

Response Systems Collective Impact

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March 19, 2024

Public Works & Health Committee, Whatcom County
Council



WHATCOM COUNTY
**HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**





Today's Presentation



We are excited to share data and program outcomes on featured Response Systems Programs.

- Designed specifically as diversion programs that reduce :
 - 911 calls
 - Negative interactions with law enforcement
 - Jail bookings
 - EMS usage
 - Emergency department visits

Quick History

What are diversion programs?

Why Health & Community Services?

...





**Whatcom does
this work
together...**





ART

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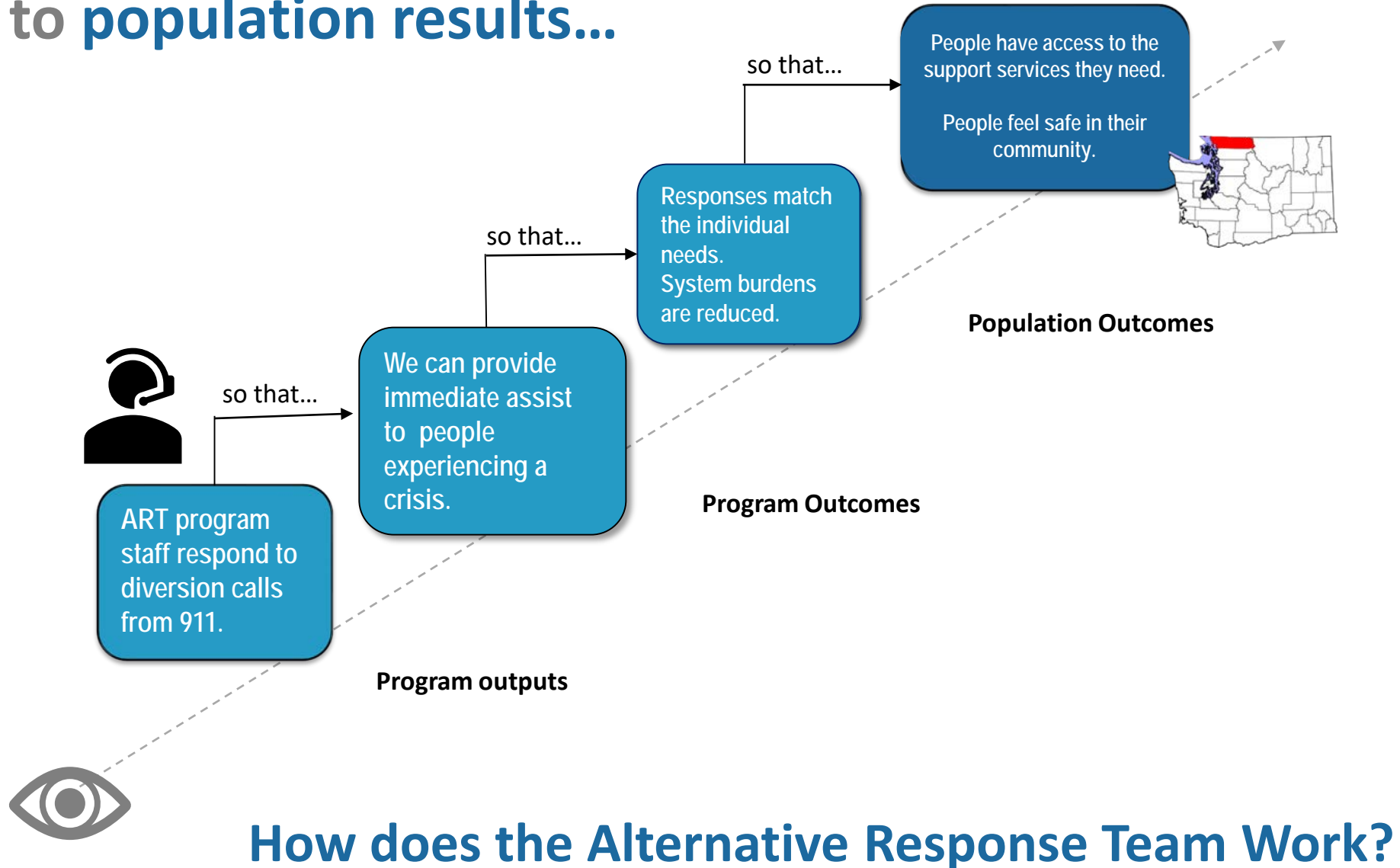
Alternative Response Team

ART responds to specific non-violent behavioral health 911 calls instead of law enforcement.



Connecting program actions to population results...

to population results...

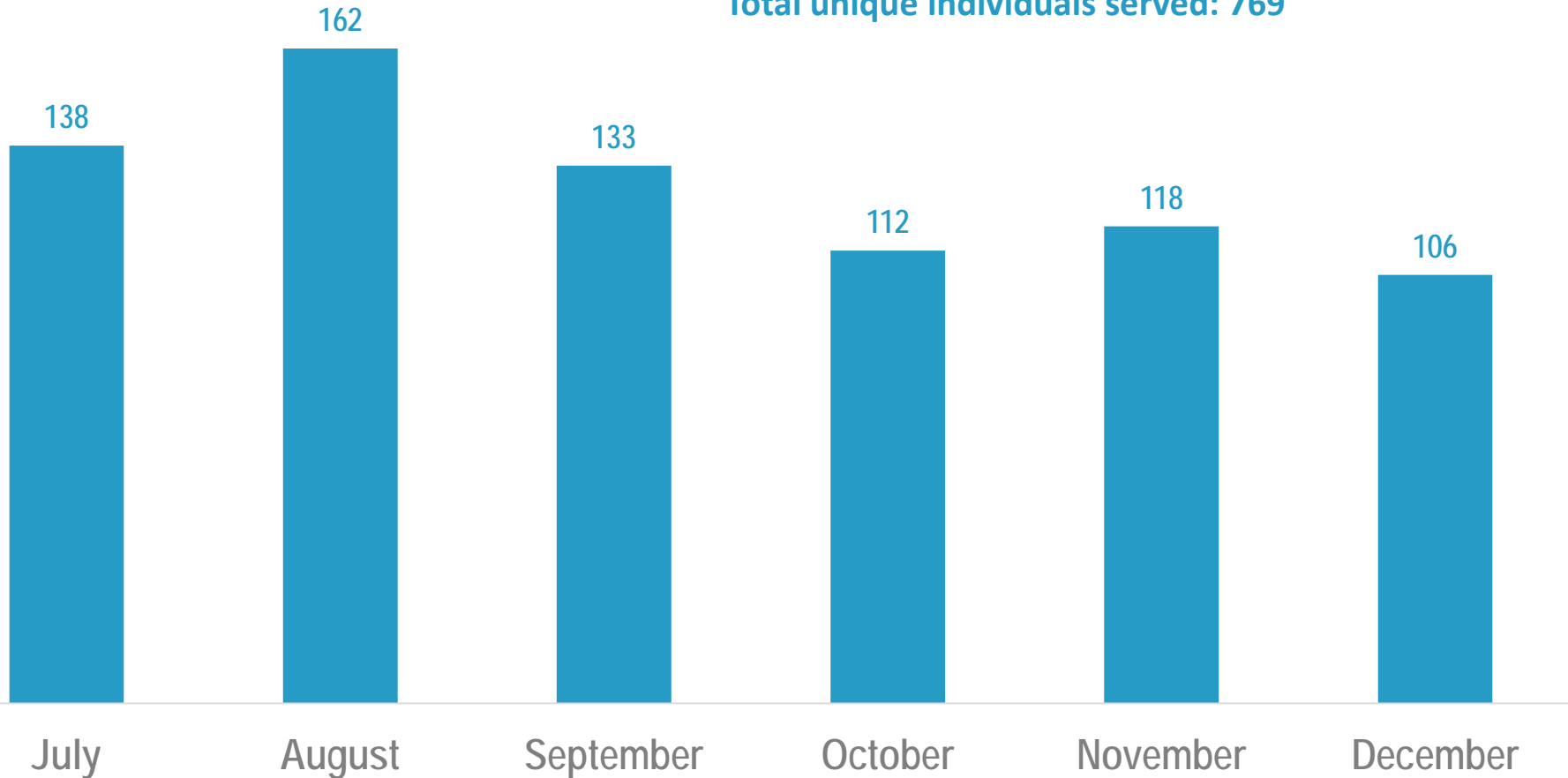


How does the Alternative Response Team Work?



From the months of July to December 2023, 830 calls dispatched to ART from Whatcomm 911.

