

**NH Suicide Prevention Council—Military & Veterans
January 6, 2021**

In attendance:

Co-Chairs: Amy Cook, Beth Alves

Members & Guests: Lisa Boedigheimer, Seth Gahr, Susan Stearns, Dale Garrow, Kristen McGraw, Ray Gilmore, Andrea Reed, Michael Mullen, Kate Sullivan

If you were logged on to this meeting, but your name did not get recorded in the attendance, please notify Amy Cook for a correction to be made.

Membership Update

Kate Sullivan is re-joining the committee as the representative for Servicelink of Strafford & Rockingham Counties.

SPC Full/Leadership Update

The SPC started strategic planning sessions last month and will continue with two in the month of January. Once the full SPC identifies priority areas for the next five years, then this committee will review the goals it identified a few months ago to make sure they are in alignment with the SPC's priority areas. If necessary, revisions will be made. Additionally, once it's confirmed that the goals this committee identified are in alignment, then the committee will begin to flush out more details regarding strategies and how to accomplish the goals. We've avoided putting in too much work to do this until we are sure that the goals we've identified align well with what the full SPC identifies as priority areas. (Due to COVID, the timeline for the full SPC's strategic planning was significantly delayed which has caused our committee to be in a position of having to wait for the completion of the full SPC plan.)

Postvention

Moving forward, we will include Postvention as an agenda item in our monthly meeting encouraging further discussion. As a result of regular discussion and sharing experiences, appropriate action items will be developed in this area as-needed.

Dale G. reminded the committee that Stephanie Ouellette has been hired to fill the position of the Survivor Outreach Services coordinator and she now has her .mil email address which we'll update on this committee's distribution list. Amy C. reminded encouraged committee members to reach out to those on this team when a need arises regarding postvention services or resources as the committee membership represents a wealth of resources.

Peer Support Services (Expand access to peer support services for SMVF.)

This was identified as an area in which the committee would like to focus efforts in the coming five-year plan period and, therefore, has been added to the standing agenda.

Committee members had nothing to report or share at this time.

Virtual Care Services (Increase access for SMVF population to virtual care services.)

This was identified as an area in which the committee would like to focus efforts in the coming five-year plan period and, therefore, has been added to the standing agenda.

Amy Cook (DMAVS)—It appears that the VFW in Berlin will not be in a position to host a Virtual Living Room in the North Country, but this will be confirmed in the next month. If that is accurate, then the Military Leadership Team will discuss whether to pursue an alternate community host such as a library.

Military Cultural Competency Training (Increase number of general healthcare and behavioral healthcare providers trained in military culture. Increase confidence of Veterans in the military cultural competence of their providers. Expand access to military cultural competency training to other sectors outside healthcare.)

This was identified as an area in which the committee would like to focus efforts in the coming five-year plan period and, therefore, has been added to the standing agenda.

Amy C. on behalf of Sheena Bice (VFR)—Sheena was not able to attend today, but asked the co-chair to share the following: Registration for all Tier 1- Tier 3 trainings in 2021 is open and available on the Star Behavioral Health Providers website.

Social Connectedness (*Increase social connectedness of rural Veterans. Increase social connectedness of military-Veteran spouses & families.*)

This was identified as an area in which the committee would like to focus efforts in the coming five-year plan period and, therefore, has been added to the standing agenda.

Veteran Wellness Series, Lakes Region (Tye Thompson, NEP)—no report available

Together With Veterans (Beth A., VA)—The Steering Committee will be attending another virtual academy this month. They will then be hosting the SWOT analysis meeting with community providers. There is a website now available for the group—it is under construction, but the basic info is available including a page on how people can get involved. www.sites.google.com/view/lrvc/get-involved

Other Related Initiative Updates

Zero Suicide Academy (Beth A., VA)—Planning will be starting soon—stay tuned! A spring date is hopeful.

Military Spouse & Family Supports (Amy C., DMAVS)—Amy and a member of the NH Military Leadership Team (Ginger Munson) hosted a virtual conversation on 12/11 with a variety of organizations and partners to discuss needs of NH military & Veteran families. It was a good conversation and resulted in a long list of needs to be addressed. The next conversation, for those interested in continuing the work, will be held on 1/28/21 at 1:30pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact Amy for the meeting link and agenda.

New Discussion

None

Announcements

Harbor Homes (Andrea R.)—A team at Harbor Homes recently suffered a Veteran suicide death and there continues to be some struggles amongst staff related to processing and reviewing the procedures used preceding the event. Members recommended that the team schedule time to meet and talk about what happened—not to pass judgment, but to help each other heal and also review effective procedures to be used in the future.

Harbor Homes will be starting to offer a Bees Program in February. The Envision Center will be offering employment counseling and mental health counseling.

National Guard—ASIST training upcoming on January 21st in Hooksett—contact Dale if you want to register; 1 spot available.

Clear Path New England (Mike Mullen)—Clear Path NE finally made the move into their permanent building in MA and will be opening for business soon. Mike will send information for distribution about programs available.

Servicelink of Strafford & Rockingham Counties (Kate Sullivan)—They received CARES funding to offer people with COVID-related needs loaner iPads, adaptive technology, wifi cards, gift cards for places like instacart, uber and gas stations. They also have care packages available for elderly individuals who are socially isolated during COVID. Other Servicelinks most likely have similar programs and assistance available, but you will need to contact them directly. Contact information for each county's Servicelink agency is located at <https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/>.

Division of Community Based Military Programs (Amy Cook)—The Governor's Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs authorized \$105,000 to support an Ask the Question: Ask, Link, Collaborate Technical Assistance Program that will be available for up to 40 organizations that identify, refer, assess and/or treat military or Veterans for risk of substance use disorder. DMAVS will be responsible for administering the program which will include training, materials, consults and coaching for organizations to operationalize how they ask the question and use the information to best serve military & Veterans. DMAVS hopes to begin enrollment in the spring and it will be a 12-month program once it begins.

Azimuth Check Foundation (Ray Gilmore)—COVID continues to make it difficult to provide in-person, recreational services to Veterans. Ray will send a list of some dates they have coming up.

UpReach (Kristen McGraw)—UpReach is partnering with Camp Resilience for a retreat scheduled for 4/9-4/11/21. They will also be restarting Resilience Reins on March 9th which is for youth ages 8-17 who have experienced trauma.

NAMI NH (Susan Stearns)— services continue virtually--support groups for families, teens, survivors of suicide loss....lots of groups. Webinars are also available. More information on all services, groups and events can be found on their website and/or their Facebook page. They have a monthly e-newsletter that you can sign up online to receive and this is filled with information.

NH State Troopers (Seth Gahr)—Seth continues to work with both State Police and local law enforcement and fire departments to share the resources available for suicide prevention.

VA Medical Center, Manchester (Beth Alves)—Recently received a grant to provide an 8-month program to Veterans identified as high-risk for suicide. Each month there will be a theme from the circle of health. Participants will receive health coaching and will have the opportunity to participate in a whole health group.

Next Meeting

February 3, 2021; 2PM – 3:30PM

Webex virtual platform

Recorded By:
Amy Cook