

NH Suicide Prevention Council—Military & Veterans February 3, 2021

In attendance:

Co-Chairs: Amy Cook, Beth Alves

Members & Guests: Lisa Boedigheimer, Seth Gahr, Dale Garrow, Ray Gilmore, Andrea Reed, Michael Mullen, Kate Sullivan, LTC (CH) Steve Veinotte, Sheena Bice, Thom O’Connor, Stephanie Oullette, Gary D’Amour, Miguel Morales, Candace Wilson, Tye Thompson, Katherin Williams

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.

Housekeeping & Membership Update

New agenda format—will be sent prior to the meetings and will include a column with notes on how you can prepare for the meeting.

Virtual Meeting Norms—on new agenda format.

Meeting themes—to inject some fun into the meetings since we are still not able to meet in person and nurture professional and social relationships. Today’s theme: Valentine’s Day. 

Welcome to Stephanie Oullette, Survivor Outreach Services and Katherin Williams, Berlin Vet Center who joined the meeting today.

SPC Full/Leadership Update

The SPC continued strategic planning sessions in January and will continue with the work through March. 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.)

During the most recent strategic planning session, it was recommended that this committee and the First Responders Committee merge and work together. Discussion around this took place. Points made during the discussion: there seems like there is probably a great amount of overlap to make a merge worthwhile, need to make sure that a merge can result in both groups getting the attention needed & deserved, first responders have great amount of need right now, potentially lots of opportunities. Amy & Beth will meet with Seth Gahr & Russ Conte to plan out how this might successfully be accomplished.

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.

Discussion took place regarding resources available to organizations that experience a suicide loss. NAMI NH has resources listed on their website and others can be found in various places or when Googled. TAPS provides a list of postvention activities. However, there does not seem to be an easily accessible, comprehensive list of resources that an organization could find when needed. The committee will make a recommendation to the full SPC that creating such a list of statewide postvention services and resources might be worthwhile.

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.

At the March 2021 meeting, guest speakers Dr. Larry Shulman and Dr. Stu Shulman will present information on a proposal they have developed to design and implement a peer support service in New Hampshire for Veterans. There is also a technological aspect to the proposal that would help organizations identify at-risk individuals. They are hoping to collect feedback from provider organizations about the need and/or perceived challenges and are also hoping to begin identifying potential interest for participation in the pilot. Amy will send out materials for the presentation ahead of time so members can attend with questions and feedback prepared. Additionally, all are encouraged to invite other colleagues who might be interested or have authority to commit resources.

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.

No report available. No discussion.

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.

Sheena Bice—Star Behavioral Health Providers has multiple trainings coming up. You can register by logging onto their website. All trainings are still virtual at this time.

Amy and Sheena have been working over the past couple weeks to collect and compile data from the SBHP trainings in NH. Amy shared a draft of a report (waiting to add \$ amount under value of resources brought into NH) summarizing the data, results and ways in which the committee can continue to support, promote and evaluate the program in the future. Report attached. Discussion took place regarding the types of fields and geographic represented by participants. There's a variety of ways in which the committee could help promote the trainings in specific areas and/or professional fields. Embed the trainings in other programs such as the NH Veteran-Friendly Business program, Veteran-Directed Care, VA's Community Care program, etc. Partner with colleges to include the Tier 1 training as part of certain curriculums. Further discussion will take place on this topic at the April meeting. Members are asked to review the report again and give thought to how/where the committee might take action to strategically promote the program and increase the # of providers who complete the training.

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)—the Veteran Wellness Series started activities at the Laconia Community Center every Thursday 9am-12pm. Attendance is capped at 10 due to COVID restrictions. They will also be hosting a virtual series in February-March. Tye collected everyone's email address and will add all to an email distribution list about the activities being held so members can then distribute that information to their own networks. If you prefer not to receive these emails, please let Tye know.

Together With Veterans (Beth A., Chaplain Veinotte)—TWV is hosting a SWOT Analysis with partners in the Lakes Region on 2/4/21.

Other Related Initiative Updates

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

Military Spouse & Family Supports (Amy C., DMAVS)—Amy and a member of the NH Military Leadership Team (Ginger Munson) hosted a 2nd virtual conversation on 1/28 to discuss needs of NH military & Veteran families. The group narrowed down the list of needs identified at the 1st meeting to accessing mental health services and identifying an effective method to communicate with and inform families about services available in NH. The next conversation, for those interested in continuing the work, will be held on 3/2/21 at 2:00-3:30pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact Amy for the meeting link and agenda.

Ask the Question: Ask, Link, Collaborate Technical Assistance Program (Amy C., DMAVS)—This program is the result of work conducted by the Joint Military Task Force under the Governor's Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs. The MOU between DHHS and DMAVS is almost ready, so the program will begin enrollment sooner than anticipated. Eligible organizations are those that identify, refer, assess and/or treat risk for SUDs in military & Veterans. Up to 40 organizations will be able to participate in the pilot program. This project will also serve to create materials and procedures that can be used in a future phase and rolled out to additional organizations.