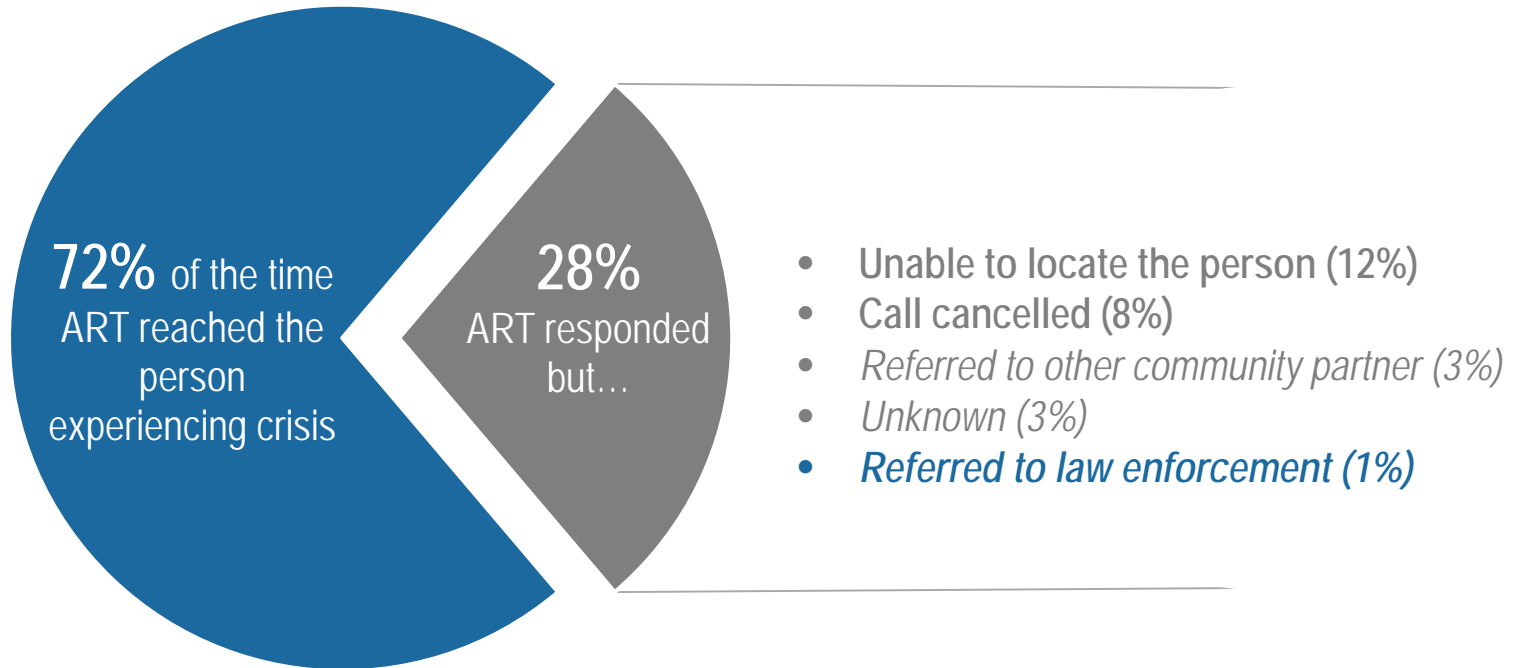
Total unique individuals served: 769





Of the 830 calls dispatched to ART in 2023*

ART successfully responded to the scene 72% of the time.



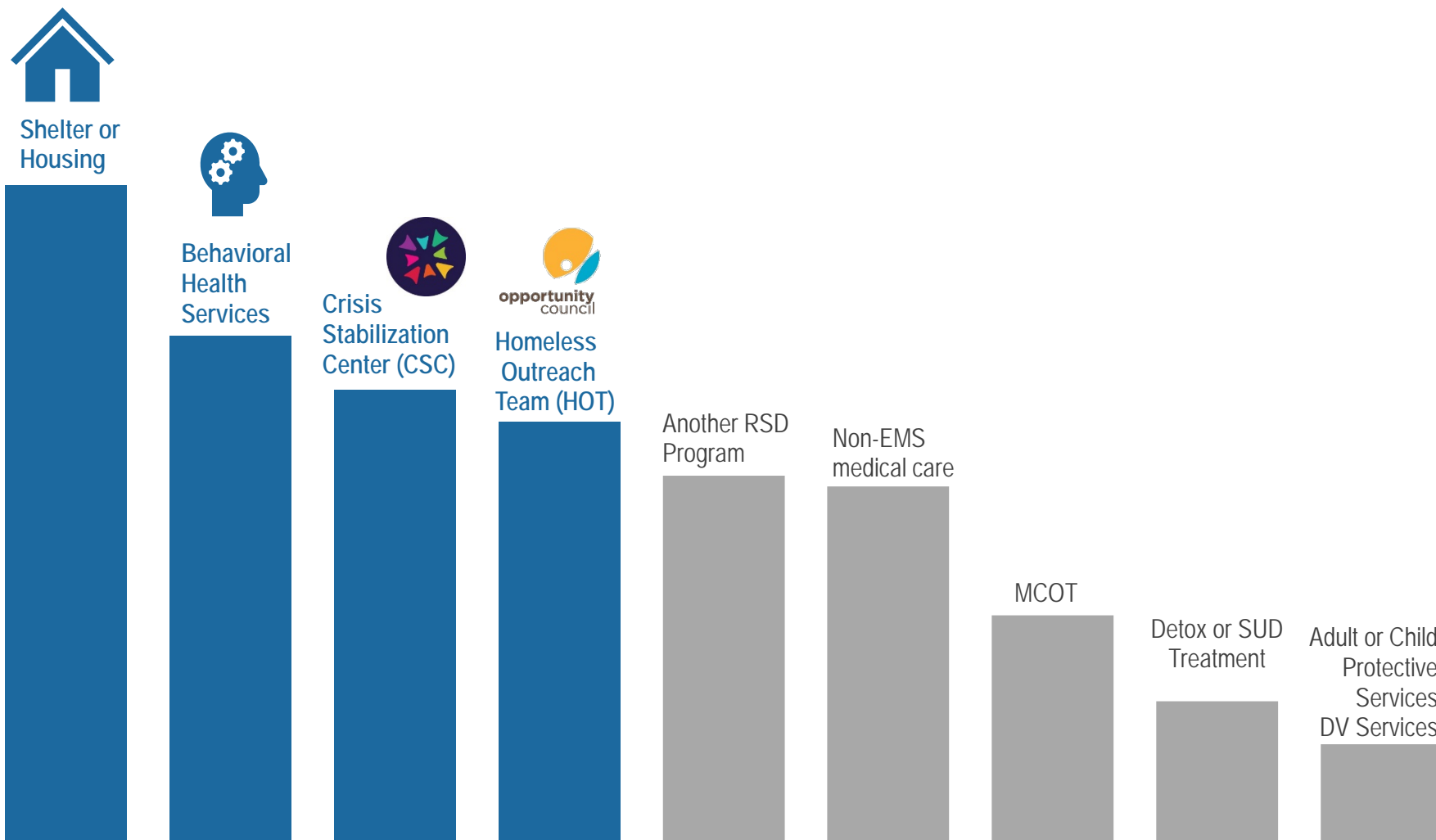
*Complete data from 6 month time period: July to Dec. 2023

