

RECOVERY COMMUNITY NETWORK

Peer recovery within the justice system

A Central Minnesota model for connection, accountability and long-term recovery

Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council

Katie Blue • Courtney Eystad • Michael Mynczywor
Kari Rudd • Christel Roelofs

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RCN was built through relationships



2014

Recovery community members organized grassroots support in Central Minnesota.

2019

RCN became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

3 years

Bureau of Justice Assistance Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program funding strengthened collaboration across justice, treatment and recovery partners.

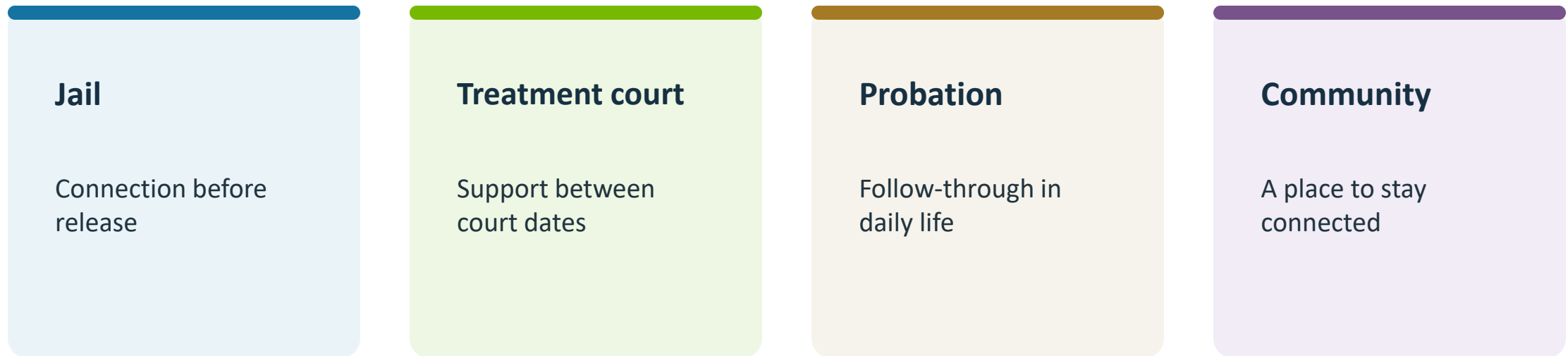
Today

RCN works alongside jails, treatment courts, probation, treatment providers, veteran services and community organizations.

56.4% of the individuals served in FY24 were justice-involved

Justice involvement creates a narrow window for connection

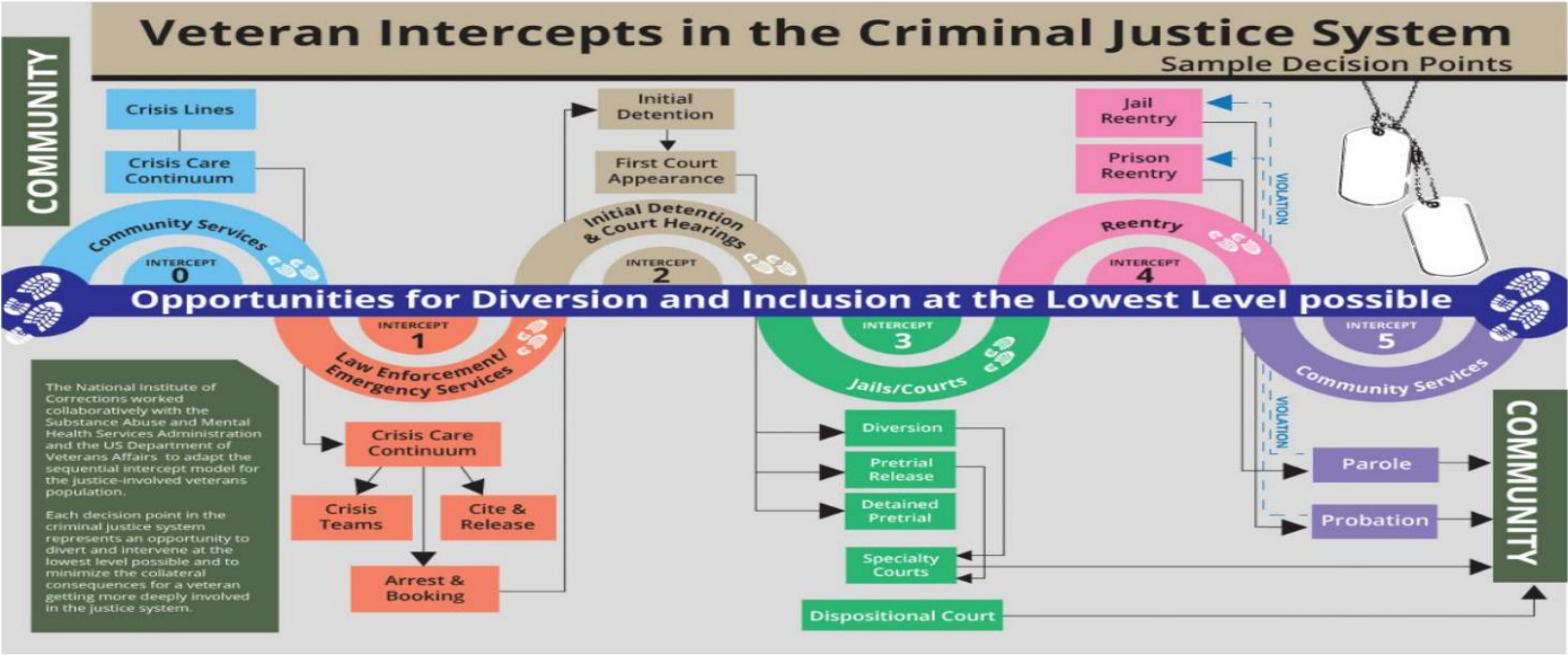
People often meet the justice system during a period of instability. A trusted peer can turn that contact into a sustained recovery connection.



