

Case Study:
Forensic Mental Health Database

Study the case, “A Forensic Mental health Database to Implement a Suicide Prevention Program”. For the purpose of this case, you should take on the role of Sue Miller.

A scandal has erupted in the press after the suicides at the High Mountain facility. Your boss, the Commissioner of Mental health Services has been called to a meeting hosted by the Governor. The Commissioner of Corrections will also be present. The Governor wants to come up with a long-term solution that will prevent a crisis such as the one that just occurred from ever happening again. He is asking that the two involved departments work out a cooperative approach. At the upcoming meeting, he wants to secure the cooperation of both departments and lay out the basic structure for a solution to be implemented in the near future.

The Commissioner has asked you to draft an executive memo that lays out for him what the department’s position should be. She is interested in coming up with action recommendations—what should the two departments do next?

You are aware that any solution to this problem will involve technical issues, management changes, and perhaps some policy issues (such as the privacy of mental health records) as well.

Draft an executive memo to the Commissioner that details what should be Mental Health’s position at the conference called by the Governor. Attach any appendices that you may feel are necessary if there are details that the Commissioner (or her staff) should know. For example, you might want to be clear about your diagnosis of the problem, any details about a technical solution, if any, and so on.

Note: This case builds on the problem sets that introduce databases by building and then linking two simple criminal justice databases.