Response Time and Time on Scene

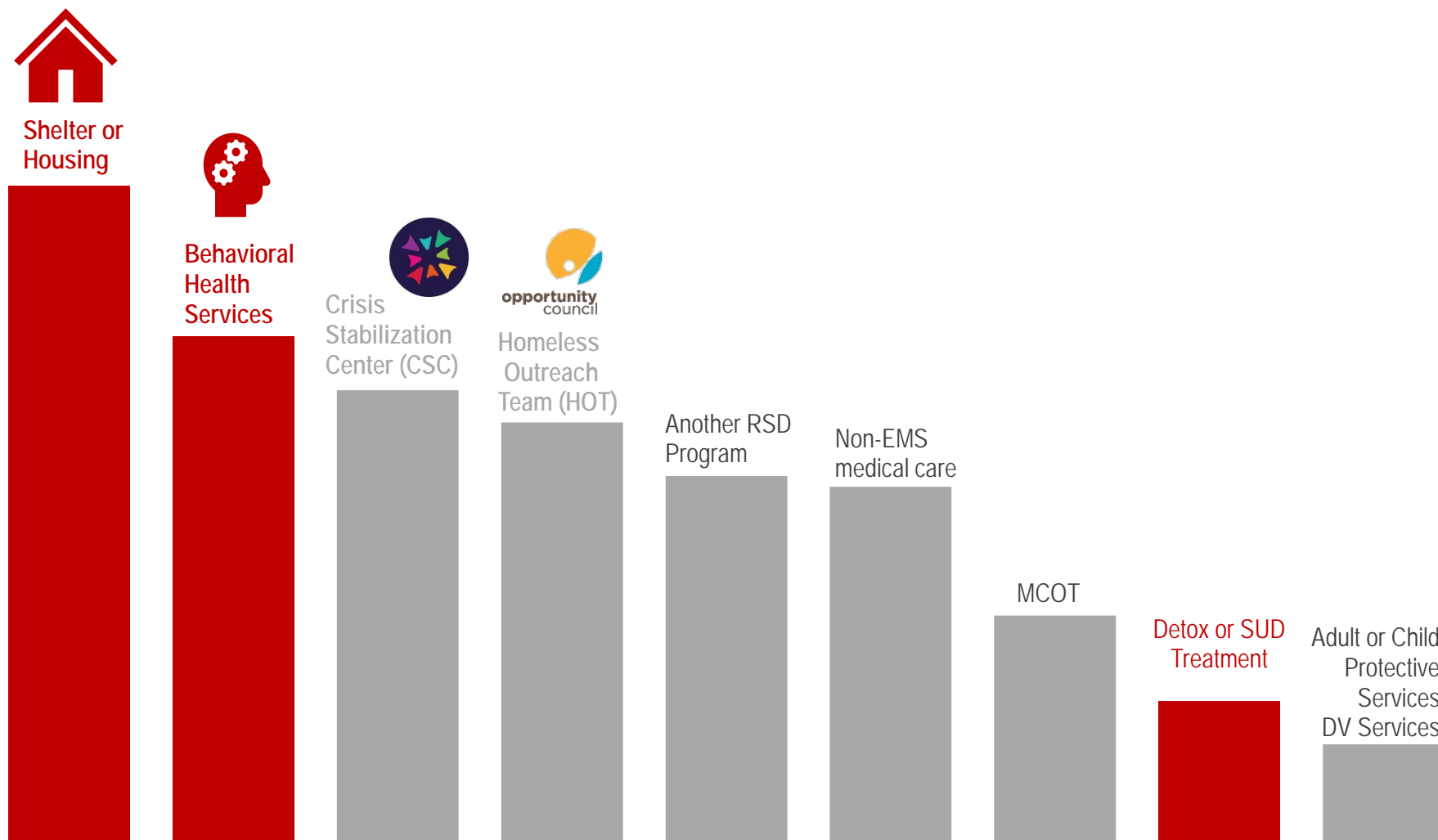


- On average it takes ART about **15 minutes to respond** to a call from dispatch.
- ART spends an average of **45 minutes to an hour on scene** with people experiencing a crisis.

The majority of community connections made by ART are focused on housing, behavioral health support and other crisis stabilization services



ART staff can find it challenging to match people with community services due to **shortages in these service areas.**





What-Comm's partnership with ART is an absolute win for our agency and our community! Before, crisis calls were labor intensive and a source of frustration for dispatchers who knew the resources we had to send were unlikely to solve the problem. ART staff are experienced, collaborative, quick to respond, good at what they do, and so caring. It is comforting knowing the person in crisis is receiving a timely, appropriate, and compassionate response.

Deputy Director Alys Everbeck
WhatComm 911

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ART is a great example of Whatcom County leading the way with innovation and finding long term solutions. It is a meaningful and effective use of resources and allows our officers to handle more emergent calls for service. I have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from our first responders and our community.

Chief Rebecca Mertzig
Bellingham Police Department



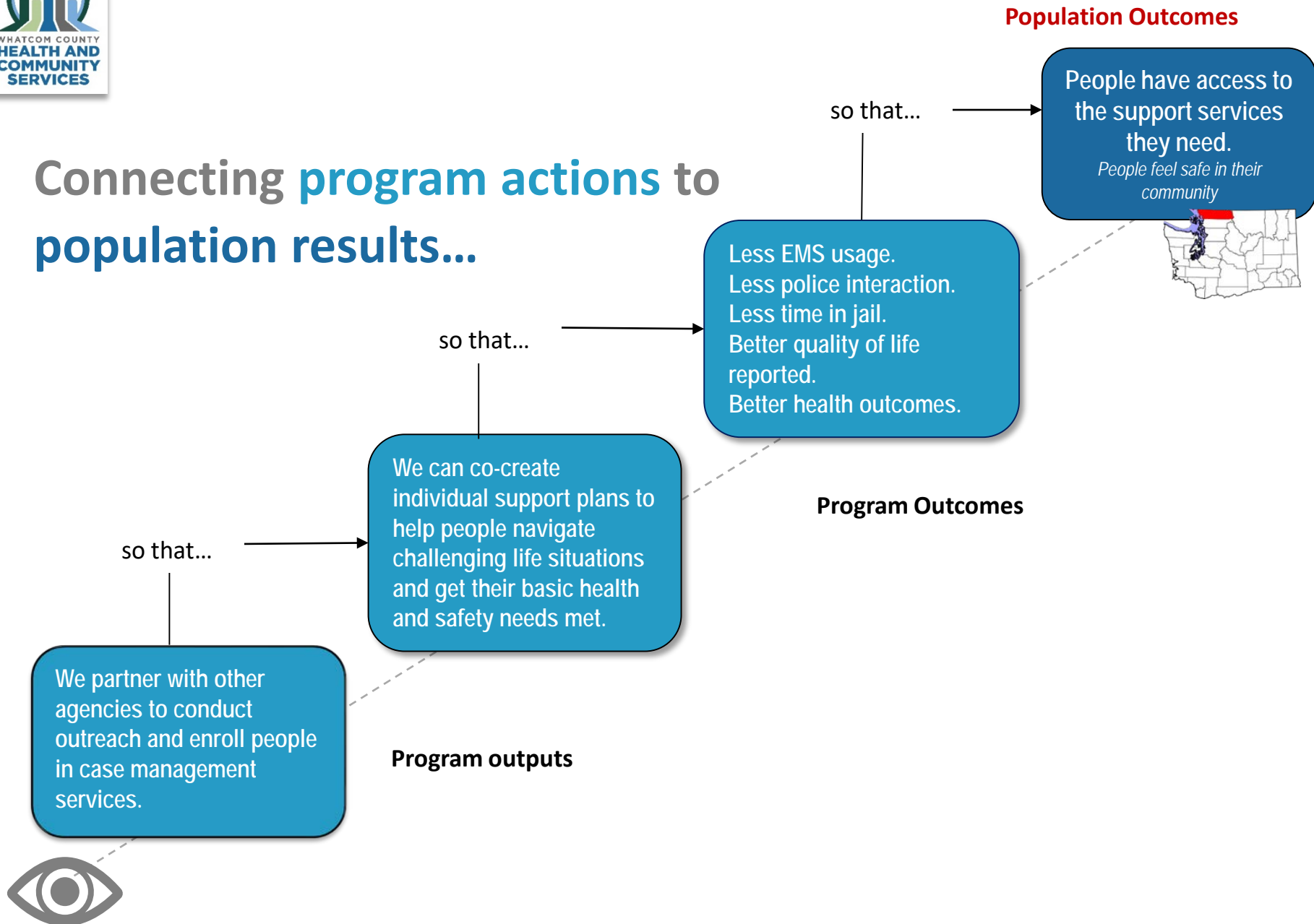
GRACE & LEAD

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Program differences and similarities...

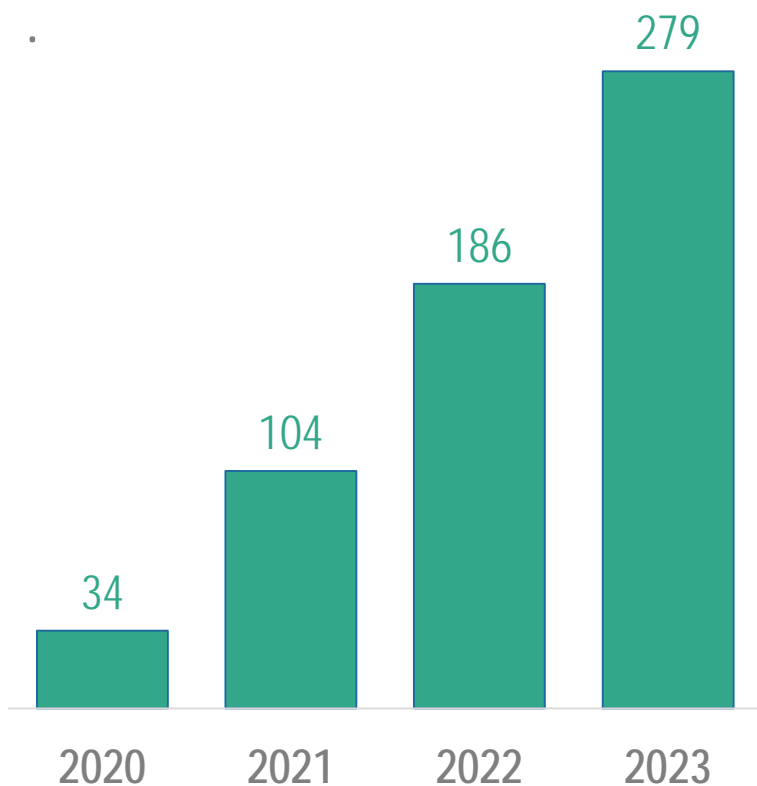
	LEAD	GRACE
Relies on referrals and outreach to engage new participants	✓	✓
Prioritizes EMS high utilizers, medically complex, older adults		✓
Prioritizes people with frequent law enforcement interactions	✓	
Uses intensive case management and individual supports plans	✓	✓
Funded by state and regional BH funds	✓	
Funded by BH local sales tax and City of Bellingham funds		✓

Connecting program actions to population results...