The opportunity is continuity across these settings.

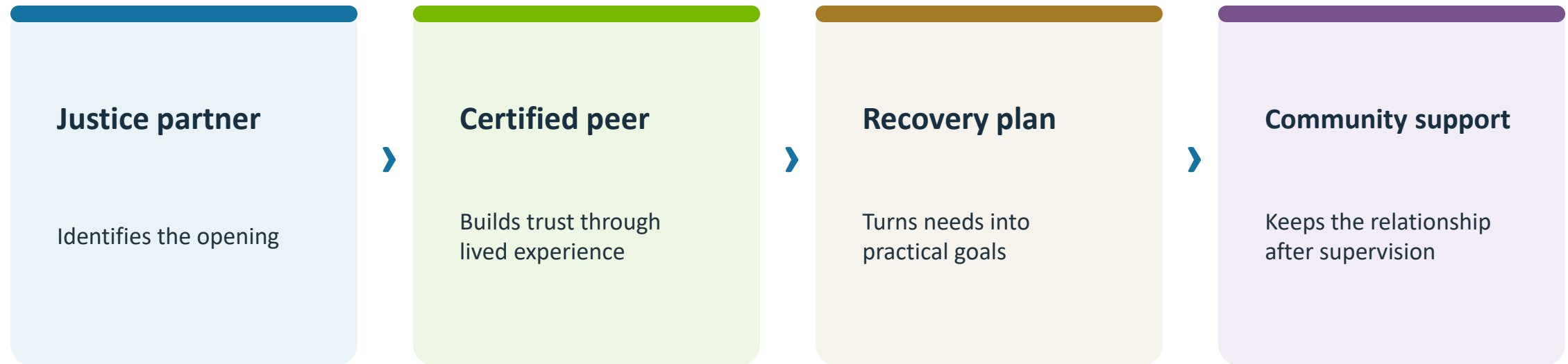
Sequential Intercept Model

Sequential Intercept Model



Source slide provided by the St. Cloud VA Veterans Justice Program. Framework: SAMHSA GAINS Center and Policy Research Associates.

The integrated local model



RCN remains available when the court date, sentence or program ends.

Jail outreach and reentry

Weekly groups inside Stearns and Benton County jails create a relationship before release.

1

Inside the jail

Peers introduce recovery pathways and local support.

2

Before release

The participant leaves with a known person and a specific next connection.

3

Back in the community

RCN supports appointments, resources and recovery goals.

Stearns County Drug Court partnership

Court

Probation

Treatment

Peer support

Community

The court team provides structure. RCN extends support into the hours and decisions that happen outside the courtroom.

Kari Rudd

Probation perspective
What improves engagement and accountability?

Courtney Eystad

Treatment perspective
Where does peer support strengthen clinical care?

Veterans Treatment Court partnership

Veterans may respond differently when support recognizes military culture, service-related experiences and the value of peer connection.

