

Police Structure & Buy-In for Deflection

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Police Department Internal Environment

- Disclaimer: Every Chief and Sheriff will build and improve their deflection program based on internal and external forces (PESTEL).
- Disclaimer: I don't have the answers, but these are my observations.
- An overview of a typical Police Department.
 - The Patrol Officer
 - The Sergeant
 - The Executive Officer

The Patrol Officer

- Various levels of experience-from 1 day to 30 years, the uniform is the same, but comfort levels are different.
- 1-5 years experience: Running call-to-call and working traffic. Not enough experience to run the more serious calls without input from others.
- 5-10 years: In bigger agencies, they have pretty much seen everything and are on auto-pilot. Still active on patrol, looking to specialize.
- 10-20 years: Most have specialized in a particular type of work or special assignments (Detective, traffic team, K9, drug enforcement).
- 20-retirement: The day shift squad, .

The Sergeant

- Sergeants are the most important leaders in a Police Department.
- They enforce the standards and the policies within their squads.
- They mentor the younger patrol officers and keep the older ones out of the Lt's office.
- Ensure officers have case reports in, equipment maintained, training completed, staffing levels are met, and triage the call load during the shift.
- Similar in function to the ER Charge Nurse
- Sergeants are key to getting buy-in for new and developing programs. As to the Sergeants so goes the agency.

Executive level officers

- Depends on agency-Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, and the Chief of Police.
- Most wear a gold badge if the agency badge is silver.
- Write policy and maintain budgets.
- Can impose discipline and economic sanctions.
- Termination decisions are made by the Chief of Police.
- Thee DA: The elected DA is the senior law enforcement official in the county. The ultimate authority concerning filing charges, has tremendous prosecutorial discretion. DDA's work for DA. Some counties have one, and some have 100 (ish).

Deflection program planning considerations

- Top-Down planning: Executive-level officers, The elected DA, the Public Defender, a county commissioner, and behavioral health conduct deliberate planning meetings to improve deflection programs. (This phase is already complete in most counties).
- Education, Engineering (Building policies, practices, and things), Enforcement.
- Interoperability (Well written policies and personality fusion)
- Process steps have value if something is physically changed in that process step, doesn't need rework, and it's affordable.
- Programs have value if they are rare, inimitable, and hard to substitute.
- Words and symbols are important, talk through subjective meanings.

Policy continuity and meeting schedule

- Internal meetings in every linked organization (Liasons in the room).
- Deflection team meeting that brings together the program manager, Deflection/LEAD navigators, LE, DA, and public defender. Specific case management decisions and exceptions.
- Build a common language architecture around patient care.
- Release of Information agreements and MOUs to decrease communication barriers.

Challenges for law enforcement Specific to Fentanyl

- Supply chain intercept challenges (Precursor chemicals and manufacturing).
- Less opportunity to intercept chemical-based illicit drugs than agriculturally based drugs.
- Not the poison but the dosage (Potency variation)
- Thick market externality (Social contagions and social media)

Thick Market Externalities and the Persistence of the Opioid Epidemic,” by David Cutler and J. Travis Donahoe (NBER Working Paper, 2024).

- Danger in handling fentanyl for law enforcement (Officers support deflection)
- Death as a demand index (risk of use and variability in potency)
- Drug market intervention (Police and treatment providers)
- Diversion programs: Swift and certain rewards and punishments that focus on young high consumers. (“If you don’t clean your room there is a 40% chance 6 months from now, I will ground you for a decade”)