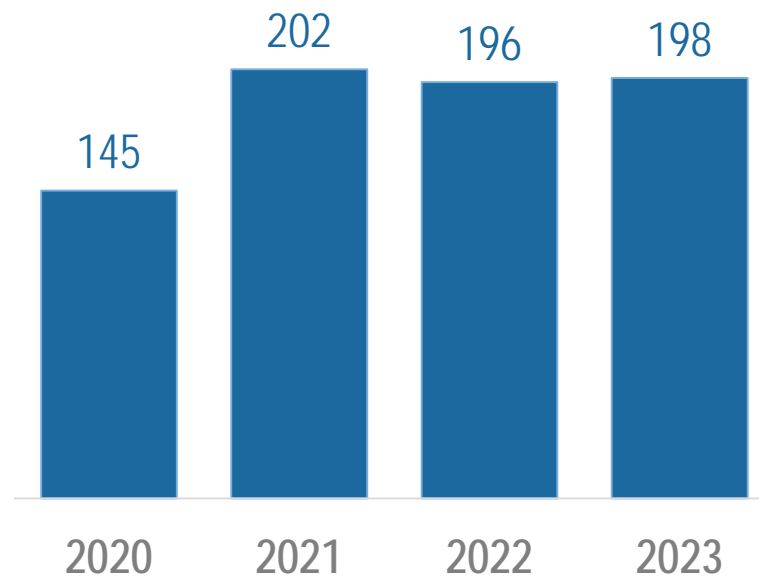


Program Participants Served 2020-2023

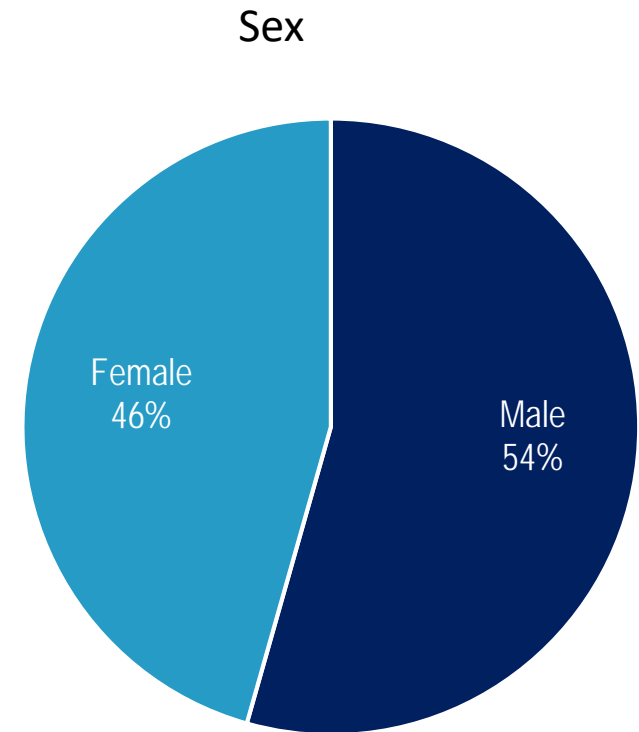
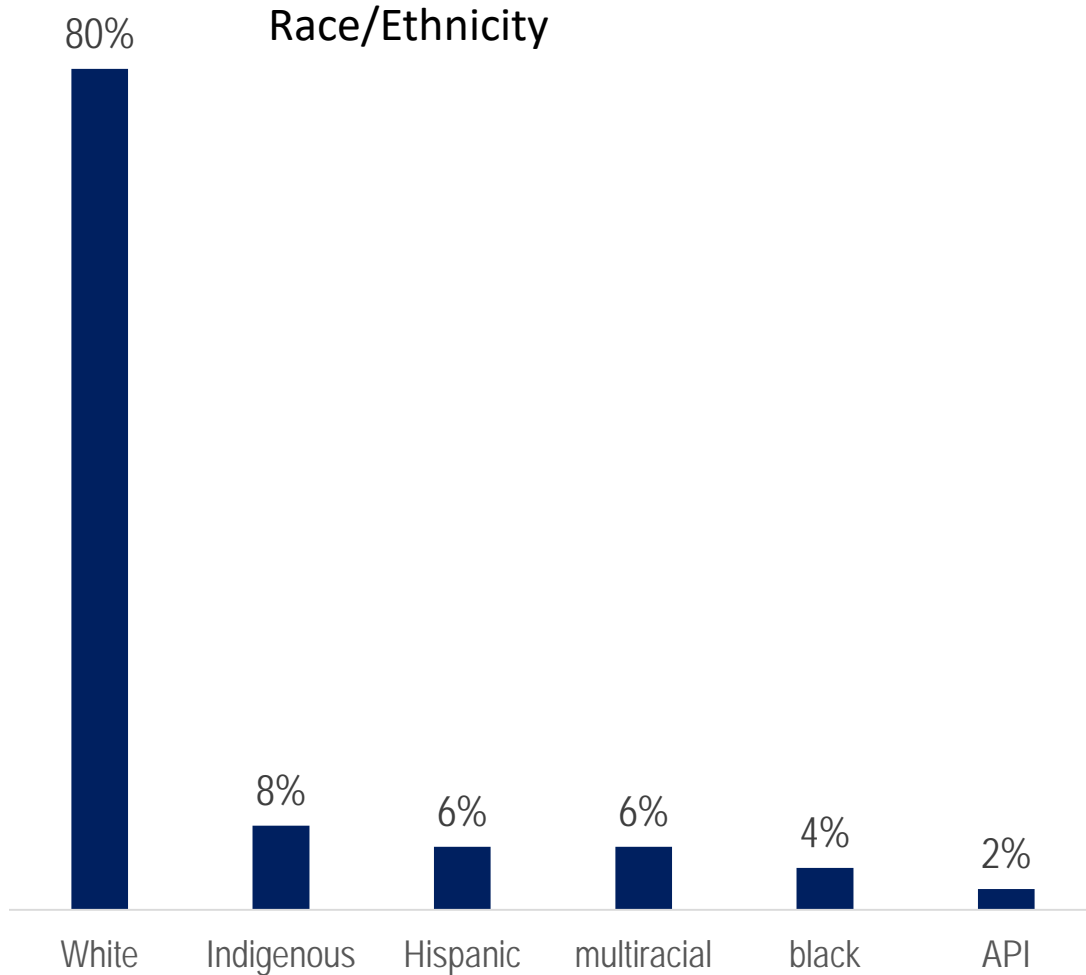
LEAD



