



# Virtual Crisis Care

## Unified Judicial System

2020 Year End Update

### Virtual Crisis Care

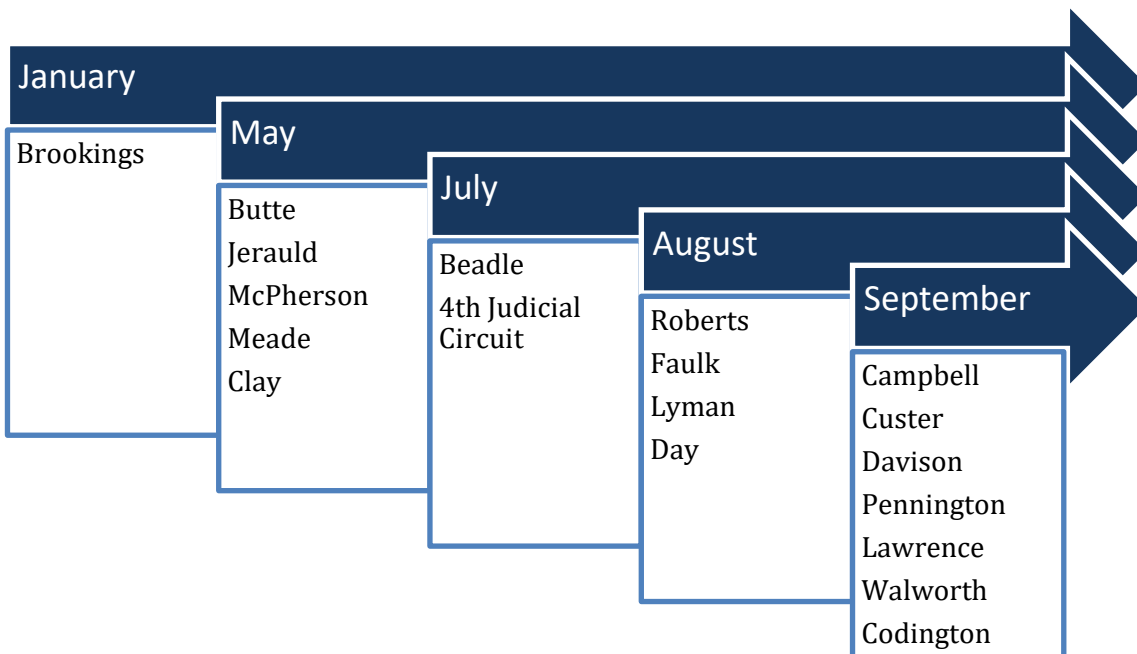
In 2020, the Unified Judicial System, Avera eCare, and local law enforcement launched the Virtual Crisis Care program with funding from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

The Virtual Crisis Care pilot program provides law enforcement officers with on-demand access to virtual mental health providers via a tablet. During a mental health crisis encounter, law enforcement uses the technology to connect with the provider, who can help the officer deescalate the situation and create a safety plan for the person in crisis.

In many rural counties, the only two options law enforcement has for a person in a mental health crisis is de-escalation and leaving the person in place or placing the individual on an emergency mental illness hold, leading to involuntary commitment. While the emergency hold is often seen as the safest option, it is not always the best option. Having the support and expertise of a mental health professional allows the officer to make a more informed decision about whether the person needs to be committed.

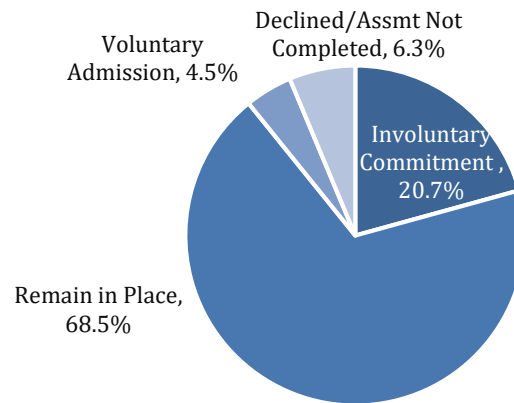
### Launch of Virtual Crisis Care Pilot Sites

Eighteen counties and one judicial circuit are participating in the pilot, which was launched in January 2020 in Brookings County. The remaining counties joined the pilot between May and September 2020.

