

NH Suicide Prevention Council—Military & Veterans

May 5, 2020

In attendance:

Co-Chairs: Amy Cook, Beth Alves

Members & Guests: Ed Drury, Dale Garrow, Chaplain (LTC) Steve Veinotte, SFC Dana Osborne, Susan Stearns, Tye Thompson, Sheena Bice, Ray Gilmore, Meghan Snitkin, Andrea Reed, Elizabeth Santos, Thom O'Connor, Lisa Boedigheimer

Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping

Thank you for logging on to the new platform for this meeting—WebEx has been made available to state employees to host virtual meetings with a higher level of security during the state of emergency. It's not clear yet if it will be available long-term, so there may be future changes to the platform we use. Any changes will be noted in the Outlook invite on a monthly basis.

Patience will be appreciated as we learn how to facilitate virtual meetings efficiently.

Please keep your phone on mute unless you're talking.

New member attending—Lisa Boedigheimer from White River Junction VA. She is a Suicide Prevention Coordinator and will be replacing Meghan Snitkin on our team. We wish Meghan the best in her new role at the VA and appreciate all her contributions!

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

- Due to the state of emergency, the state budget has been frozen and all unfilled positions are frozen at this time. This effects the posting/hiring of the State Suicide Prevention Coordinator through DHHS. Erica Ungarelli felt that we might be able to request a waiver in the future, but it would not be approved right now, so we need to wait it out.
- The current SPC Plan ends in 2020—the retreat to discuss new goals will still be held even if it needs to be done virtually this summer.
- 2020 Annual Suicide Prevention Conference date is set for November 12, 2020. Register early as soon as registration is open as it always sells out. At this time, plans to hold the conference are still moving forward; however, the Council is realistic that we may need to reconsider. Updates will be shared as they are provided.
- There's a variety of suicide prevention grants available right now through various sources. SPC members are trying to coordinate applications in a way that makes sense statewide. Amy spoke at length with Greg Norman from Dartmouth Hitchcock about the application they will be submitting. They are interested in including services for military & Veterans in the application.

Amy: Another example of suicide prevention efforts occurring--SAMHSA SMVF TA Center called late last week and notified Amy that they would like to invite a NH city/town to participate in a new cohort for a Mayor's Challenge. Amy recommended Claremont—high veteran population density, high veteran suicide rate, high NH suicide rate, close proximity to Dartmouth Hitchcock for collaboration if they receive the grant, and it's one of the areas our committee does not have much reach. Amy spoke with Claremont Mayor and Councilor Cryans (Executive Council representative covering that area)—both are excited about the opportunity. White River Junction VA covers that area, so will be invited to participate as well.

Status Reports

Together With Veterans—

The North Country Veterans, Inc made official notification last week that they are not able to support TWV in the North Country at this time. Gina Brimmer from WICHE contacted Amy Cook at DMAVS and asked to collaborate, along with VA, to identify a new, eligible community in New Hampshire. TWV has implemented various changes in their eligibility criteria and program model for the new cohort and it does not appear that the North Country would have enough of the criteria in place at this time to be eligible for the new cohort even if North Country Veterans, Inc were willing to support

the project. Belknap County has expressed interest and is in the process of quickly pulling together the criteria needed including participation of an organization to accept funds and provide a structure to the project (Winnepesaukee Public Health Council with Partnership for Public Health). Once an initial outreach is completed, WICHE/TWV will host a virtual Info Session for interested Veterans and community partners. Then, the local Veterans will be asked if they want to officially participate. If anyone knows of a Veteran or community partners in Belknap County who might be interested, please provide their name/contact info to either Beth Alves or Amy Cook.

Veteran Hub—

The Servicelink RFA was released by DHHS on 2/26 and recently closed. DHHS is currently reviewing applications and the organizations awarded contracts will be announced soon. As soon as the organizations are identified, Amy Cook and Thom O'Connor will coordinate a meeting with the leadership of those organizations to begin identifying opportunities for enhanced military culture training as well as procedures that can be implemented to best support Veteran consumers of the services provided.