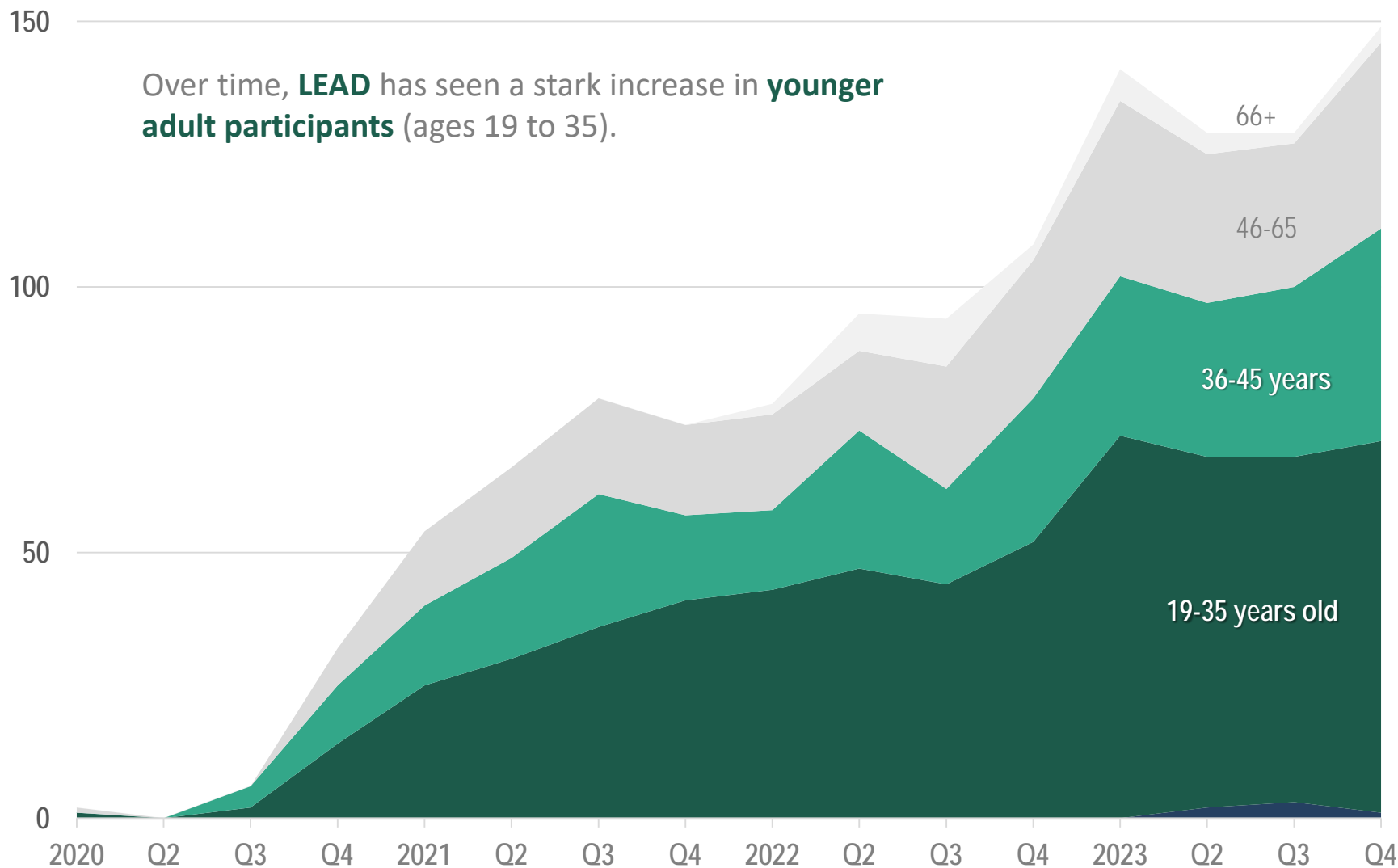
GRACE



2023 GRACE and LEAD Programs' Participant Demographics

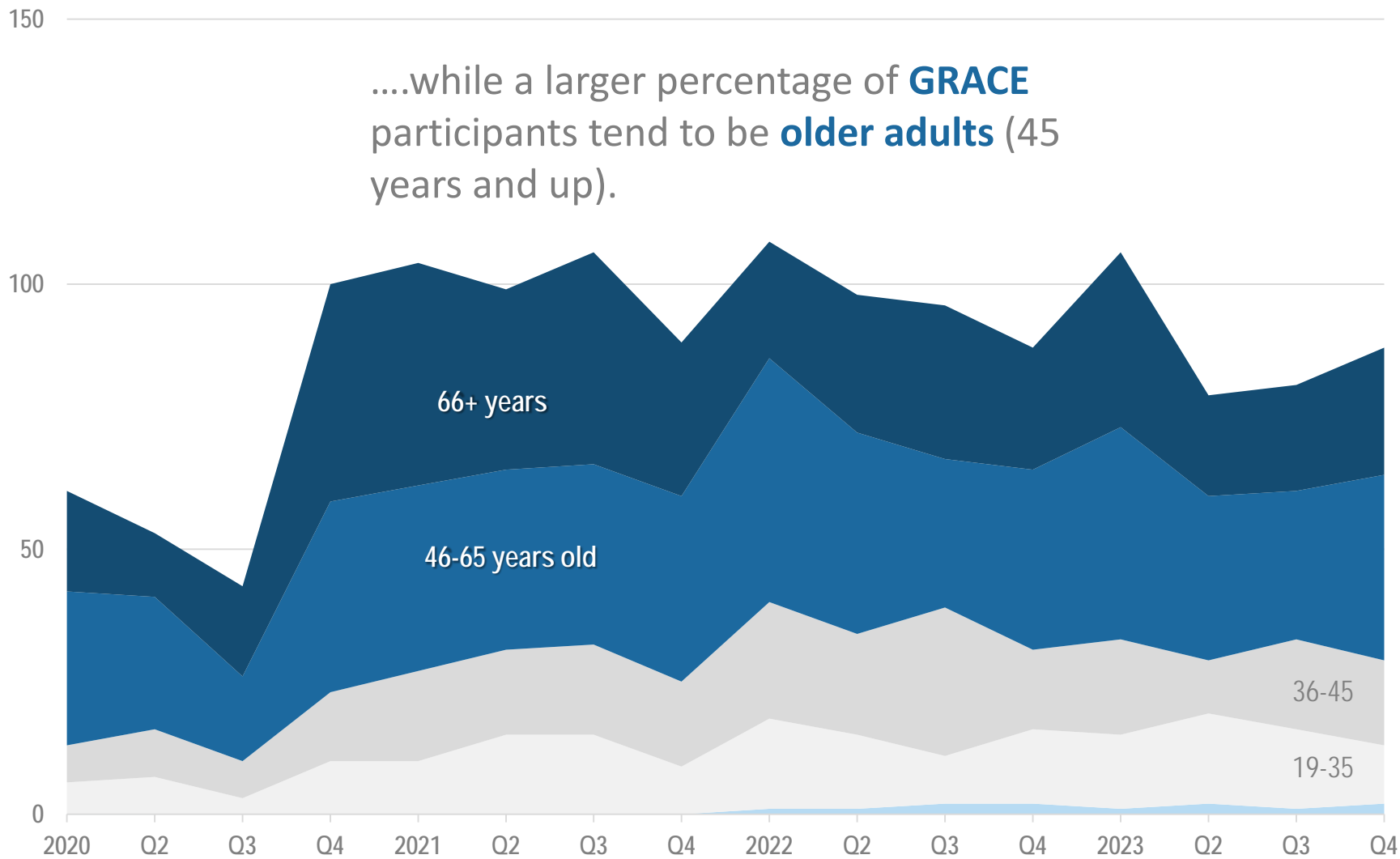


Age of LEAD Participants



Age of GRACE Participants

....while a larger percentage of **GRACE** participants tend to be **older adults** (45 years and up).



The **top 10 risk factors** presented by 2023 program participants...



LEAD Participants:

1. Mental health



2. Homeless



3. Substance Abuse



4. Law Enforcement hi-utilizer



5. Jail hi-utilizer



6. Complex medical



7. Aging, disabled or fall risk



8. Community impact



9. EMS high utilizer



10. ED high utilizer



GRACE Participants:

1. Aging, disabled or fall risk



2. Mental health



3. EMS high utilizer



4. Complex medical



5. Substance Abuse



6. Homeless



7. Community impact



8. Law Enforcement hi-utilizer



9. ED high utilizer



10. Jail hi-utilizer



The **leading risk factors** presented by program participants contribute to the **most expensive behaviors**...



LEAD Participants:

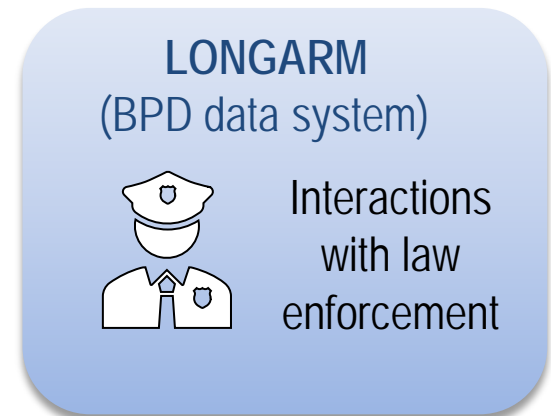
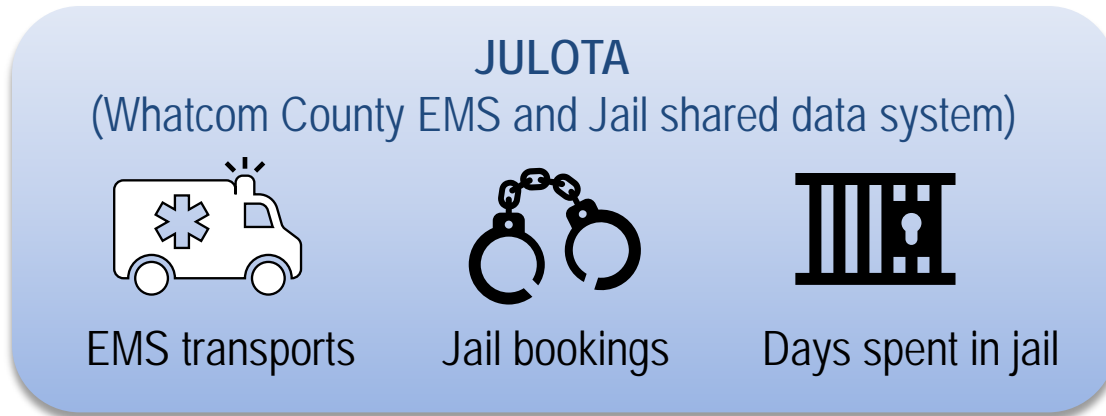
1. Mental health 
2. Homeless 
3. Substance Abuse 
4. Law Enforcement hi-utilizer 
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GRACE Participants:

1. Aging, disabled or fall risk 
2. Mental health 
3. EMS high utilizer 
4. Complex medical 
5. Substance Abuse 
6. Homeless 
7. Community impact 
8. Law Enforcement hi-utilizer 
9. ED high utilizer 
10. Jail hi-utilizer 

Defining our cohorts and how we calculate data...

