

Connecting the Dots: Innovative Collaborations to Address Homelessness in Monterey County



Presenters

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Learning Objectives

- Gain an understanding of the vision, development, and structure of the MDOT team.
- Learn ways to enhance the relationship between law enforcement and APS, ultimately resulting in better outcomes for both housed and homeless seniors and dependent adults.
- Learn about the vision, development and structure of Monterey County's Navigator University, in order to implement similar collaborative efforts in their communities.
- Identify lessons learned and next steps for the MDOT model, as well as Navigator University

Monterey County Aging and Adult Services Branch

MISSION:

To empower and serve the aging population and persons living with disabilities to live safely and with dignity.

Client Population–Aging Homeless

- “Silver Tsunami”–The number of Americans over the age of 80 is expected to double in the next 20 years.
- Adults born in the second half of the “baby boom” (1955–1965) have a “sustained elevation” in their risk of experiencing homelessness. **As this population ages, so does the average age of the homeless population.**
- The number of people experiencing homelessness over the age of 65 is forecast to increase by 2.5 to 3 times from 2017 to 2030.
- Medical Age–Older adults who are homeless experience geriatric medical conditions (like cognitive decline and decreased mobility) at rates equal to housed adults who are **20 years older.**

“Older Homeless Adults: Can We Do More?” Kushel; Journal of General Internal Medicine, 2011.

“The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness”, Culhane et al, University of Pennsylvania, 2019.

Challenges facing homeless adults

- ▶ Inability to control or alter environment
- ▶ Lack of reliable information about or access to benefits
- ▶ Increased medical problems, mental health concerns and substance abuse
- ▶ Limited access to health care
- ▶ Lack of transportation
- ▶ Communication challenges
- ▶ Increased risk of abuse
- ▶ Increased legal issues



Before MDOT: Problems/Needs

- ▶ Frequent police contact with homeless individuals with ineffective or only punitive means to respond
- ▶ Limited knowledge of services for homeless by PD
- ▶ “Silo-ing” and lack of coordination between service providers and other agencies
- ▶ Encountered increasing issues of homelessness, along with substance abuse, mental illness and other concerns

Monterey PD MDOT History and Development

- ▶ Mission/Objectives
- ▶ History and Development
 - Leadership – Monterey PD Asst. Chief Bill Clark
 - Homeless Exchange formed
 - CAT (Community Action Team) Officers role evolved
 - City Liaison Meeting
 - Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT) formed



MDOT Structure

MDOT Members

- Monterey PD CAT Officers
- Adult Protective Services Social Worker
- Monterey County Behavioral Health Mobile Crisis Psychiatric Social Worker
- Montage Health/Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) Community Outreach Social Worker
- YWCA Domestic Violence Advocate

Adult Protective Services Role

- History and Development of APS Role
 - Participated in Homeless Exchange meetings
 - Outreach with Officers after Homeless Exchange meetings
 - Monterey PD Co-Location Pilot
 - Built on Co-Location Model with MDOT Creation

What Does MDOT Do?

- Homeless Outreach
 - Homeless Camps and Other Locations
- Team response to urgent needs of homeless clients
- Service Coordination
 - Between MDOT Members
 - With Other Social Service Agencies
- Community Meetings
- Inform Law Enforcement Response

