Baltimore Deploying Mobile Mental Health Teams Rather Than Police When Responding to Individuals Experiencing a Mental Crisis

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Baltimore is expanding its mobile crisis teams, which divert certain 911 calls from police, emergency medical services (EMS), or other traditional first responders to mental health professionals when the circumstances suggest that a clinical response is more appropriate. A study published last year found that people experiencing a mental health crisis achieve a more favorable outcome when they are met with appropriate intervention instead of perceived punitive action. The Baltimore mobile crisis teams try to determine what individuals in crisis need and then connect them to appropriate resources rather than arresting them, in contrast to what typically occurs when police respond.