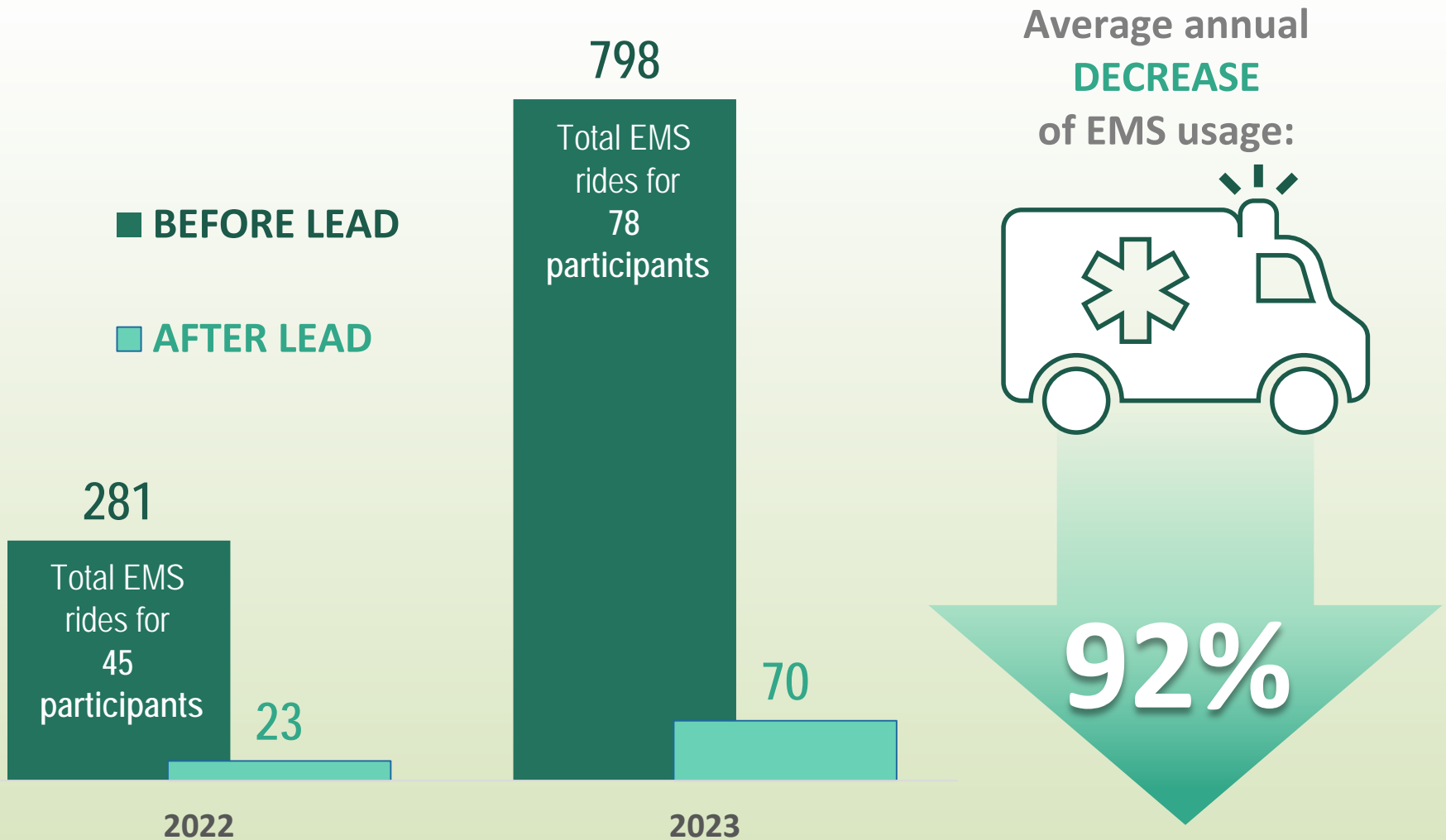
Thanks to our amazing community partners and their willingness to engage in data sharing agreements we are able to access the following information about program participants:



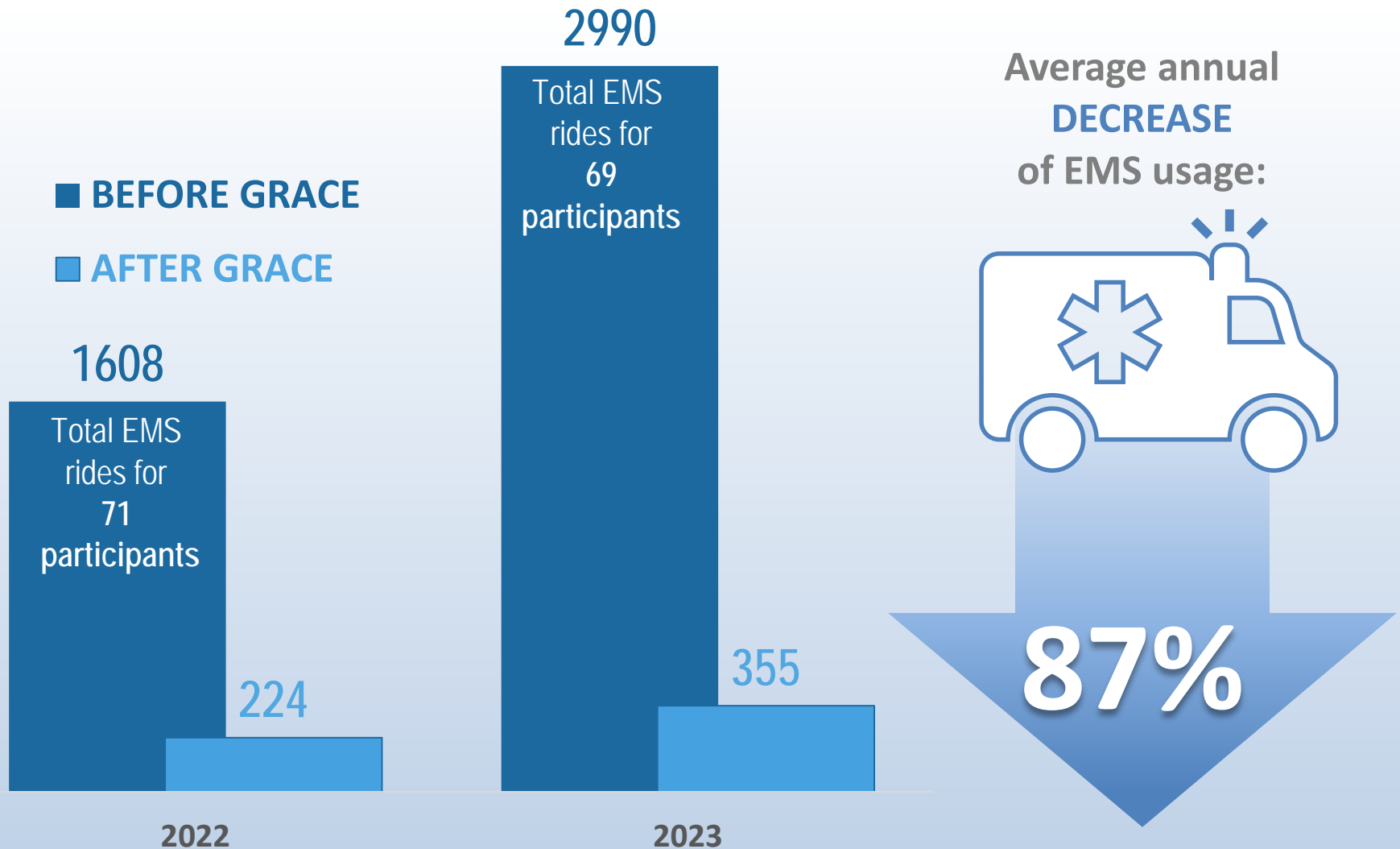
At the end of each quarter, we are **identify participants** with two complete sets of data and compare them for differences.