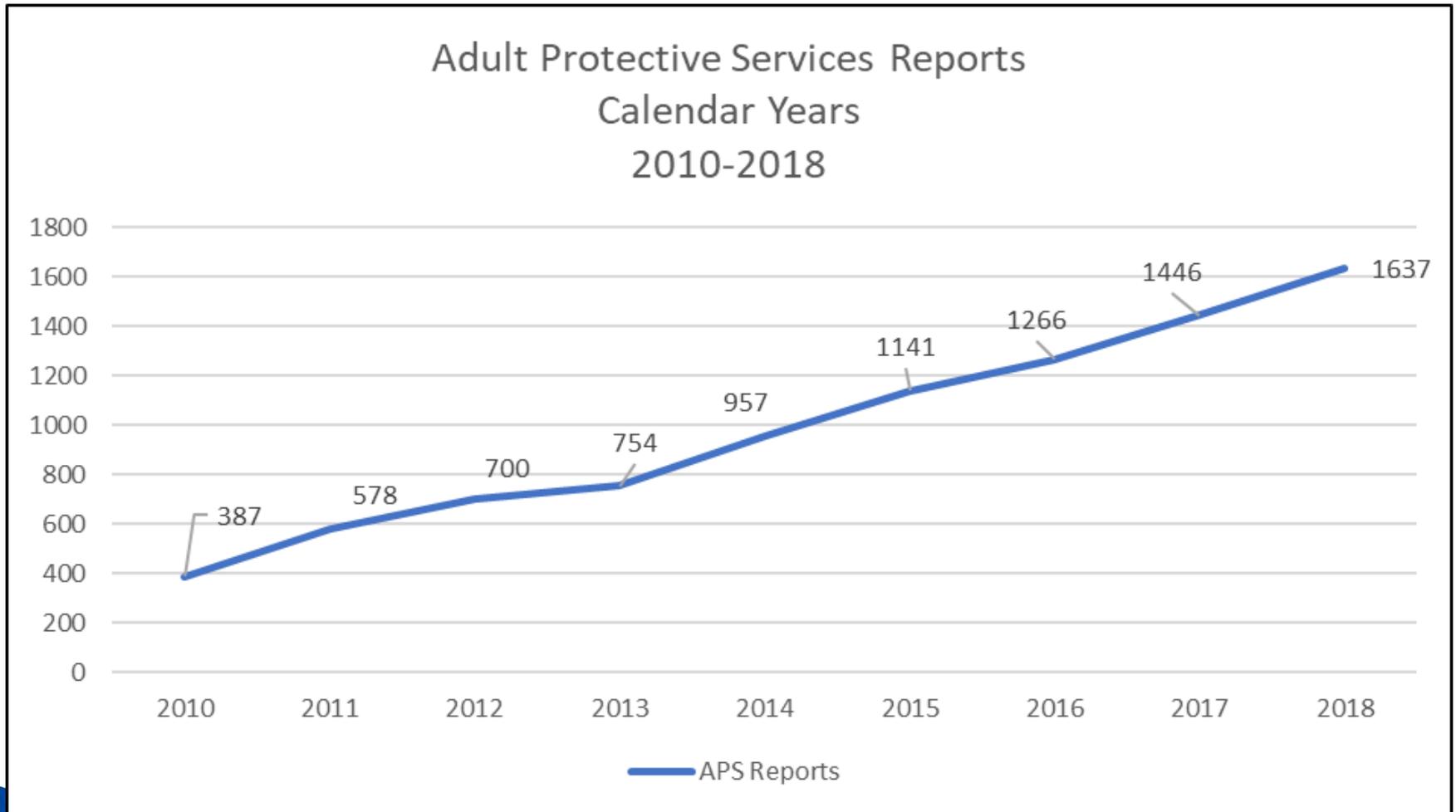
What Does MDOT Do?



- What Does This Look Like Day to Day?
 - APS Perspective
 - Law Enforcement Perspective
- What Makes MDOT Work?
 - Leadership
 - Developing Inter-Agency Relationships
 - Building Collaboration
 - Culture of the Team

