

1 **A12**

2 **American Medical Student Association**

3 **House of Delegates 2022**

4 **Resolution:**

5 **Introduced by:** Sabah Munshi, Nadiya Yerich, Oscar Cazares, Courtnie Moodie, Trevor Lyford,  
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7 **School(s):** Virginia Commonwealth University, UNC School of Medicine, University of Texas  
8 Rio Grande Valley, Barry University, Milken Institute School of Public Health, Harvard College,  
9 Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine, CUNY Brooklyn College

10 **Subject:** Principles Regarding Mental Health

11 **Type:** Amendment to Principles  
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14 WHEREAS the lack of mental health crisis services across the U.S. has resulted in law  
15 enforcement officers as first responders to most crises [7].  
16

17 WHEREAS 21% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2020 (52.9 million people); this  
18 represents 1 in 5 adults. 16.5% of U.S. youth aged 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder in  
19 2016 (7.7 million people) [6].  
20

21 WHEREAS people with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed during a  
22 police encounter than other civilians approached or stopped by law enforcement, according to a  
23 study released by the Treatment Advocacy Center [1].  
24

25 WHEREAS approximately 1,000 people in the United States were fatally shot by police officers  
26 during 2018, and people with mental illness were involved in approximately 25 percent of those  
27 fatalities. Nearly one in four people shot and killed by police officers between 2015 and 2020  
28 had a mental health condition [2,6].  
29

30 WHEREAS about 2 million times each year, people with serious mental illness are booked into  
31 jails [6].  
32

33 WHEREAS some police officers obtain only 40 hours of training over five consecutive days  
34 called the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) on how to address people with mental illnesses [3].

WHEREAS psychologists, licensed professional crisis counselors, and psychiatrists receive more than at least 4 years of intensive mental health training and crisis de-escalation training [3].

WHEREAS the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is not a requirement for all police officers. In Fairfax County, in Virginia, 60% of the police department has no crisis intervention training. In Maryland, 44% of the Montgomery County Police department does not have crisis intervention training. 77% of DC Metropolitan Police Department officers have not taken a course in crisis intervention [4].

WHEREAS many states such as Maryland, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, Virginia implemented a crisis intervention model that includes licensed mental professionals as first responders to address mental health crisis calls [5].

WHEREAS on May 14, 2018, Marcus David Peters, an alum of VCU was killed during a mental health crisis by a Richmond Police officer, Michael Nyantaki who had received the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) in 2011 [10].

WHEREAS Virginia General Assembly passed the Marcus David-Peters Act in honor of Marcus David Peters in 2020, which is a framework designed to ensure behavioral health experts are involved in responding to individuals in a crisis [9].

WHEREAS the Marcus Alert system in certain counties in VA allows individuals in a crisis to be connected to a new regional crisis call center staff that are trained to assess calls for what type of intervention is needed. They offer services ranging from over the phone de-escalation to mobile crisis dispatch [8].

WHEREAS the remaining counties and cities in Virginia will implement the Marcus Alert system on July 1, 2026 [8].

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Principles Regarding Mental Health (pg. 106) be **AMENDED BY ADDITION** to state:

The American Medical Student Association

1. **SUPPORTS the Marcus David-Peters Act and URGES the nation to expand and adopt the Marcus Alert system to have trained mental health professionals present as first responders during a mental health crisis instead of law enforcement.**

Fiscal Note: None

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