

**House C.A.R.E.S. Task Force
September 29, 2017**

Location: Mid-Michigan Community College, Harrison, MI

The Task Force held its sixth and final meeting on September 29 at the Mid-Michigan Community College in Harrison, Michigan.

Presenters to the Task Force included a prosecuting attorney and county undersheriff who both identified a need for more residential beds and better means to care for people with mental illness and substance use disorders who end up in jails. The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency gave a presentation on its mental health screening tool, the success of veteran specialty courts, and efforts to work with incarcerated veterans to determine their eligibility for VA benefits.

Representatives from community mental health organizations spoke about the successes and challenges serving the local population, including a lack of in-patient beds, and lack of case workers and psychiatrists. Finally, there was a presentation on the benefits that can be achieved to treat mental illness with art therapy.

Presenters for the Detroit meeting included all of the following:

- J. Dee Brooks, Prosecuting Attorney, Midland County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (Kristina Leonardi, Director of Strategy; Phil Yeiter, Legislative Liaison, Jeff Cassidy, Strategy Analyst)
- Craig Derror, Clare and Gladwin Program Director, Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
- Clare County Sheriff John Wilson and Undersheriff Dwayne Miedzianowski
- Sydney Larson, AuSable Valley Community Mental Health
- Amber James, Legislative Chair, and Wendy Case, Michigan Association of Art Therapy

Written comments were collected from those in attendance.