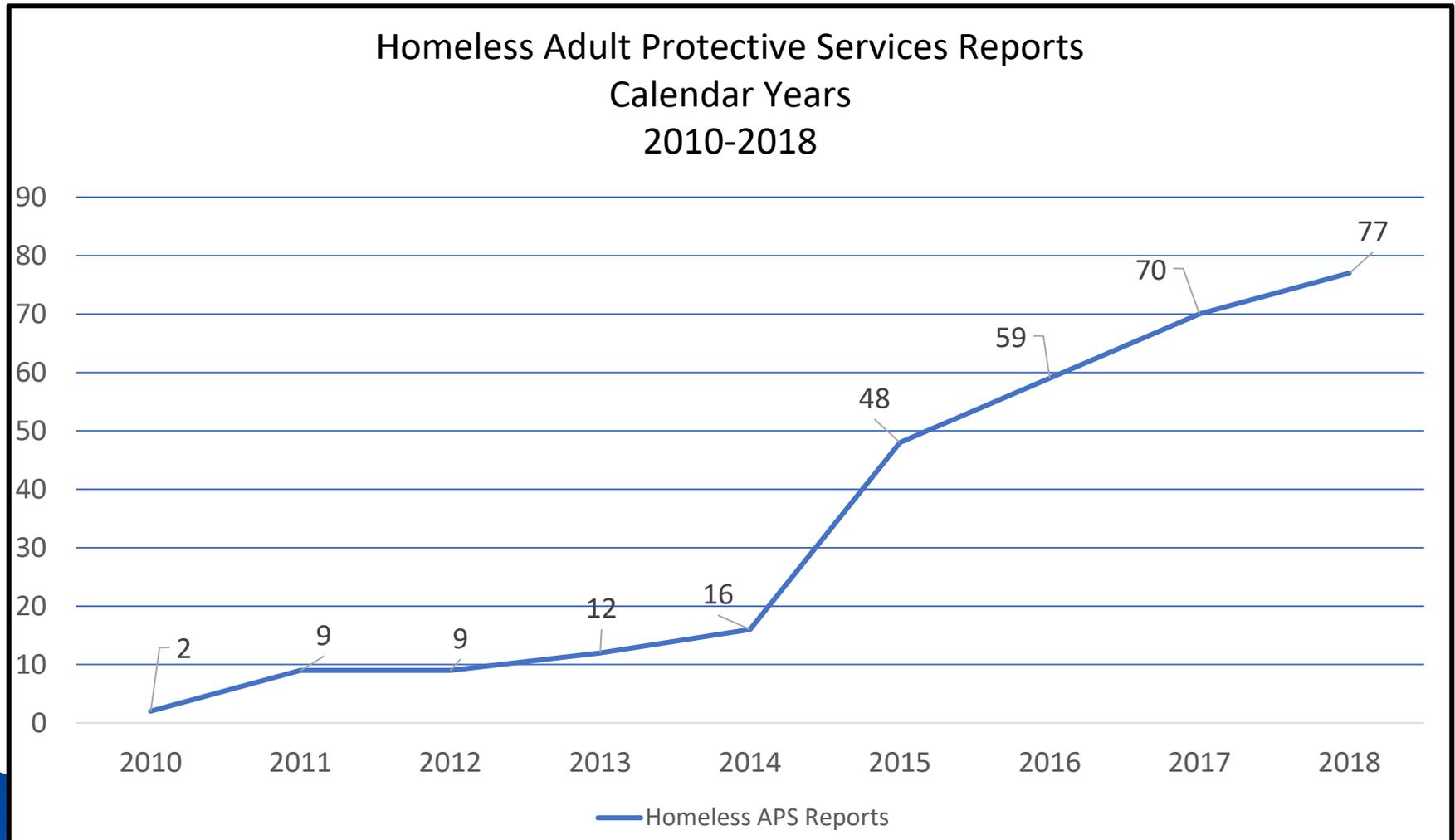
Monterey County APS Reports 2010-2018

323% Increase



Monterey County Homeless APS Reports 2010–2018

3,750% Increase



APS and MDOT Statistics

APS Statistics

During an almost 2-year period from May 2017–April 2019:

- 360 visits completed with individuals who were homeless and/or who met APS criteria
 - 59 new APS referrals generated
 - 119 visits with clients with open APS cases
- 380 hours total at PD, an average of 5 hours/week of active collaboration.

