

NH Suicide Prevention Council—Military & Veterans
April 7, 2021

In attendance:

Co-Chairs: Amy Cook, Beth Alves

Members & Guests: Lisa Boedigheimer, Seth Gahr, Dale Garrow, Ray Gilmore, Michael Muldoon, Kate Sullivan, Sheena Bice, Stephanie Oullette, Candace Wilson, Sarah Morrissey, Ruthann Fabrizio, Chaplain Steve Veinotte, Andrea Reed

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

New guest in attendance—Ruthann Fabrizio. Ruthann was invited to attend by Ray Gilmore. She worked as a nurse for many years and a flight nurse for the Air Force Reserves. She is involved with facilitating a Survivors of Suicide group in North Conway.

SPC Full/Leadership Update

The SPC completed strategic planning and the strategic plan document will be available by next month's meeting for the committee to review and align their own goals. Planning continues for the fall Suicide Prevention Conference. It will be a hybrid model this year. The new State Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Jennifer Sabin, started work in March.

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.

No report or update available. No discussion.

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 presented a proposal they have developed to design and implement a peer support service in New Hampshire for Veterans. They were very appreciative of the feedback from those who were in attendance. Based on the feedback shared during the meeting and afterwards, they have decided to pursue a different avenue for their proposal.

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.

Star Behavioral Health Providers—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. SBHP has made some changes to the Registry and how it operates—those included in the registry can now send referrals to each other via the registry and do warm hand-offs. This feature makes it even more important to get as many NH providers on the registry as possible.

Other Military Cultural Competency Trainings—As a result of the Governor's Challenge work and feedback that New Hampshire gave to SAMHSA and PsychArmor over the past year, there will be an online training portal and dashboard available to all Gov Challenge states! The portal will contain 10 trainings related to suicide prevention and basic military culture and will allow tracking of who has completed the trainings. Amy C. recently met with the CEO of PsychArmor and their team to share what NH is doing to promote training through the new NH Veteran-Friendly Business program. PsychArmor will be providing ideas on how they can perhaps customize support to New Hampshire to make this successful. Amy has another meeting with the CEO later this month and will be able to provide another update in May.

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—no report available

Together With Veterans (Beth A., Chaplain Veinotte)—The Together with Veterans project in the Lakes Region has chosen the name Lakes Region Veterans Coalition (LRVC). The initiated a Buddy Check Coffee program this past month that they have been promoting. They recently received some press in the Laconia Daily Sun.

Other Related Initiative Updates

Zero Suicide Academy (Beth A., VA)—May 11-13, 2021. Applications are currently being accepted and will be accepted over next couple weeks. Slots for 8 teams available.

Military Spouse & Family Supports (Amy C., DMAVS)—Amy and a member of the NH Military Leadership Team (Ginger Munson) continue to work on this project. They are currently talking with NAMI NH about what possibilities might exist to collaborate with regards to the NAMI NH Facebook Page for military families in order to inform families about what is happening in NH. A Military & Veteran Family survey will also be available for distribution soon. Please share with your network when you receive it and be sure to complete it if you are a military/veteran family member!

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. Enrollment will begin late spring. 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. Organizations will be able to access up to \$1,500 to offset the cost of participating and implementing the 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.

For more information or the application: <https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/community-based-military-programs/ask-link-collaborate-technical-assistance-program>

Partnership with Servicelink (Beth A., Manchester VAMC)—Currently, dates are being scheduled to meet with the Managers of two sites in order to initiate a SQUARES pilot. SQUARES will allow Servicelink staff to obtain information regarding the eligibility of a client for VA services more timely and easily.

New Discussion

Promotion of the Star Behavioral Health Providers program—

Based on the data collected over the past year showing the professional fields and geographic locations of SBHP attendees, the committee discussed how/where targeted promotion should occur in the coming year.

- MH Providers (Community Care Network, CMHCs, other)
- Servicelink staff
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (primary care facilities—tier 1 and perhaps tier 2)

Re: Servicelink staff training—sometimes a day of training will be set aside, but that is difficult. There are differences in training and how trainings are conducted county by county. Staggered trainings are better. Mostly only the Vet-Directed Care staff are educated in MCT. It would be great to set a goal of having all Servicelink staff trained in basic MCT. Would SBHP be willing to offer more Tier 1 trainings to accomplish this?

