

Justice Involved Veterans Full Task Force

Meeting Minutes: 4/22/20

Location: Virtual Meeting

In attendance*: Co-Chairs: Jill O'Neill, Sheena Bice

Members & Guests: Susan Mead, Katie Nicholas Malvey, Kevin Casey, Warren Perry, Susan Stearns, Amy Cook, Aaron Dristillaris, Diane Levesque, Jeffrey Newman, Sharon Sibley, John Hattan, Joseph Tessier

*two additional members attended via phone call-in, but names were not available

Updates

JIV Chair Update:

Need to start a more coordinated outreach and promotion to Police Departments and Prosecutors. Further updates provided throughout meeting minutes.

DMAVS Update reported by Warren Perry & Amy Cook:

All legislation has been suspended. Legislation will probably not come back until fall—not official, but anticipated. Division of Veterans Services is still working—remotely and telephonically. National Guard is involved in all community support initiatives. Set up 14 care sites. Supporting NH Food Bank. Supporting mobile test sites. No increase for family services.

Amy Cook—no significant update as most ongoing work has been put on hold due to the health crisis. Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among SMVF has been fully absorbed by the NH Suicide Prevention Council-Military & Veterans Committee. That group continues to oversee the implementation of the Governor's Challenge action plan. *Together With Veterans*, the program from Colorado being implemented in the North Country, has been suspended in that area. More details about that will be available in the future. The Mayor's Challenge in Manchester conducted a crisis intercept mapping exercise—Susan shared that the activity was well facilitated and provided useful information. The Manchester Community Mental Health Center pursued a grant based on the results of the mapping activity, so it will be useful to watch how they develop programming to see if it can be replicated elsewhere in the state.

Veteran Track Updates

Rockingham County--11 participants—Was meeting via Zoom, but VA stopped allowing use of Zoom for court or team meetings. Trying to find different platform for meetings. Judge is trying to get the team on WebEx; Diane is exploring VVC, but can also use phone conference as a back-up if necessary. 1 graduate last month. Another will graduate this month.

Nashua—4 participants; no Judge time right now, but check-ins are happening weekly. Getting new referrals, but Judge is not doing weekly court reviews.

Manchester—11 participants; Diane is sending Judge updates on everyone's compliance & updates every 1-2 weeks. The Judge is then sending written communication through the postal mail to those in the program in Manchester & Nashua. Referrals—Diane has spoken to attorneys who have referrals and will be sending them along once the state of emergency is lifted. 1 upcoming graduate.

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Grafton—no report available; Jill will reach out to point person.

Old Business & Discussion

Grant funding opportunity—a call was held in late March with Alex Casalle to discuss the BJA-2020-17098 grant solicitation. Alex indicated that the court would not be pursuing because they already received a BJA grant that they have yet to implement. Jill shared that there is one organization she is aware of that will be applying for the BJA grant. She will reach out to see if they are willing to partner and address some of the Veteran Track needs. The application deadline has been extended.

Priorities for funding/resources:

- Part-time coordinator
- Enhance data collection (specifically regarding recidivism)
- Increase #s (including case management for non-VA-eligible)

Need to identify invested partner organizations through which JIV can possibly access funding. JIV itself cannot apply for a grant because it's not a group/organization that can accept funding—need to do so through a business, court or state department.

Data—still a challenge to compile and coordinate data from all regions to provide a full picture. It's coming together, but slowly. Personnel time has been stretched recently due to COVID-19 which may continue to effect the data collection. Next meeting, May 26, will be held virtually. Diane hopes to have the Rockingham data put together (similar to Manchester) by that meeting. Katie will send Diane template. Diane expressed a desire for future help with data collection and coordination—it might be worthwhile to model data after how the Drug Court manages data.

New Business & Discussion

Discussion took place regarding the use of Zoom and other virtual meeting platforms and how they will, or will not, support the protection of PHI (protected health information).

If someone has a charge of Discharging a Firearm or Reckless Conduct, are they asked if they have access to firearms? Yes—VA asks in all assessments. How are firearms dealt with upon arrest? Combination of things are done under supervision of police. Post-graduation there have been several incidents when graduates have issues related to firearms.

Jill and Sheena (co-chairs) discussed how to move forward with JIV and its challenges including the support for non-VA-eligible.

Recently revised the way in which meetings are being conducted—Full Task Force meetings and smaller Data Group meetings.

Member Updates & Announcements

Katie Nicholas Malvey (VA)—new program to address Domestic Violence or Domestic Disturbance incidents/arrests; accepting referrals. VA anticipated higher incident rate in this

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area and put program in place to address. Attorney Tessier (Prosecutor in Hudson) provided some details regarding what Hudson is seeing at this time. Some departments have Police Victim Advocate, but not all.

Attorney Tessier—Update on court happenings in Hudson area: Telephonic pleas are being used. Domestic calls are double for April compared to February. No knowledge about what the court will do after 5/4. Jill referenced an article in the Union Leader about the status of the courts, their back log in cases. May take a while to get back to normal business, time of judges for Veterans may be tested once normal operations resume.

Diane L. re: early releases—Diane has 4 Veterans in jail, but none were eligible for early release. Aaron D.—Rockingham court has not been lenient to give early release due to COVID-19; 1 non-VA-eligible is close to being released. Diane shared that the VA is committed to ensuring Veterans have the technology & equipment necessary to participate in telehealth or remote appointments—they provide whatever is needed.

Sharon—Child Support hearings are being held at the court still despite public health crisis. They can help with modifying child support if necessary—it might be helpful to Veterans right now during financial burdens.

Susan—most of NAMI's programs have gone virtual so families can access support from home.

Jill—Superintendent Dionne is retiring in June. If anyone hears anything further about that, please share. June 10th is the next Mental Health Court Coalition meeting. Greater Nashua Mental Health is providing about 90% of services through telehealth. Community Support Services continues, but it puts staff are higher risk, so there have been staffing challenges. Accepting new clients.

Sheena—VFR has moved to 100% telehealth in NH. Despite initial challenges, moving to telehealth has allowed NH-VFR to expand its services to other state.

Action Steps

- Will send out invitation for May Data Group—will be virtual.
- All members should continue to look for potential funding opportunities—either grants JIV can apply for or organizations JIV can partner with in order to benefit from their funding.

Next Meetings

- Data Group—Tuesday, May 26, 2020 9am-11am; location TBA
- Full Task Force—Wednesday, June 24, 2020 9am-11am; location TBA