



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. hosts 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Conference with a focus on the Aging Population

Cambridge, MD (November 1st, 2024) – Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) hosted the 11th Annual Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Model Conference in Cambridge, MD on Friday, November 1st, 2024. This year's theme focused on older adult populations and interactions with the justice system. The conference was held at the Chesapeake Grove Intergenerational Center and drew approximately 75 attendees, including community members, formerly incarcerated individuals, criminal justice professionals, and behavioral health providers.

The Sequential Intercept Model (SIM), developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is a framework designed to improve the responses and interventions available to individuals with behavioral health and substance use conditions who come into contact with the justice system. The model identifies six key "intercepts," or points of intervention, where individuals can be diverted from the justice system and connected to mental health services, substance use treatment, and community resources. These intercepts include community services, law enforcement, initial court hearings and detention, jail and court services, reentry, and community corrections. By focusing on these intercepts, the model aims to reduce unnecessary incarceration and improve outcomes for justice-involved individuals with behavioral health needs. The SIM model serves as a strategic planning tool, enabling communities to identify service gaps, develop collaborative strategies, and create a continuum of care that reduces recidivism and addresses the unique needs of individuals with behavioral health challenges.

At the conference, keynote speaker Elwood D. Wilson opened by sharing his personal journey through the justice system while managing behavioral health challenges, underscoring the unique difficulties faced by older adults. The speakers following Elwood spoke sequentially to each one of the intercepts identified in the SIM model to elaborate on how older adults traverse the justice system. Mariah Shupe, Mid-Shore and Cecil County CIT Coordinator, and Sheriff Gary Hofmann of Queen Anne's County discussed the critical first interactions between law enforcement or crisis services and individuals with behavioral health conditions, marking the initial step in many individuals' justice system involvement. Bill Rhodes, LCPC, Mental Health Coordinator for Dorchester and Talbot Counties, addressed the complexities of providing

jail-based mental health services, highlighting the challenges older adults encounter in accessing care while incarcerated. Latasha S. Nichols, MPA, Problem-Solving Court Coordinator for Dorchester County, shared her experience in assisting individuals with mental health and substance use issues in the court system, emphasizing rehabilitative approaches. Judge Melvin James Jews expanded on these insights, sharing his perspective on handling cases involving older adults with behavioral health needs and reflecting on his efforts to create supportive solutions within the justice system. The presentations concluded with Melissa Mitchell, LCSW-C, MDH Community Forensic Aftercare Program Manager, and Maggie Black, PsyD, Licensed Psychologist and owner of Shore Neurocognitive & Behavioral Health, who reviewed the significant barriers older adults face when reentering society from the justice system, stressing the importance of strong community connections to facilitate this transition and improve long-term outcomes. Together, these presentations provided a comprehensive view of the justice journey for older adults with behavioral health conditions.

Participants engaged in breakout sessions for each intercept to discuss how adults with behavioral health conditions navigate the system in the mid-shore region, identifying ways to reduce unnecessary contact with the justice system and connect individuals to appropriate treatment. Discussions from the breakout sessions will help inform behavioral health planning for the region.

Alisha Saulsbury, LCSW-C, Forensic Mental Health Program Manager, commented: The Sequential Intercept mapping really is a valuable tool where we build upon existing relationships across the systems interconnected in the criminal justice system. At our annual conference we are inspired by experts within each intercept on how we can better serve those in our community with behavioral health needs. At our annual conferences, we select a population of interest where we can focus on those needs and do a “deeper dive” of gaps, opportunities, and priorities across the Mid-Shore region. This year we had a wonderful line up of presenters, and our afternoon breakout sessions were invaluable.

Mark your calendars for the 12th Annual SIM Conference, which is scheduled for Friday, November 14th, 2025. For more information about the work of MSBH’s Forensic Mental Health Program or work of the SIM Conference, contact Alisha Saulsbury at [asaulsbury@midshorebehavioralhealth.org](mailto:asaulsbury@midshorebehavioralhealth.org).

As the Core Service Agency for the mid-shore region, MSBH is dedicated to enhancing behavioral health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot Counties by coordinating care in collaboration with consumers, their support systems, providers, and the broader community. For more information, visit [www.midshorebehavioralhealth.org](http://www.midshorebehavioralhealth.org).



Keynote speaker Elwood D. Wilson shares his personal experience with dealing with behavioral health conditions while being involved in the justice system.



Sheriff Gary Hofman speaks to law enforcement interactions with individuals experiencing behavioral health conditions.



MSBH staff pose together after successfully completing the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual SIM Conference.