

988 Coordinating Council

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

9am - 11am

Meeting Notes

Meeting Materials: Agenda, 988 Metrics Report, FY25 Budget vs. Actuals, FY26 Budget vs. Actuals, June Meeting Minutes

Agenda

9:00 AM Welcome & Updates

9:05 AM Mobile Crisis Response Models

9:35 AM Annual Report Discussion

9:40 AM Dispatch Software Presentation & Discussion

10:45 AM Other Matters

10:55 AM Next Steps

Attendees

KDADS: Andy Brown (Chair); Laura Brake; Aneliese Apala Flaherty; Allyson Sanders

Council Members: Patrick Fucik; Monica Kurz; Gene Ward; Colin Thomasset; Zack Odell

KHI: Valentina Blanchard; Shelby Rowell

Other Attendees: Michelle Watson

Welcome & Updates

- The Council approved the June meeting minutes as written.

Mobile Crisis Response Models

- The Council reviewed two approaches to improving crisis response. The CARE “Air Traffic Control” (ATC) model functions like a central hub, usually within a 988 center, that can see where calls are coming from, which mobile teams are available, and which stabilization beds are open. This coordination helps route people to the right resource quickly, reduces unnecessary law enforcement involvement, and generates strong system data. The tradeoff is that ATC requires robust technology, real-time data sharing, and 24/7 staffing, making it resource-intensive.
- The Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) model is focused on children and youth. Teams respond in about an hour, de-escalate crises in homes or schools, and then stay involved with the family for several weeks to provide skills and connections to longer-term supports. Kansas already uses MRSS, with practice standards requiring rapid response times and allowing hybrid in-person/telehealth models to reach rural areas.
- Kansas pilots in 2024 (Wyandotte and Compass) showed the importance of staff training, shared understanding, and strong provider relationships. Other states offer examples of integrating these models statewide, often through shared dispatch platforms and regional hubs.
- Looking ahead, Kansas could consider standardizing protocols, selecting an integrated platform, expanding MRSS coverage, and developing dashboards to monitor outcomes. Council members noted that the main cost driver for ATC would be dispatch software; currently, Kansas relies on direct coordination between 988 centers and CMHC teams rather than a statewide ATC system.
- Q&A highlights:

- Cost drivers for ATC focus primarily on dispatch software, with added training/marketing needs.
- Current KS practice uses direct coordination between 988 centers and CMHC teams; no statewide ATC platform in place.

Annual Report Discussion

- **Timeline:**
 - **Oct 14:** Council meeting to discuss sustainable funding and review a rough draft.
 - **Dec 1:** Distribution of ratification draft to Council.
 - **Dec 9:** Ratification meeting (virtual; vote to approve).
 - **Late Dec:** KHI transmits final report to KDADS.
- **Content planning:** Recapped 2025 topics covered to date and asked members to consider priorities for the final six months of the Council's term (to refine in October).
- **ACTION ITEM:** KHI to create annual report draft and incorporate a placeholder section for a dispatch platform funding recommendation for Council consideration in October.

Dispatch Software Presentation & Discussion

- **Utilization Snapshot (FY25, Jul 2024–Jun 2025)**
 - About 50,000 total 988 contacts were recorded (calls, chats, texts). The highest volumes came from Wyandotte, Johnson County, and COMCARE.
 - Most other community mental health center (CMHC) areas were answered by Headquarters (primary) and HealthSource (backup).
 - Digital contacts (chat/text) entered a statewide queue rather than being geo-routed. COMCARE began answering digital contacts in July.
 - Roughly 30,000 contacts went to centers without direct 988-to-mobile crisis integration, highlighting a major gap to address.
- **Platforms Reviewed (high-level takeaways)**
 - *Behavioral Health Link (BHL):* Offers GPS-enabled dispatch, hub-based workflows, and a real-time bed registry. Well aligned with 988 needs; pricing depends on scale and integrations.
 - *Chorus (e.g., Missouri "MoConnect 2.0"):* Provides statewide dispatch and tracking, bed capacity visibility, and regional coordination. Supports dispatch to local agencies, which then assign staff.
 - *Carelon Crisis:* Statewide platform; early estimate of \$4–6M for year-one implementation across 26 CMHCs and 5 call centers. Ongoing costs TBD; price varies by optional features such as a statewide bed board.
 - *NetSmart:* Estimated \$1.25M for implementation plus ~\$0.5M annually ($\pm 20\%$ depending on scope). Includes call center/EHR integrations and dashboarding, based on a 60-month agreement.
- **Current Local Systems**
 - *Johnson County:* Using TrekMedic (via Beacon) to link 988 with mobile crisis (~40 users), with ongoing costs of about \$500/month (initial setup cost unknown).
 - *Wyandotte BHN:* Currently using BHL for 988 calls; mobile crisis dispatch and follow-up features are in implementation.
 - *COMCARE:* Using elements of a NetSmart package.
- **Discussion**

- **Statewide estimate needed:** Council requested a statewide cost “ceiling” (with menu options) to inform an October vote on including a budget recommendation in the annual report (legislative request).
- **Menu pricing:** Ask vendors to separately price optional components (e.g., statewide bed board; depth/number of EHR integrations).
- **Integrations:** Costs scale with number/type of EHRs; vendors requested the top 5 EHRs used in Kansas to prioritize APIs.
- **Funding/braiding:** Explore federal 988 funds (noting typical ≤20% cap for technology), Medicaid admin match, and potential local cost-sharing; primary expectation remains for a state-led vendor selection via RFP if pursuing a unified system.
- **Operational considerations:**
 - Low-connectivity options (e.g., SMS-based dispatch/updates) are available in multiple platforms.
 - Bed board accuracy depends on accountable update processes; platform can host the registry but sustained, real-time updates require provider buy-in and/or contract terms.
 - Unified history views across calls/chats/texts and field dispositions are valuable for coordination and quality improvement.

Metrics and Budgets

- **Metrics Review:** Fourth consecutive month of over 90 percent in-state answer rate for calls; chat and text rates remain mid-60s with year-over-year improvement.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** KDADS to add combined chat and text answer rate and year over year comparison to the metrics report.
- **Budget Review:**
 - *FY25 Budget vs. Actuals:* Minor inaccuracies identified; KDADS will resubmit corrected documents. COMCARE and Wyandotte fully expended SFY25 allocations.
 - *FY26 Budget vs. Actuals:* Currently reflects budget only; July actuals not yet due.
- **988/911 Coordinator Position Update:** Three interview rounds completed with no hire; position reposted. KDADS is targeting to have a candidate onboard by the October meeting, if possible.

Next Steps

- The next council meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 14** - Sustainable funding discussion and annual report draft review (includes potential vote on dispatch platform funding recommendation).

ACTION ITEMS

- KDADS to request statewide quotes with menu options (platform, bed board, integrations) and provide to Council for October meeting.
- KHI to create annual report draft and incorporate a placeholder section for a dispatch platform funding recommendation for Council consideration in October.
- KDADS to add combined chat and text answer rate and year over year comparison to the metrics report.