Veterans Justice Program

- VA coordination
- Justice outreach
- Connection to eligible services

RCN veteran peer support

- A veteran CPRS
- Community-based support
- Connection beyond VA and court settings

Shared goal: recovery, stability and successful community reintegration

Kandiyohi County expansion

Rural communities need a local relationship and a wider regional network at the same time.

Local identification

Community Corrections identifies people who may benefit from peer support.

Warm connection

RCN connects the participant with a CPRS and local recovery resources.

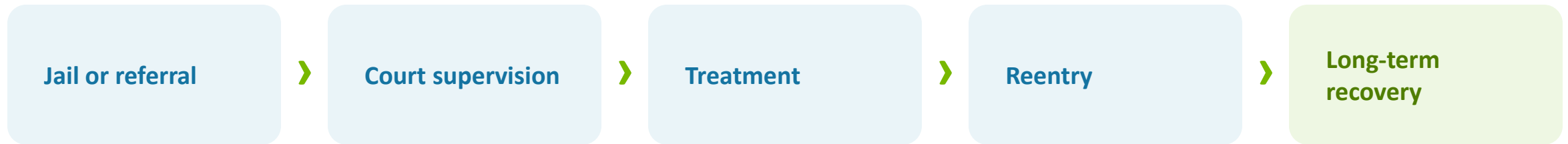
Regional continuity

Telephonic support and community partnerships keep contact consistent.

Christel Roelofs: what Kandiyohi County needs from an RCO partner

One relationship across changing systems

A person may move through several systems. Their recovery relationship should not restart at every doorway.



Certified Peer Recovery Specialist: trust, planning, navigation and continued contact

SAMHSA practices reflected in the local model

Plan early

Begin screening and individualized planning during justice involvement.

Prepare for release

Treat the first hours, days and weeks after release as a critical period.

Use direct linkages

Create warm handoffs to community treatment and support.

Coordinate across systems

Share appropriate information, cross-train partners and measure performance.

RCN contributes the recovery-support layer: a trusted relationship, an individual recovery plan and continued community contact.

Clear roles make the partnership work

Justice partners

Referral, accountability, supervision and legal authority

Treatment providers

Assessment, clinical treatment and clinical coordination

RCN and CPRS staff

Voluntary peer support, recovery planning, navigation and community connection

Participant

Chooses goals, defines recovery and builds natural supports

RCN already has the community infrastructure

1,300+

people served

16,000+

annual contacts

250+

weekly TRS participants

2 counties

weekly jail groups



Infrastructure beyond justice referrals

- Certified peer recovery specialists
- Telephonic Recovery Support
- Culturally responsive staff
- Veteran services
- Treatment and community partnerships

Current barriers

Short-term funding

Relationships take time, but grants often end just as partnerships mature.

Uneven access

County and rural partners do not have the same local recovery infrastructure.

Fragmented payment

Justice outreach, warm handoffs and long-term community contact do not fit neatly into one reimbursement stream.

The local model works best when funding supports the partnership, not only a single service encounter.

What sustained investment would support

1

Dedicated RCO capacity

Fund trained peers, supervision and compliance.

2

Formal justice partnerships

Support jail outreach, treatment court participation and coordinated reentry.

3

Rural reach

Build local partnerships backed by regional staffing and telephonic support.

4

Shared measurement

Track engagement, connections, recovery goals and justice-related outcomes with partners.

SOURCES

Primary sources

Bureau of Justice Assistance

Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP)

bja.ojp.gov/program/cossup/about

SAMHSA

Sequential Intercept Model Brochure, PEP19-SIM-BROCHURE

library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/pep19-sim-brochure.pdf

SAMHSA

Guidelines for Successful Transition from Jail and Prison, SMA16-4998

library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/sma16-4998.pdf

SAMHSA

Adult Drug Courts and Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence

samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/adult-drug-courts-medication-assisted-treatment-opioid-dependence

Minnesota Legislature

Minn. Stat. § 254B.052, Peer Recovery Support Services Requirements

revisor.mn.gov/statutes/2025/cite/254B.052

Minnesota Judicial Branch

County Specific Information: Treatment Courts

mncourts.gov/help-topics/treatment-courts/county-specific-information

Recovery Community Network

Services and organizational impact

recoverycommunitynetwork.com



The question for Minnesota

Will recovery support end when justice supervision ends?

RCO partnerships give communities a way to answer: no.

Questions and discussion

supporting recovery, one human at a time.