



Promising Practices for Improved Record Reporting

Many states face challenges in Reporting mental health-related cases to the NICS Index. This brief presents a strategy that at least one state has implemented to address that problem.

Estimation Problem

Inability to create accurate estimates of available mental health records.

Reporting Problem

Confusion among clerks regarding their role in reporting cases to NICS and a lack of understanding about which cases to report, resulting in a lack of records being reported.

Strategy

Conduct NICS reporting outreach activities through articles in clerk association newsletters and presentations at regional and state conferences. Provide NICS reporting training to clerks in person or over the phone and provide resources, such as answers to frequently asked questions or a manual.

Conducting Training & Outreach with Court Clerks

About this strategy

Court clerks are an integral part of the process of reporting mental health records to the NICS Index. Often, clerks don't realize that guardianship and certain types of criminal records must be reported, in addition to involuntary inpatient mental health commitments. Further, clerks may be unsure of how to deal with cases that lack the required identifiers to be entered into NICS.

- **Who it may work for:** States who are not identifying all categories of mental health records at the court level.
- **Costs:** Developing training materials and other resources, travel to courts, and meetings to conduct training or give presentations.
- **Timeframe for implementing:** Initial time to assess needs, develop training materials, and write articles.

Why this strategy makes a difference

Creating and implementing training for court clerks is critical to increasing the level of understanding about the process of mental health record reporting. This training, as well as issuing newsletter articles, making presentations, and compiling a manual of NICS mental health reporting requirements for clerks, can greatly improve the number of records being reported.

Who's Doing It? Texas

Texas received a NARIP grant to improve their NICS reporting and providing assistance to court clerks is one component of their grant. Using this strategy, Texas has significantly increased the number of mental health records in the NICS Index.

For more information:

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