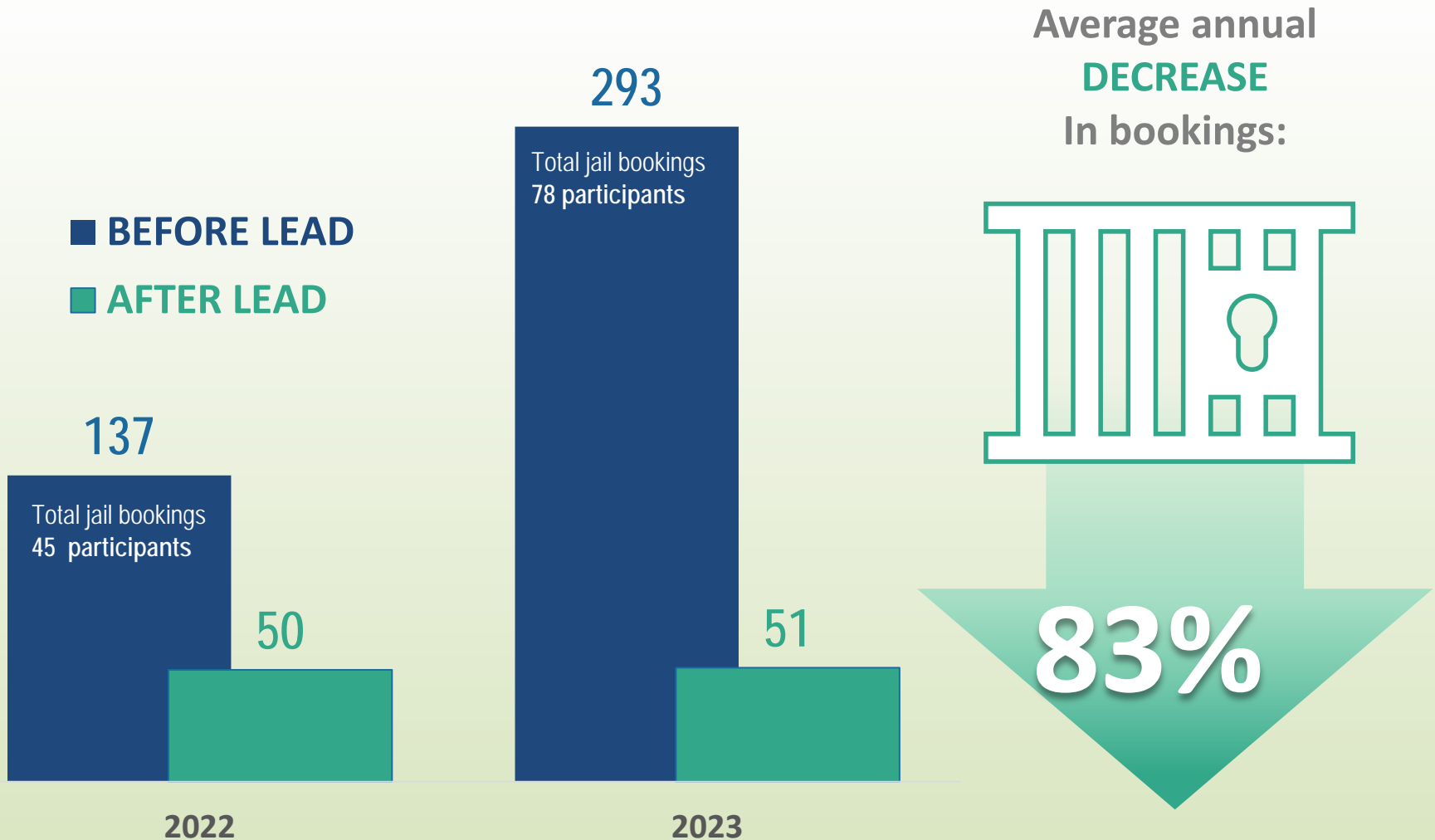
2022 and 2023 LEAD participant data shows an impressive reduction in **EMS usage** before and after program exit.



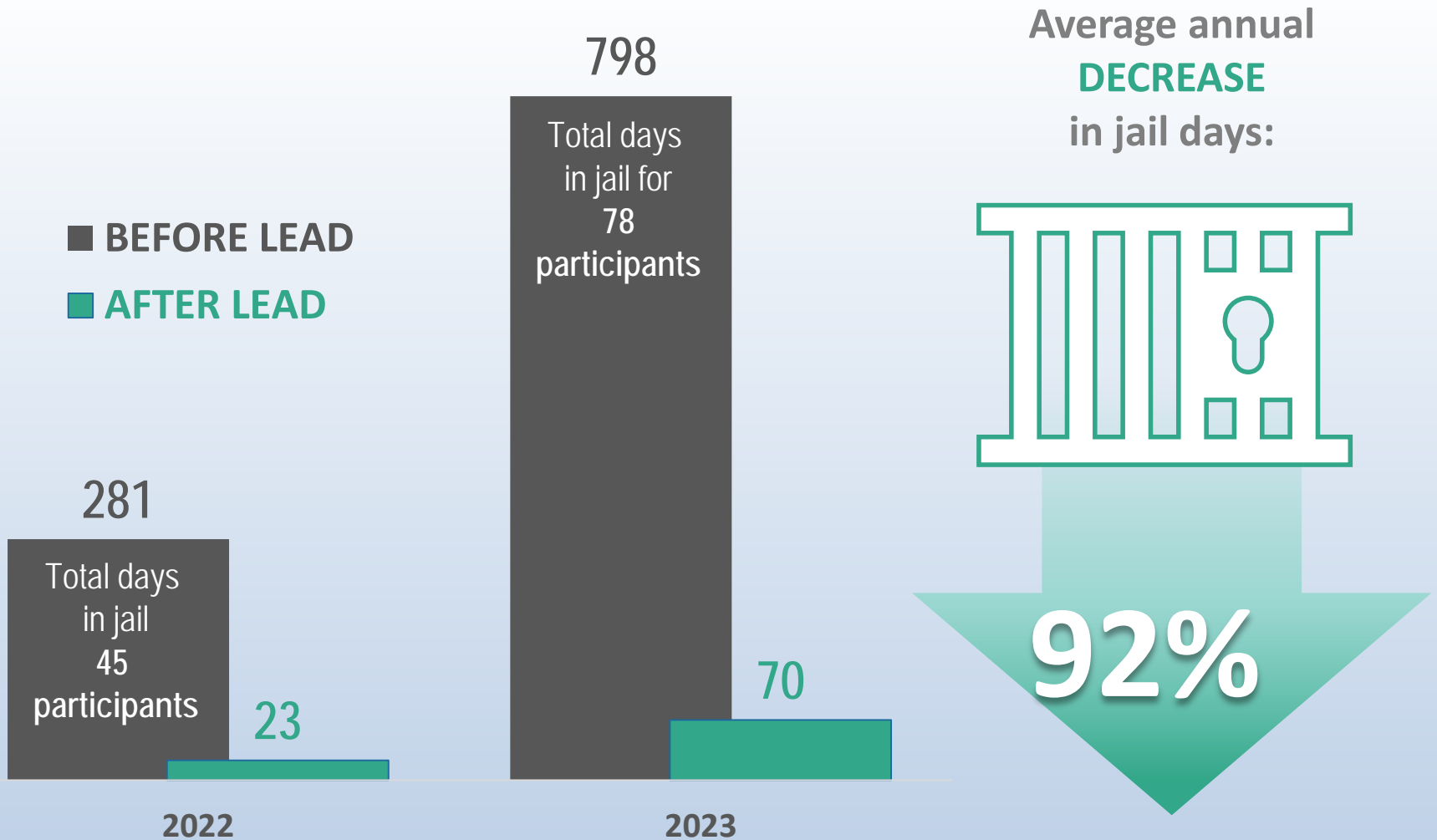
We are seeing an even bigger impact on high utilizers in GRACE participants' **EMS usage before** and **after program exit**.



2022 and 2023 LEAD participant data shows an impressive reduction in **total jail bookings** before and **after program exit**.



2022 and 2023 LEAD participant data shows an impressive reduction in **total days spent in jail** before and **after program exit**.