Analysis of visits completed May 2017–July 2018:

- 22% were APS clients who were homeless
- 43% were individuals who were homeless who did not meet APS criteria, provided with resource information and referrals as appropriate
- 35% were APS clients with housing

Benefits of MDOT

For Adult Protective Services:

- Improved outreach to homeless clients
- Increased collaboration with law enforcement and other agencies to address needs of homeless and housed APS clients
- Stronger inter-agency working relationships (MDT)
- Better understanding of APS role and limitations by agency partners

Benefits of MDOT

For Monterey Police Department:

- Tools to address the needs of homeless individuals and causes of homelessness
- Increased collaboration and coordination with homeless service providers and other agencies
- Better understanding of agency partner's roles and limitations
- More positive relationships and interactions with the homeless community

Benefits of MDOT

For the Community:

- Compassionate Community Policing
- More resources and focus brought to addressing the needs of the homeless community
- Increased collaboration results in better outcomes for homeless individuals, resulting in cost savings in areas such as healthcare, law enforcement, etc.
- Generates positive word of mouth in the homeless community and makes it more likely for people to seek services

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Law enforcement/service agencies must be able to respond quickly and in a coordinated way when an individual is willing/ready to accept help.
- Services may need to be offered many times before they are accepted, if at all.
- Consistency builds trust in the homeless community and positive word of mouth that leads to others being willing to accept or request help.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Important Factors

- Culture of the Police Department
 - Leadership
 - Willingness to devote resources to address homelessness
- Culture of APS
 - Leadership/Management
 - Proactive Outreach
 - Understanding that clients who are homeless require additional work and time
- Skills of the APS Worker
 - Interest/experience working with homeless population
 - Ability to work independently and build positive inter-agency relationships
 - Creativity and willingness to go the extra mile to assist clients

Navigator University

▶ History

- Fawn saw a growing need for development of a means for sharing updated resources for homeless service providers
- September 2017 Elder Justice Summit on Homelessness among Elders and Disabled Adults
 - Breakout Workgroup – Fawn proposed Navigator University
- Planning committee (APS and Gathering for Women) met and organized a pilot within a few months

▶ Purpose

- Provide training and resources for “navigators” to assist homeless clients to move from homeless to housed

Navigator University

▶ Pilot

- First Navigator University launched in April 2018
- 6–10 trainees attended each session
- 6 weekly sessions, 2 hours each
- Fawn created brief assessment forms for trainees
- Collected pre- and post-surveys

▶ Response

- Pre- and post-surveys showed an 89% increase in skills and knowledge amongst trainees
- Trainees' feedback was very positive and suggested expanding the pilot to be held every year

Navigator University

▶ Expansion

- Led by APS Intern Clara Vargas
- March 2019 Navigator University
- 4 weekly sessions of 4 hours each
- Increased class size and fully enrolled 30 trainees from several different agencies/disciplines, including law enforcement

▶ Response

- Positive feedback from attendees
- Law enforcement officer stated that every officer should attend the training and that he planned to bring more officers the following year

Next Steps

MDOT

- Expand the MDOT team to include other agencies and services
- Expand MDOT model to other Monterey County law enforcement jurisdictions
 - Salinas PD has created a Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) based on the Monterey PD model that has begun meeting to address needs of homeless individuals in the Chinatown neighborhood, which has a high prevalence of homelessness, substance abuse, and other issues.
 - Other Monterey Peninsula jurisdictions have expressed interest in developing an MDOT model.

Navigator University

- Continue refining and offering Navigator University on an annual basis to increase the skills and resources of those serving the homeless

Ways to Build Your Own MDOT

- ▶ **Build/Strengthen Relationships with Law Enforcement**
 - Share the success of MDOT with your local law enforcement
 - Contact us/refer law enforcement to Monterey PD to discuss MDOT
 - Connect face to face with law enforcement
 - Request a meeting with leadership
 - Use cross reports as an entry point
 - Ask to go on a ride-along
 - Work closely with and follow up with officers on shared cases, provide feedback and assistance
 - Open communication/responsiveness – provide your direct work contact information for questions/consultation
 - Offer to provide social services outreach to homeless individuals regularly encountered by officers
 - Attend a Citizen's Academy or similar program to learn the culture of the agency and get to know officers and leadership

Case Examples

QUESTIONS?