



MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Law Enforcement Officers Receive Specialized Training for
Dealing With Mental Health Issues**

FAYETTEVILLE, NC - On Monday, June 22, 2009 The Cumberland County Mental Health Center began the first Crisis Intervention training class for law enforcement officers in Cumberland County. The Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) program is a law enforcement based, pre-booking jail diversion program that trains law enforcement officials to better understand and break down barriers related to mental illnesses. There are more than 20 individuals from Cumberland County participating in the 40 hour course.

The Cumberland County CIT program was developed as a collaborative effort between the Mental Health Center, the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department, the Fayetteville City Police, the Cumberland County Consumer and Family Advisory Committee, NAMI and others. The program encourages communities, families, law enforcement officers, and mental health professionals to act as liaisons for an improved community law enforcement crisis response. Implementation of this training in other parts of the country has proven to help officers de-escalate situations involving individuals in serious mental health crisis.

Participating in this week's training are members from the Fayetteville Police Department, Hope Mills Police Department, VA Hospital, Parkton Police Department, and the U.S. Army. The training begins at 8:00 a.m. at the Cumberland County Detention Center every day this week with a graduation ceremony to begin at 2:30 p.m. on Friday. Media is encouraged to attend.

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