

How is Lubbock County making a positive impact in the community with mental health?

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One of the issues that I ran on as county judge was to begin a veteran's court, because we know that our veterans are coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan and other points of service in our military, and they're coming back with some, some of them with some very serious mental health problems. And so by establishing a specialty court, we're able to not only deal with the issues and how it's presenting itself, but also deal with the underlying problem that some of our veterans are having in these mental health crises that they're having. And so I'm really looking forward to getting this veterans court getting that established, getting it up and running, and serving those who have served us in the military.

Why is collaboration important in addressing mental health?

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Collaborating is vital and what I've been so honored to be a participant on with this study is that we have been working together and we're able to see where some folks are, are very, very strong and how they serve the community. And so we're able to funnel resources, put resources together so that we're not doubling up and tripling up sometimes. And so what's really good is to be able to lean on other entities, lean on our faith based organizations, lean on our other community organizations and our government organizations to be able to come together to create a plan to take care of those in Lubbock county as a whole so that we're not bumping into each other so we're not doubling up on services saving the people of Lubbock County there are the taxpayers, quite a bit of money and also providing more efficient services so that we're able to take care of those who really need the help. Sometimes, it even in a large system with everybody doing everything people fall through the cracks. And so I think as we work together, we minimize those cracks so that we're able to take care of people more efficiently and, again, saving the taxpayers of Lubbock County, quite a bit of money when we work together and help people at the same time.

What is Lubbock County's role in this initiative?

03:00

Lubbock county's role in this initiative is twofold. One is we have a detention center that and some people don't like me saying this. But our detention center is the largest mental health hospital in Lubbock County and so it's very important for us to be a part of the mental health solutions, the mental health issues in Lubbock County, because of who we take care of at our detention center. And second, as the Lubbock County judge, it is my job to oversee the civil commitments in Lubbock County. And what that means is if someone is in the throes of a mental health issue, and they're presenting themselves as either a danger to themselves, or to the community, then we can, they can come to me and we can get them into one of our mental health hospitals get them the help that they need before a tragedy occurs. So it's twofold here in Lubbock County. One is, is we want to make sure that those who are in our detention center are the ones that that we really need to hold on to. But if you're only there because you're having a mental health issue, we need to get you out of there and we need to get you in the help in our community. So working with our community partners, working with other agencies, vitally important to make sure that we are taking care of those who really need help.

How has COVID-19 highlighted the importance of mental health care?

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This is the time if you feel like that this is something you can't handle, ask for help and get help. It's out there. There's some great folks out there StarCare for one. And our faith-based organizations are doing such a great job right now of identifying people who need help and getting the help that they need. We just need you to reach out and ask and this is the time to do that. Don't do this alone. Your community is behind you. And we need we need you to reach out to us so that we can help you and be a part of the solution and not add to your problems.