Beth reminded the committee that the Manchester VA Veterans Council is interested in helping to provide community care providers with information related to suicide prevention resources and training opportunities (suicide prevention and military cultural competency). Beth was able to obtain a list of the CCN MH providers from the Manchester VAMC catchment region. We’ll look into obtaining the same for White River Junction VA.

Additional Comments:

Targeted invitations might work best based on who the VA is already paying to provide MH services.

Seek press attention to promote—especially in White Mountain & North Country regions. Radio group in north country; Conway Daily Sun, 2 TV stations in Valley.

Public Relations at Manchester VAMC (K. Pressly) did #BeThere commercials—she might be able to help with PSAs

Next steps:

- 1) Obtain list of MH Providers in CCN from WRJ VAMC and share list with Manchester VA Veterans Council.
- 2) Promote SBHP Tier 1 trainings to Servicelink agencies.
- 3) Identify small group to work on developing an action-focused timeline for strategic promotion.

Member Updates

Amy Cook, DMAVS—There is a Community Calendar on the DMAVS website that all committee members are encouraged to check out for local events & trainings, but also encouraged to add to. Partner organizations can promote their own events on the website. The website page gives instructions on how to request an event be added.

<https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/about-us/calendar>

The Division of Community Based Military Programs will be hiring 3 new positions this summer—Grant Writer/Resource Development Coordinator, Housing Stability Manager and Military Waiver Specialist. More info to come if/when the state budget supporting the positions gets approved.

Beth Alves, VAMC Manchester—Zero Suicide Academy coming up in May—see Related Initiatives. Manchester VAMC is holding weekly virtual coffee socials for Veterans. The group is a drop-in group available every Wednesday to engage with others. Topics may include support, resources, information on VA health benefits, peer support and a place to socialize while having coffee. Join group by copying and pasting in web browser: <https://tinyurl.com/NHVetsCoffeeSocial> This is for a Microsoft Teams meeting.

Join by Phone-1 872-701-0185 Pin-431220211#

For more information: Kelvin K. Stuart Cell: 603-703-6622; E-mail: kelvin.stuart@va.gov

Sheena Bice, VFR—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. VFR has a new umbrella name—Forge Health. They are in the process of expanding into Massachusetts.

Seth Gahr, NH State Police—Seth is now the Chair of the First Responders Committee of the Suicide Prevention Council. The committee had its first meeting in February. No meeting is currently scheduled for a future date, but Seth will keep us updated when one is scheduled in case anyone is interested in attending. We'll continue to look for opportunities for collaboration between the two committees as there may be a lot of overlap.

Lisa Boedigheimer, VAMC White River Junction—Lisa will be moving to a new position soon and leaving the committee. Members wished her well and expressed appreciation for her involvement over the past year. WRJ VA is currently looking to fill her position.

Dale Garrow, Contractor with National Guard—Two new ASIST workshops are coming up—one in April, one in August. The 2-day training offers CEUs and is free if attending through Dale. If interested contact Mr. Dale Garrow at (603)227-1450 or email: dale.e.garrow.ctr@mail.mil.

Candace Wilson, UpReach

- Caring Connections will continue on Mondays at 11 and Fridays at 3 through April 16 (continued dates to be announced). 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. 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.
- Masks 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 cohorts will be beginning in Boscawen on May 5 and in Goffstown on May 11! 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 Kristen McGraw at kristen@upreachtec.org, Candace Wilson at candace@upreach.org, or either at 603-497-2343.

Chaplain Steve Veinotte, NH National Guard—700+ Airmen & Soldiers have been providing COVID support over the past year and many will return to civilian jobs within the next month. Many may be looking for new jobs during this time and that may cause stressors that will require resources.

Ruthann Fabrizio, SOS Group, N. Conway—Ruthann expressed appreciation for being able to attend the meeting virtually as commuting from her area is often times difficult. The SOS group she facilitates meets the 2nd Thursday of each month. If anyone wants to connect someone, she can be reached at: ruthannfab@roadrunner.com



Next Meeting

May 5, 2021; 2PM – 3:30PM

Theme: **Cinco De Mayo!**

Webex virtual platform