It also demands that the city add more street crisis teams to help people like Rocha instead of relying on police, who are ill-equipped to handle such cases. And we need more places for the teams to take people — like a round-the-clock crisis facility in Tucson staffed by medical professionals offering a range of services from a living-room-style hangout area to inpatient treatment beds.

“Arizona doesn’t have the same sort of focus on dangerousness in their treatment standard. They’ve made it much more medically based,” said John Snook, executive director of the Treatment Advocacy Center, a national organization pushing for better mental health care. “There isn’t that artificial barrier of, ‘Oh, there’s nothing we can do until that person’s dangerous,’ which has been used as an excuse for avoiding care in California.”

It’s important to note that the vast majority of mentally ill people will never be violent. But in some cases, compelling treatment can keep people from deteriorating to the point they are dangerous to themselves or others. That’s surely a more compassionate answer than waiting for a crime and then jailing them indefinitely with no care.

“If you’re talking about someone whose psychosis was so severe that they acted out in such a violent way and then they’re sitting in a jail cell possibly without treatment, it’s hard to imagine a more awful scenario,” Snook said.

“It’s a nightmare.”

So how will this nightmare end?

A spokesperson for the state’s psychiatric hospitals declined to say how long people declared incompetent to stand trial are typically on the waiting list for care. But Rocha’s attorney in the city Public Defender’s Office, Will Helvestine, said the state’s current estimate for Rocha receiving a hospital bed is August.

That’s six months after a deadline set by a San Francisco judge.

“We’ve lost months and months of potentially valuable treatment time, and we’re no closer than we were last summer to getting Peter the treatment he needs,” Helvestine said.

The lawyer said he’s grateful to Glen Park neighbors who’ve reached out to ask about Rocha’s well-being. “The community seems to understand,” he said, “that while Mr. Hainzl’s death was undoubtedly a tragedy, the inability or unwillingness of the state to properly treat Peter is a tragedy in its own right.”

Ramiro Rocha said he was shocked to learn so many people like his brother are waiting for a hospital bed. He believes both Hainzl and his brother are victims of a broken system.

“This was 100% preventable,” he said. “I don’t know what it’s going to take for citizens to stand up and say, ‘Enough is enough.’ These people need help.”

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