ILLINOIS: Mental Health Crisis Training Given to Chicago’s First Responders

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Mental health crisis intervention training is being rolled out to Chicago’s first responders, including members of the police and fire departments and staff in the Office of Emergency Management and Communication. Training consists of instruction in how to identify and assist people experiencing mental health issues, in addition to crisis simulation exercises. “This program will help assure that we understand and address the unique needs of a very important segment of our society—those who suffer from altered mental status,” said Chicago Fire Commissioner Jose Santiago. Ninety percent of 911 operators have taken the course, and thirty-five percent of police will be trained by the end of 2017. “The goal for us is to insure we have enough officers in every district trained,” said Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson. “So that when a call comes out and they are identified, we have an adequate number of officers who can respond to these patrols.”

Spark Extra! Learn more about first responders [2].

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