

Table 1 describes some of the barriers cities face in developing, implementing and sustaining effective approaches in emergency response and crisis stabilization for individuals with mental illness, SUD and/or those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as recommendations to overcome these barriers.

Table 1: Barriers to Emergency Response and Crisis Stabilization Efforts and Recommendations to Overcome Them

	BARRIERS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Mindset Shift	Too often the approach to emergency response and crisis stabilization does not operate within a public health framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policymakers designing interventions should employ a public health framework; • Instead of arrest and incarceration, this framework should focus on access to treatment, early intervention and prevention; • Cities should share success stories from promising approaches/models.
Financing	Cities need funding to develop, implement and sustain their approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities should receive flexible financing that enables the braiding and blending of funds; • Federal funding should be used to implement or sustain emergency response/crisis stabilization efforts; • The federal government should develop a special initiative with cities to test innovative approaches to emergency response and crisis stabilization; • Cities should be assisted in mapping their emergency response and crisis stabilization systems.
Collaborative Partnerships	Cities have different capacities and must form partnerships to implement their approaches based on this capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal agencies and private entities should work to identify partnership opportunities to augment existing public dollars invested in enhanced emergency response and crisis stabilization efforts; • Partnerships should allow for more dynamic financing opportunities like local wellness trusts; • Communities should form regional response networks where they otherwise lack individual community capacity; • Businesses can employ individuals in recovery.

<p>Reducing Barriers to Treatment</p>	<p>Even with effective emergency response and crisis stabilization, there are still barriers to accessing treatment that can cause individuals to cycle through emergency response and crisis stabilization without being connected to care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States should pass legislation to expand telehealth services; • The federal government should use its regulatory authority to expand access to behavioral healthcare services; • Federal agencies should collaborate with cities to help design interventions that are responsive to community capacity and needs; • Mental and behavioral health services should be reimbursed at rates comparable to physical health services.
<p>Social Determinants of Health</p>	<p>Social determinants like housing insecurity, unemployment and lack of transportation can affect rates of mental illness, SUD and homelessness. Without addressing these underlying determinants of poor health, there are limits to what stakeholders can do to achieve sustainable improvements in health outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies and levels of government should use consistent definitions for criteria for services (e.g. defining homelessness); • The federal government should expand Medicaid benefits to cover non-medical emergency transport and housing supports; • Federal agencies should adequately fund affordable housing, job creation, public transit, early childhood education and public schools; • Special offices in the federal government should provide funding and assistance to local health departments to better address social determinants of health; • Businesses can offer employment to those in recovery.
<p>Data Sharing and Analysis</p>	<p>Data sharing and analysis are necessary to create comprehensive emergency response and crisis stabilization systems, but partner organizations are often wary of sharing data because of perceived restrictions under federal laws.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The federal government should coordinate a workgroup to identify barriers to data sharing; • The federal government should issue guidance to cities to effectively navigate federal laws surrounding data privacy including potentially creating toolkits for cities to ensure progress and compliance.
<p>Metrics</p>	<p>Cities need effective metrics to assess the success (or shortcomings) of their emergency response and crisis stabilization approaches and make changes when necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities, states, and the federal government should work together to align program definitions; • Federal and state agencies should work with cities to identify, collect and analyze appropriate data from emergency response and crisis stabilization initiatives; • Agencies should provide technical assistance and funding to help cities collect data and assess the effectiveness of programming.