



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Lincoln County Board of Commissioners

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### **Lincoln County One of Seven Jurisdictions Selected to Receive Funding for Sequential Intercept Mapping**

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Lincoln County's effort to reduce the number of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system has received a major boost. The County is one of just seven jurisdictions in the country selected to receive the services of a federal agency for an intensive planning process.

"Fifty-four communities applied for this, so the fact that Lincoln County was one of just a handful to be chosen shows that we've laid the groundwork for a successful effort," said Lincoln County Commissioner Bill Hall, who is co-leader of the county's Stepping Up effort. Stepping Up is a national effort focused on diverting people with mental illness, substance abuse problems and trauma out of the justice system at the earliest possible point.

"It's been shown that putting people with mental illness behind bars is costly and inefficient," Hall added. "It doesn't make communities safer, it doesn't help people get on a path to recovery, and it wastes precious resources that could be better spent elsewhere."

"We are very excited for this opportunity. This workshop will help us map a plan for moving forward in the future to address this critical issue. Incarcerating individuals with mental illness or substance abuse problems does not correct the problem. Providing new alternatives will improve the quality of life for the individual and will increase the efficiency of the overall criminal justice system," said Lincoln County Sheriff Curtis Landers, also co-leader of the County's Stepping Up effort.

The GAINS Center, part of the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), will come to the county sometime this spring or summer to conduct a two-day intensive workshop with representatives of the public safety, law enforcement, medical and behavioral health communities. The Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) has been used as a focal point for states and communities to assess available resources, determine gaps in services, and plan for community change.

Stepping Up is a national initiative co-sponsored by the Council of State Governments, the National Association of Counties and the American Psychiatric Association. Each of the more than 3,000 counties in the United States is encouraged to adopt a resolution and begin a planning process to find ways to reduce the number of people with mental illness in the justice system.

<http://www.co.lincoln.or.us/boc/page/stepping-initiative>

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