

**Commission on PTSD & TBI Meeting Notes**  
**Walker Building, Room 274**  
**Thursday September 19, 2019**  
Recorder: Tony Paradiso

**Member attendance:**

Amy Cook	DHHS
Dr. Nicole Sawyer	NH Psychological Association
Peggy LaBrecque	NH Veterans Home
Tony Paradiso	Veterans Advocate
Denise Roy-Innarelli	NHES
Dr Richard Wren	WRJVA
Alicia Semiatin	Manchester VA
Maj Gen Gretchen Dunkelberger	NH Veterans Cemetery Association

**Excused**

Nick Tolentino	Disabled American Veterans
Catrina Watson	NHMS
Craig Sanderson	NH National Guard
Jerry Donovan	Robin Hill Farm

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Pledge of Allegiance

New Member Introduction:

None

New Guest Introductions:

None

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for the June 20, 2019 meeting were approved as written.

### **III. Commission Updates (Updates pertinent to COPT mission)**

#### **General Membership**

NHES Denise Roy-Innarelli: Nine more job fairs are still planned. Next up will be at the Community College in Portsmouth from 12 - 4 pm. Two are scheduled for the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Three more are scheduled for October.

The New Hampshire unemployment rate is holding steady at 2.5%.

The State's department personnel hiring effort will kick off and will be focused on hiring more veterans.

Dr. Sawyer: There is work being done to examine how fitness evaluation for police officers translates into officer safety. Nicole noted that many veterans go into law enforcement and people are trying to develop better ways to account for service-connected PTSD and law enforcement jobs. James College in Newton has a specific program related to working with the military/veteran population. She thought this might be a resource that the Commission could leverage.

Dr. Wren: The White River Junction VA continues to emphasize suicide prevention. Dr. Wren indicated that they are currently operating in a difficult "flat" budget period while managing the need for additional resources.

Maj Gen Dunkelberger: Noted that there is a remembrance station at the cemetery where loved ones can write their stories.

Peggy LaBrecque: Pointed out that the commission is always looking for relevant resources and information. She suggested that Military One Source is a good source for issues such as recognizing the symptoms of PTSD and coping mechanisms for PTSD. She observed that often, once a veteran retires, the PTSD symptoms manifest.

The results of the survey can now freely distributed. Commission members should feel free to use the results as they see fit and provide them to anyone that might be able to assist the Commission's efforts. Peggy noted that the results could be valuable for submitting grants etc.

The high turnover among the provider community means that the Commission must stay focused on engaging provider organizations and providing resources and training. We need to stay vigilant in seeking funds to be able to accomplish this.

Nicole believes that it would be huge if we could just get the military culture training in the CMHCs. In working with the military liaisons Amy sensed that the lack of funding has become a barrier. Amy indicated that if we are to seek funding, we need to know what it would be used for.

Peggy asked the members to review the attendee list and other names associated with the Committee to determine who we believe will continue to participate and who likely won't.

### **NH DHHS Update – Amy Cook**

Senate Bill 208 went into effect on September 17th. The Bureau of Community Based Military Programs is now a division of the Department of Military Affairs and Veteran Services. They had their inaugural lunch and they are now out from under HHS and under the new department. However, she noted there remains numerous connections and a high level of cooperation. HHS has agreed to continue to cover some operating costs.

The Bureau/Division is in the process of updating the web page. It will be migrated to the new department with a target date of January 1, 2020.

She is working with team from the new department and NHES to update the veterans resource guide. The guide hasn't been updated since 2012.

The summer was busy in terms of ATQ. Since May - 22 new organizations were provided access to the toolkit and orientation on to how to utilize it. Forty-six individual providers attended the trainings.

We need to find resources to create hard copies of the ATQ toolkit and to fund new promotional items if we think we could use them. Nicole indicated that there are some funds available. Amy has estimates of the possible costs. We will be looking for new ways to fund the military culture training (MCT). Since May - 78 providers have been trained. There are CEUs associated with it. There is one final training scheduled in November at Riverbend CMHC.

The ATQ website is due to go live by the end of the month. The NH Center of Excellence has volunteered to provide support to track and evaluate the analytics related to the new website.

Governor's Challenge: New Hampshire North Country was selected as the fifth pilot site and will received about \$100k in funds.

Regarding the Heritage Learning Center at the cemetery – Amy believes that there should be something related to ATQ as part of the information they disseminate.

### **IV. Action Items (Items that require decision /action by COPT)**

None

**V. Old Business**

None

**VI. New Business**

- Seeking new funding is an on-going process. Peggy is always looking for grant opportunities.
- Looking to develop better transportation for the behavior health community.
- And the state needs to attract more dentists.

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 pm

**Next Commission Meeting is Thursday, October 17, 2019 from 2:30 – 4:30 pm at the Walker Building, Room 274, 21 South Fruit Street, Concord**