesbury, Bellingham, Greenfield, New Bedford and Somerville/Cambridge. They assess older adults for mental illnesses, provide counseling, provide and/or connect elders to crucial social services, facilitate connections to PCPs, and provide support to other municipal staff and community partners who in turn can improve their interactions with elders experiencing mental health issues.

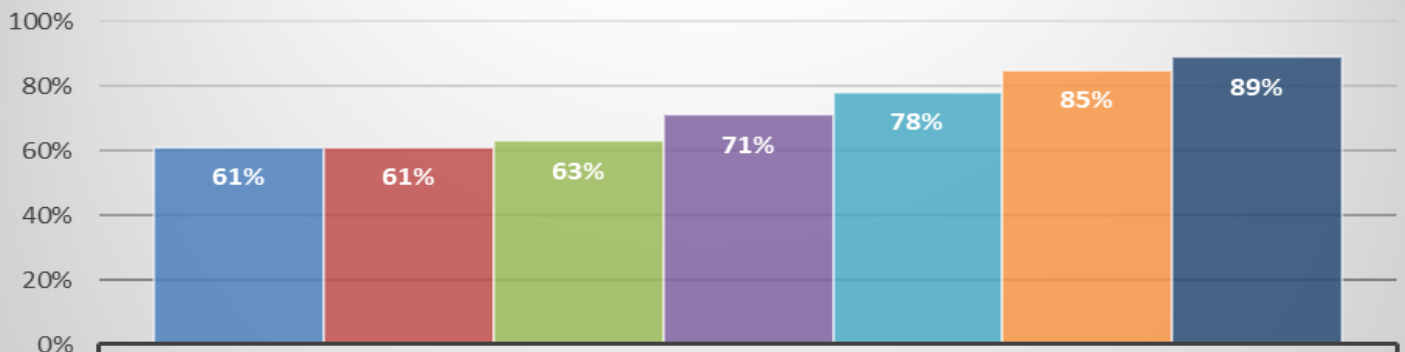


### Leading Diagnoses: Depression, Anxiety, Hoarding, PTSD, and Substance Use

#### EMHOT STATISTICS

- 10% of all referrals are elders experiencing a mental health crisis
- 2,600 individual counseling sessions were provided in FY 18
- 450 group counseling sessions were provided in FY 18
- 99% of all EMHOT clients received direct counseling from EMHOT staff
- 1,731 hours of direct counseling were provided by EMHOTs in the 1<sup>st</sup> six months of FY19

### EMHOT Services Outcomes



#### AS A RESULT OF RECEIVING EMHOT SERVICES, ELDERS

- Have symptom improvement- 61%
- Are better able to deal with a crisis- 61%
- Are better able to control their lives- 63%
- Now have support from family or friends if they are in a crisis-71%
- Now know people who will listen and understand them when they need to talk- 78%
- Deal more effectively with daily problems- 85%
- Know who to contact if they need help right away -89%

## THE NEED

### State and National Data Shows Us Reason For Concern

- **Substance use among boomers is higher than any preceding generation**
- **Boomers have the highest rates of anxiety and depression**
- **In Massachusetts, the highest rate of suicide among males was among individuals age 85+**

### HOW EMHOTs WORK, Responses from Elders

One elder receiving EMHOT services attempted to reach out to get help for 50 years for his mental health and personal issues and he *"never got anywhere except dead ends"*, until his local EMHOT Team connected him with: mental health services to treat his depression, anxiety and bi-polar disorder and further with housing and other community supports. When speaking of the impact EMHOT has had, he stated, ***"This program has helped me more than any other program in my life"***

***I am healthier now from therapy... I wish I could do more but my body is not able. I am glad I found this program"***.

***"This program has been a blessing! It is wonderful to have access to a professional, compassionate, non-judgmental ear."***

***"To know there's someone who seems to believe in me and cares. A lot of doctors don't always. I know sometimes friends aren't professional and can't help because they aren't trained to understand mental health issues. This service has been very helpful."***

***"I have felt less anxious since working with my EMHOT Social Worker"***

### How EMHOTs Strengthen Community Collaborations

***"Since the program began, more than 40 police officers have been trained to participate in the city's Community Crisis Intervention Team Protocols. That collaborative effort with the council on aging has resulted in coordinated follow-up with partnering agencies and city departments to better serve the needs of our elders with mental health issues...I strongly urge the state to provide the funding necessary to maintain this valuable program"*** **Chief of Police, Joseph C. Cordeiro, New Bedford, MA**

***"I have had numerous to call upon you and the team to intervene with elders and assist them in matters regarding serious violations of the Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation pursuant to 105CMR410.000. Quite frankly the team has provided such a valuable service I have been able to avoid serious enforcement action which could be extremely costly and very traumatic to these people because it could have ended up with a condemnation or order to vacate their homes..."*** **Jack Morris, Director of Public Health, Amesbury and Salisbury, MA.**

***"Our numbers of "frequent flyers" have been greatly reduced. In some cases, criminal charges have been filed due to misuse of the 911 system. Without EMHOT, charges would more than likely continue and tie up time at court. EMHOT is definitely the only program around that provides in depth service for elder mental health issues. EMHOT has been an extremely helpful tool for the Newburyport Police."*** **Detective Inspector Christopher McDonald, Newburyport**