Humble Grunt Work—Amy shared that she has a meeting scheduled for 2/8/21 to learn more about a group in the Lakes Region called Humble Grunt Work. They are currently working to open The Humble House which will be a transitional housing unit in the Lakes Region for Veterans in need of many basic life essentials. They intend to offer programs such as recovery support, health and wellness counseling, employment and housing assistance. According to the woman who contacted

Amy, the group is close to purchasing the property and will start by using the property as a food pantry while they fundraise for the other services. Amy will encourage Humble Grunt Work to connect with the TWV group.

http://www.humblegruntwork.org/about_us.html

New Discussion

None

Announcements

Due to the time, members were encouraged to email their announcements or updates to Amy C. for inclusion in the minutes. The following was received by members:

Azimuth Check Foundation (submitted by Ray Gilmore)-- Had a successful ice climbing event this past weekend and will be returning to NH next month for a Winter Solstice Hike in March. We have 21 different events this year across New England, and recently received an Operation Hat Trick Grant and COVID. Relief funds to make up for lost donor dollars this year.

UpReach (submitted by Candace Wilson)--We're excited to start a new program for frontline healthcare workers and first responders called Caring Connections! The intention is to help first responders and frontline healthcare workers battle compassion fatigue, renew and refresh. The program is being offered free of charge and runs Feb. 1-March 5. Attendees will get to spend an hour connecting with our awesome horses in our beautiful and peaceful environment. Our hope is that time spent with the horses will provide a bit of rest and relaxation for those that have given so much of themselves to our loved ones and community. Mask will be required and participants are asked to do a self-check health assessment prior to arrival and cancel if they are experiencing any type of illness. Liability and Covid-19 Releases will be signed on site. We will be in an unheated arena, so everyone needs to dress accordingly. Spaces are limited to keep groups small. Registration is available at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090448AAA728A4FC1-caring> Do not hesitate to contact with any questions!

Resilience Reins is beginning again March 9 and running until April 21! Resilience Reins is a 7-week program for youth ages 8-17 (4-8 youth in a group) and their families who have experienced a traumatic event. The goal of Resilience Reins is to improve the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of youth by offering therapy that mitigates the risks and poor outcomes associated with exposure to trauma and violence. As part of this program, parents/guardians can attend Parent Cafe, which strengthen the connections between family members and build protective factors.

Resilience Reins is co-facilitated by a mental health professional, a Professional Association Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning, and a Certified Educator. This is a non-riding program and no previous horse experience is required! For more information on this program please contact please contact Kristen McGraw at kristen@upreachtec.org or 603-497-2343.

Clear Path For Veterans New England (submitted by Michael Mullen)-- Our occupancy permits are good to go! Our building is now operational but we will be continuing to follow MA COVID-19 guidelines regarding the services we provide and event capacity. And for anyone who is willing to make the drive to Devens, we are providing perishable food supply boxes every week for free from now until the end of April. Register here or visit the link pasted below:

https://clearpathnewengland.formstack.com/forms/food4vets_perishable_foodboxes_devens

Division of Community Based Military Programs, DMAVS (submitted by Amy Cook)—Amy and her Program Assistant Kim Hillson will be moving their office locations within the next couple weeks from the Main Building at DHHS (105 Pleasant Street, Concord) to the DMAVS site located at the NH National Guard Reservation, 1 Minuteman Way, Building C, Concord. The MOU between DHHS & DMAVS will be ending, so Amy & Kim will no longer be connected with DHHS in any formal capacity although Amy intends to continue nurturing the partnerships she's built there over the past 2+ years. Emails will remain the same, but both Amy & Kim will have new phone numbers. Amy will continue to work remotely for the majority of the next few months so can be reached in the same ways you've reached her recently. Kim is already physically located in Building C at NHNG. New contact information will be shared soon.

Next Meeting

March 2, 2021; 2PM – 3:30PM

Theme: **St. Patrick's Day—wear green!**



Webex virtual platform

Guest Speaker: Dr. Lawrence Shulman and Dr. Stewart Shulman

Re: Veteran Peer Support Services

2018-2020

Annual Report

MILITARY CULTURAL COMPETENCY
TRAININGS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Compiled by:

Division of Community Based Military Programs
NH Department of Military Affairs & Veterans Services
NH Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among
Service Members, Veterans and their Families

Amy.Cook@nh.gov
www.dmavs.nh.gov

2018-2020 Goal: Increase # of providers in NH who attend military cultural competency training

In 2018, the *NH Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and their Families* Team set a goal of increasing the number of providers in New Hampshire who received training to be military culturally competent within their professional field. Provider is defined in this instance as a professional who provides any type of social service or referral to NH residents. The goal was adopted by the NH Suicide Prevention Council-Military & Veterans Committee in 2019 when the two groups merged.