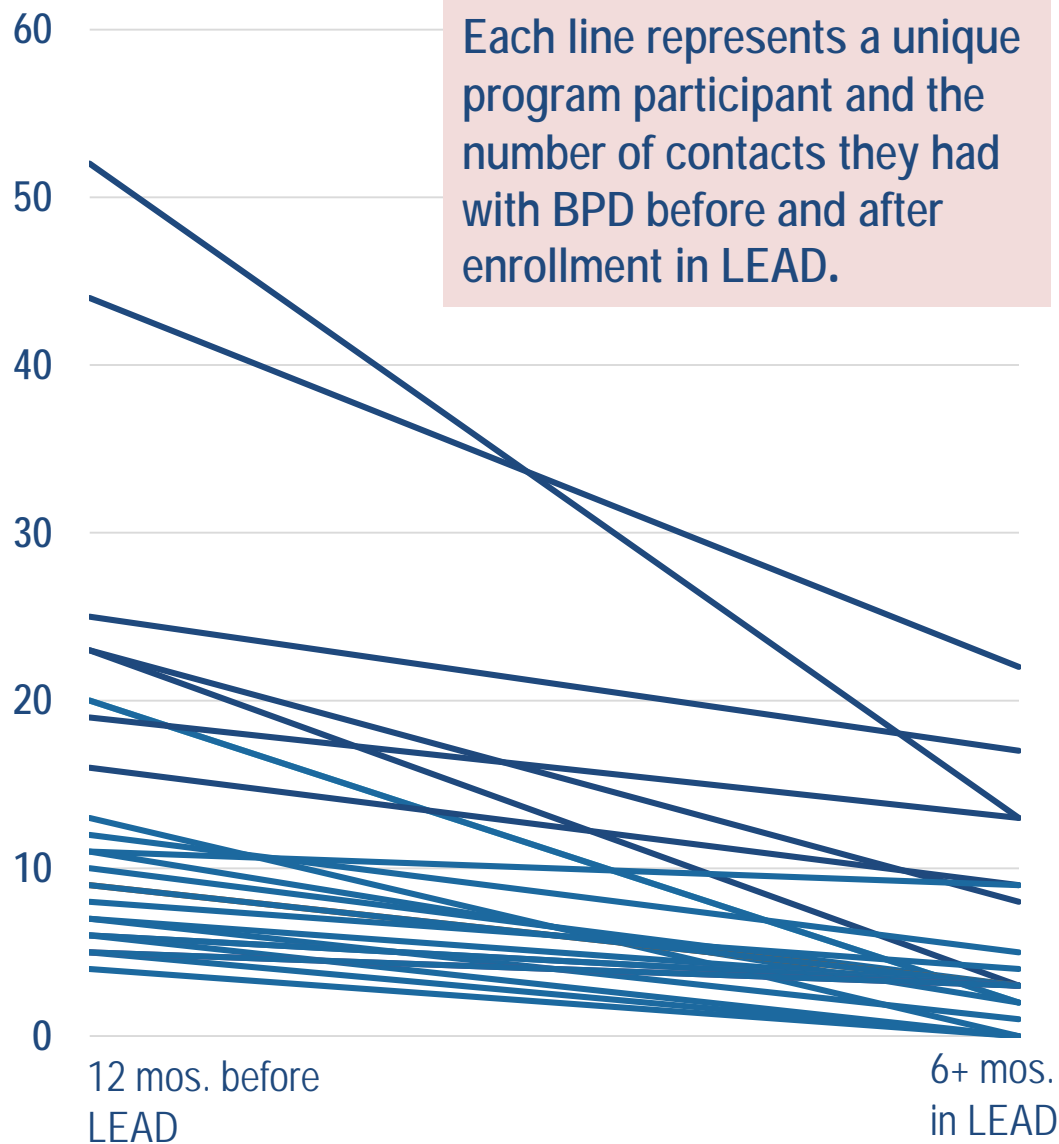


In 2023, the average **number of LEAD participant interactions* with BPD** went down by an average of 67%.



67%

* Data is taken from LONGARM for currently enrolled participants who have been in services 6 months or more



Program Impact Evaluation: Cost Avoidance Calculation

We calculate this total amount:

- # of jail bookings x \$55
- # of days in jail x \$ 221
- # of EMS rides x \$5,200



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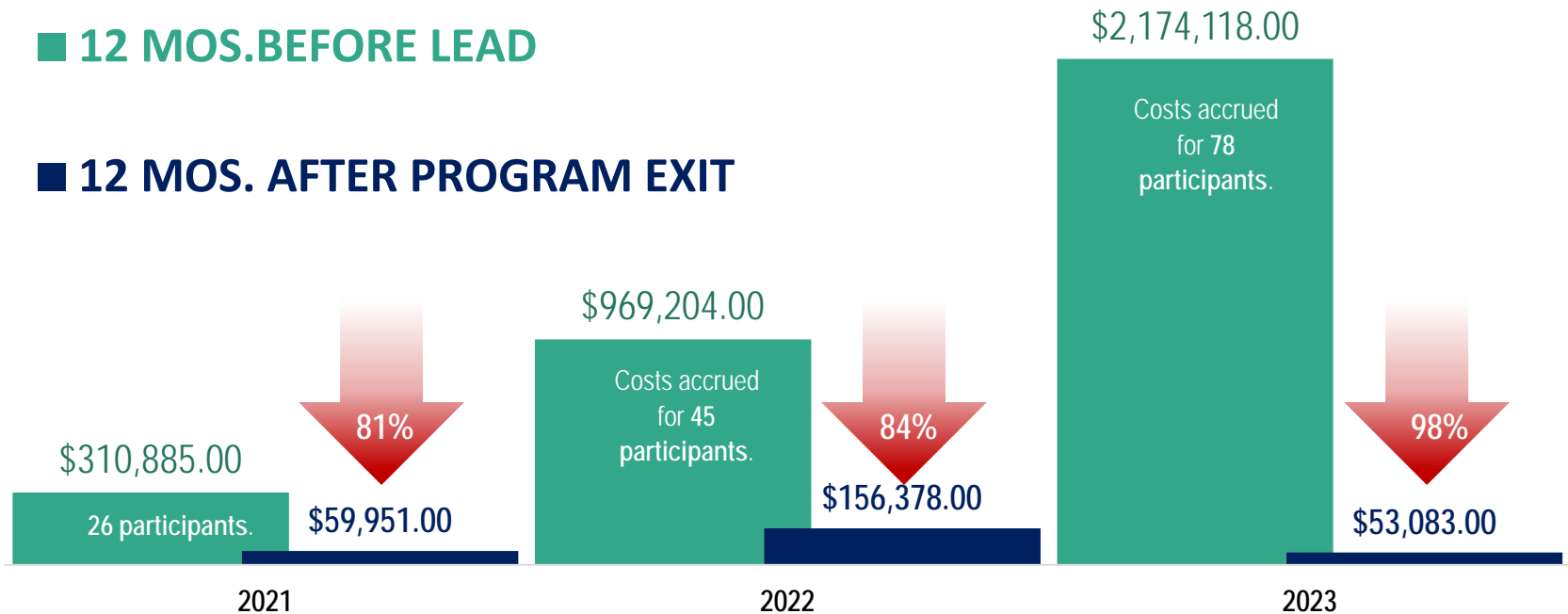
Then subtract this total amount:

- # of jail bookings x \$55
- # of days in jail x \$ 221
- # of EMS rides x \$5,200

Total costs accrued for
12 months *directly before*
entry into services

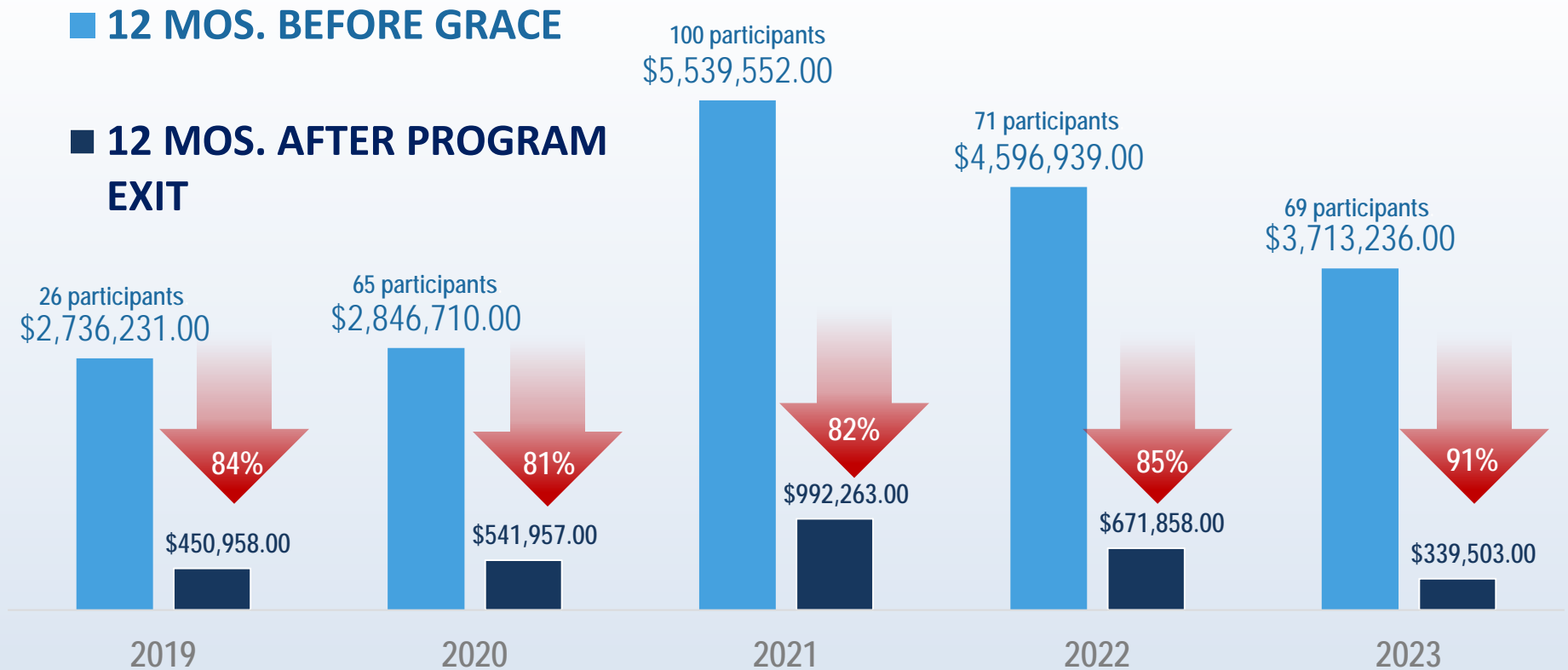
Costs accrued during the
12 months *after* exit from services

LEAD participant data shows an **annual average 92% reduction** in potential costs associated with jail and EMS utilization.



Total estimate of potential costs avoided: **\$3,184,765.00**

GRACE participant data shows an **annual average 85% reduction** in potential costs associated with jail and EMS utilization.



Total estimate of potential costs avoided: **\$16,436,129.00**



Thank you!