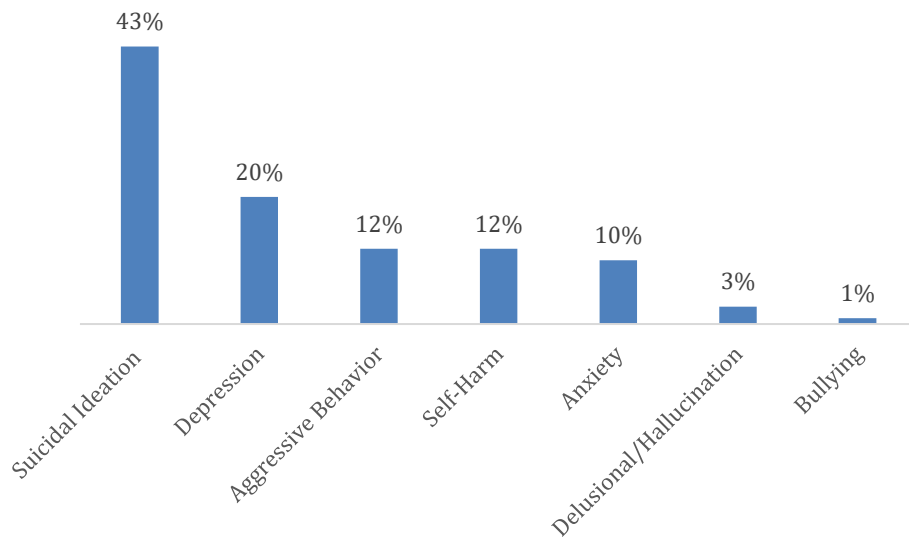


## 2020 Outcomes

Seventy-eight percent of people who completed a Virtual Crisis Care assessment were not involuntarily committed.

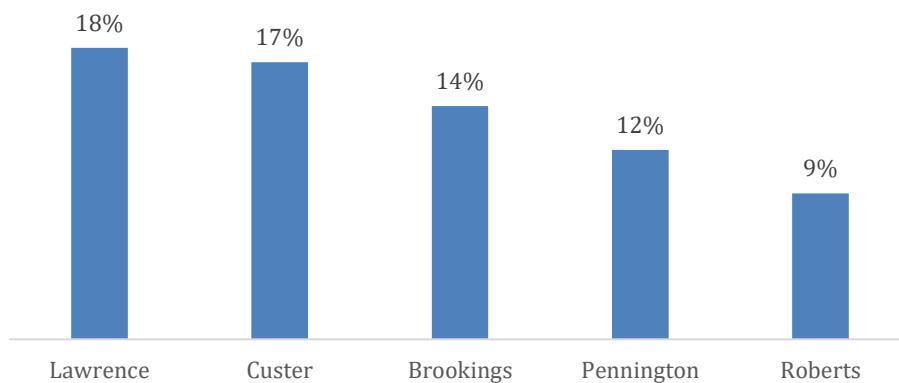


Suicidal ideation is the primary reason Virtual Crisis Care is used.

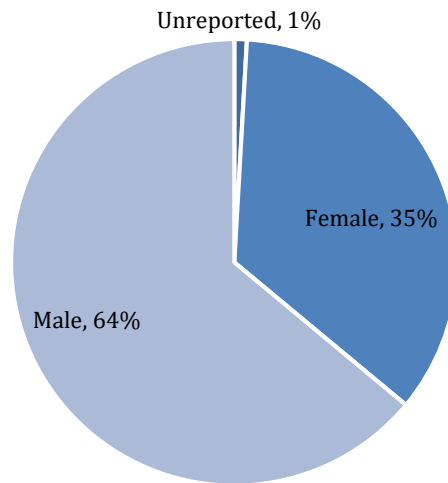


Half of the calls originate from Lawrence, Custer, and Brookings county.

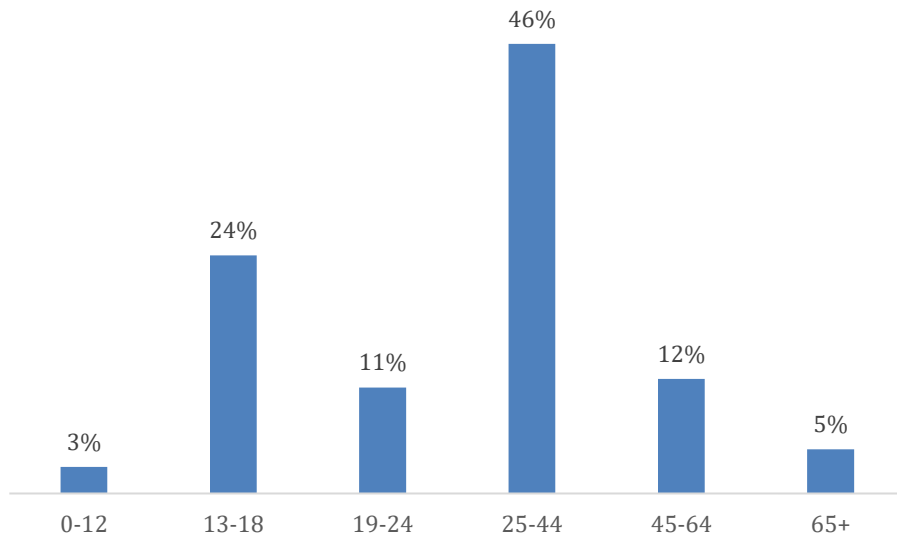
Top 5 Utilizers: Percent of Total Encounters



2/3 of the calls are for males.



While Virtual Crisis Care has been used with both adults and children, almost half of the calls are for people between the ages of 25 and 44.



### Next Steps

During the 2021 legislative session, the Unified Judicial System will be seeking one-time funds to continue the pilot for an additional year, as well as funding for an additional 6 counties.