There are a variety of Military Cultural Competency Trainings available to community-based providers in New Hampshire. They vary in professional focus, format, length, knowledge depth and target audience.

In the past two years, the SPC-Military & Veterans Committee collaborated with the New Hampshire National Guard, Veterans and First Responders Healthcare and Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) Program to promote the SBHP Program to community providers across the state.

Additionally, the SPC-Military & Veterans Committee compiled training recommendations for clinical providers, child & family service providers (including educational professionals) and human resource professionals. The recommendations prioritize SBHP Program as the preferred method of training, but offers alternative suggestions if a provider is not able to access the SBHP training.



Participant Demographics

The Star Behavioral Health Provider program began operating in New Hampshire on 10/1/2019. The first NH participant attended a training on 12/11/2019. Between 12/11/19 - 12/31/20, the following data was collected.

31 Providers

TRAINED BY SBHP

306 hours of training

31 Providers*: Tier 1 = 22 (blue), Tier 2 (yellow) = 8,

Tier 3 (green) = 1

**Refer to map on right*

3 Providers are on SBHP National Registry

Location of Providers

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY

Belknap 1	Hillsborough 12
Carroll 2	Merrimack 6
Cheshire 1	Rockingham 5
Coos 0	Strafford 1
Grafton 0	Sullivan 2

Professional Fields

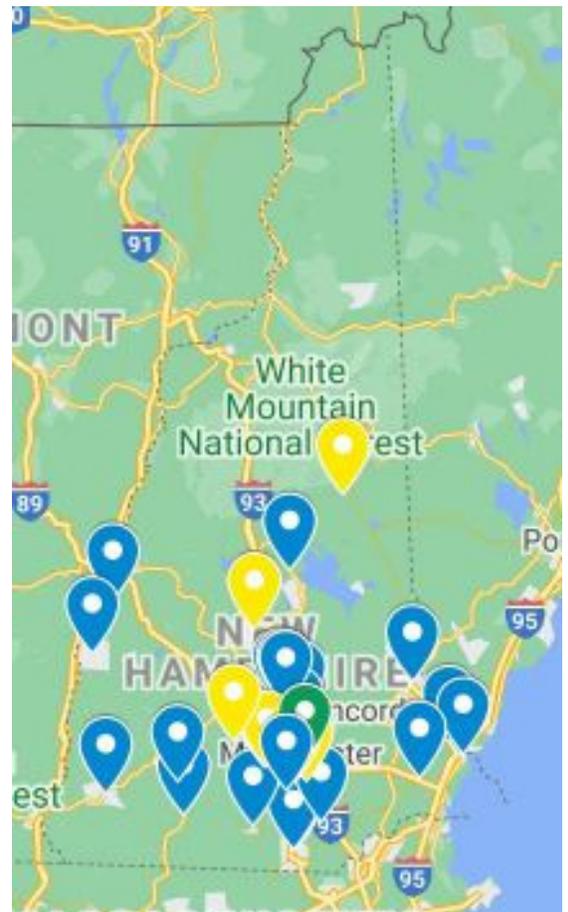
SECTOR DISTRIBUTION

1 Clinical Social Worker	4 Social Workers
15 Mental Health Counselors	4 Other
7 Not Identified	

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VALUE OF RESOURCES BROUGHT TO NH

Total value of resources brought into New Hampshire to implement mct. total # hours x cost per person



Comparing New Hampshire to National Outcomes

Nationally, research has been conducted to evaluate the confidence levels of providers who are trained in military cultural competency and compare those to the satisfaction level of the Veteran patient/client with treatment. Available research demonstrates a correlation between the confidence level in the Provider to treat Veteran patients and the satisfaction with treatment level of Veteran patients. As the Provider's level of confidence increases, so does the Veteran's satisfaction with treatment. (Refer to Tanielian, Terri, et al., *Ready to Serve: Community-Based Provider Capacity to Deliver Culturally Competent, Quality Mental Health Care to Veterans and Their Families*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR806.html.)

In New Hampshire, we are at the beginning stages of developing the capacity to evaluate the same possible correlation. To date, we have collected a Pre- and Post-Training Mean Rating of the Provider's perceived level of readiness to work with military clients.

Mean Rating of Preparation to Work with Military Clients

	Pre	Post	Increase		
Tier 1				n=31	7 trainings
1	6.2	7.9	1.7		
1	4.5	7.3	2.8		
1	3.9	6.3	2.4		
1	3.7	6.8	3.1		
1	3.6	6.2	2.6		
1	4.3	7.6	3.3		
1	5.1	7.5	2.4		
Average	4.471429	7.085714	2.61428571428571		
Tier 2				n=9	4 trainings
2	5.1	7.7	2.6		
2	5.6	7.7	2.1		
2	5.1	7.6	2.5		
2	5.3	7.5	2.2		
Average	5.275	7.625	2.35		
Tier 3				n=1	1 training
3	5.8	7.8	2		
Average	5.8	7.8	2		
Average All	4.85	7.325	2.475		

