

**NH Suicide Prevention Council—Military & Veterans  
November 4, 2020**

**In attendance:**

Co-Chairs: Amy Cook, Beth Alves

Members & Guests: Chaplain (LTC) Steve Veinotte, Sheena Bice, Lisa Boedigheimer, Seth Gahr, Thomas Groulx, Susan Stearns, Dale Garrow, Thom O'Connor, Kristen McGraw, Sarah Morrissey, Tye Thompson, Vanessa Stafford, Ray Gilmore, Gary D'Amour, Andrea Reed, Michael Mullen

\*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.\*

**SPC Full/Leadership Update**

The SPC Annual Suicide Prevention Conference will be switched to a virtual format and will take place November, 12-13. There will be no charge unless you need CEUs. You need to register for each day you plan to attend. The SPC was awarded the grant to fund an independent facilitator for strategic planning. This will be moving forward. Amy will forward a link to a SPC Survey that they are using to collect feedback prior to strategic planning. Please complete prior to the deadline. The SPC continues to meet virtually on last Monday of month—if anyone wants to attend, let us know and we'll forward link.

Foundation for Healthy Communities—they have been working to promote the adoption of the Columbia screening tool by Emergency Departments and other practices. They created a toolkit for practices to use—it will be available soon. Vanessa works in same office as Nancy who is overseeing this work, so Vanessa can be a point of contact to connect our subcommittee to this group.

**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.*

Stephanie Oullette has been hired to replace Elizabeth Santos as the Survivor Outreach Services coordinator. She has been added to the subcommittee's email distribution list and will attend future meetings.

National Guard published guidelines based on TAP that can be utilized and referred to when guidance re: postvention is needed. Dale will forward guidelines to Amy who will send to group.

**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.*

**Michael Mullen (Clear Path New England)**—Clear Path recently facilitated a community needs assessment for the Methuen, MA city area. Would like to do same thing for a southern NH area if interest exists. City should have a desire to learn what resources and services are available to Veterans. In Methuen, the activity was coordinated through Mayor's Office. The activity would provide a current snapshot of what's going on with providers in area (what's available, what's working or not working, where are gaps). The activity would also help Clear Path to learn where there are service gaps that they could possibly address in their future development. Michael will confirm Clear Path's definition of "southern NH" so group members can better identify potential communities. Clear Path put forth a project proposal to create platform in New England to advertise services for Veterans—will have more information soon.

**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)**—there is no update regarding progress towards a Virtual Living Room in the North Country.

**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.)

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**Sheena Bice (VFR)**—Star Behavioral Health Providers training program is holding several trainings in coming months. Visit website for list of training dates. All trainings are currently being held virtually. A new flier with 2021 trainings was sent to subcommittee members on 11/4/20. Four trainings in each level. Sheena reviewed the training structure.

**Amy Cook (DMAVS)**— Final version of the MCC Training Recommendation sheet was provided to subcommittee members via email on 11/4.20. In the future, we may try to add a category of professionals—First Responders; but, for now, members can begin handing out this final version of the recommendations; DMAVS Community Calendar will be ready this month & there will be a Suicide Prevention Efforts page as well where we can advertise trainings and other important events.

In late October, the Governor’s Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs approved a funding recommendation by the Joint Military Task Force for \$105,000 to be transferred to DMAVS to implement an Ask the Question: Ask, Link, Collaborate pilot program (which includes military culture training) for up to 40 practices/agencies that identify, refer or treat SMVF for substance use disorders. Will be asking for help in recruiting appropriate agencies when program starts.

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

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**Veteran Wellness Series, Lakes Region** (Tye Thompson, NEP)--

Two avenues of funding for this series, so it’s happening in various locations throughout the state. Outdoor activities as much as possible. Check out activities and register at: <https://www.nepassage.org/veteran-recreation> .

Tye has made some connections with people and groups who have been great partners and welcomes any new partnerships or connections.

**Together With Veterans** (Chaplain (LTC) Veinotte & Beth Alves, VA)— The group is transitioning into a community focus at this point in the initiative. Community providers will be invited to attend a SWOT analysis in January. Plugging along. Next few months crucial. They will be looking to gather different providers in Lakes Region who have pulse on what’s going on for Veterans in the Lakes Region regarding suicide prevention efforts. Had first part of the Summit which was virtual. Steering Committee members will participate in the SAVE training.

Tye from Northeast Passage would like to connect with TWV group. Beth will send Tye a description of the levels of participation and NEP can determine how they want to participate.

**Military Spouse & Family Supports** (Amy Cook, DMAVS)—Amy and a member of the NH Military Leadership Team (Ginger Munson) participated in a call with the Veteran Spouse Network out of Texas this past month to learn about how they developed some great programs for Veteran spouses in their state. A lot was learned from this conversation. Amy and Ginger are going to be inviting interested parties to join in the dialogue on 12/11 1:30pm. If you, or someone you know, are interested in hearing the ideas that are being considered and helping to possibly make them a reality in NH, let Amy know.

### **Other Related Initiative Updates**

**Zero Suicide Academy** (Beth Alves, VA)—The contract for this was awarded, so planning will move forward. Initial stages of planning have commenced and will move along more quickly now. After the training, a Community of Practice will be set up and this will help agencies with ongoing support needs.

### **New Discussion**

None

### **Announcements**

**National Guard**—ASIST training in January, Hooksett—contact Dale if you want to register; shared pdf that can be used for postvention.

**Division of Community Based Military Programs** (Amy Cook)—19 businesses will be recognized as NH Veteran-Friendly Businesses this year. Recognition event moved to 12/9. The state is transitioning to Microsoft Teams for virtual

meetings, we may need to switch our meetings to that platform. As of right now, next month's meeting will continue to be through Webex.

**UpReach** (Kristen McGraw)— completed retreats that partnered with Camp Resilience to host for Veterans (6) and 14 attended retreat for military families. Another four upcoming. Group from VA will be participating in a service group. It's been busy—that's good because participants have needed the in-person social connections.

**NAMI NH** (Susan Stearns)— services continue virtually through end of December, but will probably continue through 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2021; support groups for families, teens, survivors of suicide loss...lots of groups. Webinars coming up— caregivers of older adults. Will send flier. Coping with stress during COVID—11/11. Parenting & teaching during COVID webinar available. Susan will send out more information that can be shared or used for registration. NAMI NH website and Facebook page always has information about groups and upcoming trainings, too.

**NH State Troopers** (Seth Gahr)—doing a lot of work with Veterans and first responders. Happy with VFR and telehealth services and also support from VAs and DMAVS.

**VFR** (Sheena)—telehealth, working with VFR to foster peer-to-peer connections. New service is being developed— Sheena can provide more information at a later date.

**Next Meeting**

December 2, 2020

2-3:30pm; Webex virtual platform

Recorded By:

Amy Cook