Postvention—

Since the discussion at the March meeting, Ann Duckless provided materials to aid in a further discussion, but no follow up discussion has taken place yet. [See meeting minutes from March 5, 2020 for details of the discussion.] A further, follow up discussion is needed to determine if there are any opportunities for work by the committee in this area. Follow up steps will be announced.

Looking Forward

Committee needs to identify new goals for the upcoming term. We can aim to continue, enhance, revise or supplement existing goals in the Action Plan created by the Governor's Challenge or the goals outlined by the SPC-Military & Veteran Committee. Or, we can identify new goals all together.

Ideas shared by members:

- Military Culture Training—still a great need; interest expressed to work on this need; there is a variety of MCT available and a variety of groups working to create or provide trainings—perhaps an effort to coordinate all these will be worthwhile.

In order to gain useful feedback to move forward, Amy will create an online survey to distribute to committee members.

Announcements

NH National Guard update provided by SFC Dana Osborne--

NH Army and Air Guard members are very active in NH emergency operations. Working in Employment security call centers, Food Banks, setting up hospital overflow and quarantine sites, storing and distributing supplies. We currently have 500-600 NH Guard members working for state of NH, supporting Covid -19 operations.

If anyone wants to request or donate anything to NH National Guard, or the NH COVID-19 response in general, please go through the Emergency Operations Center that is run by the NH Homeland Security and NH Emergency Management. (You can be connected by calling 2-1-1.)

NAMI NH update provided by Susan Stearns—

NAMI NH has a variety of resources set up specifically to address mental health concerns arising during this time. Please see the detailed update provided by NAMI NH at the end of the minutes.

DHHS update provided by Thom O'Connor--

A press release outlining how ServiceLink is currently operating during this pandemic in addition to a statewide listing will accompany the meeting minutes—share with your network as appropriate.

The ServiceLink contracts are expected to be reviewed at the June 10th G&C meeting.

DHHS/BEAS has applied and have been approved to receive the *Emergency Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) COVID-19 Grant*. The project period is planned to be July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. There will be a lot of flexibility on how these funds can be utilized to help ADRCs and the clients they service address their needs during this pandemic.

Beth Alves commented that she'd like to see BEAS explore how the grant money might be used for transportation. The VA temporarily had a transportation fund that just ran out of money today—it had been providing rides for Veterans to food banks, appointments, stores for necessities, by paying for an Uber or Lyft and it had been extremely helpful. It's very unfortunate that it has now ended. Perhaps this new grant could help in some way with those same needs?

Northeast Passage update provided by Tye Thompson—

Northeast Passage is currently providing programming on virtual platforms for both our general, vet rec, and 1:1 community based RT programs. Veterans and Service Members are welcome in all aspects of these programs. If you need a quick cut and paste for sharing <https://www.nepassage.org/virtual-events>

Please feel free to forward Tye's contact information directly to any Veteran or Service Member who may benefit from NEP programs. If you would like to be added to their data base to get emails about upcoming programming shoot Tye a quick email to be added to the email list.

Harbor Homes update provided by Andrea Reed--

Please know that Harbor Homes does have housing available still. The contact is Sam Dolberg. You can call the main number 1-603-882-3616 or his cell 1-603-305-1122 and Andrea's program HVRP is still working to assist in finding employment. She has a new work cell at 603-459-9658. They are always mindful of their MH issues, Housing issues, and employment issues taking care to be mindful of suicidality concerns of course. They also have the crisis line with James Cline.

VFR update provided by Sheena Bice—

VFR is open for IOP, OP groups, and individual sessions serving Veterans, First Responders and Family. They are able to treat outside of New Hampshire as well since using Telehealth services which is great as they are able to get into the rural areas of New England. VFR flier will accompany meeting minutes—share in any way appropriate.

Division of Community Based Programs update provided by Amy Cook—

The NH Veteran-Friendly Business Recognition Program will still be accepting applications this coming July-August despite COVID-19. Plans to publicly announce and launch the program will be revised. Currently, several businesses are participating in the Testing Phase and are providing feedback on the application before it is publicly released. DMAVS and NHES are also hosting a Logo Design Contest for NH students in grades 6-12. Flier will accompany minutes so you can share widely with your personal and professional networks. Deadline is 10/2/20. The selected logo will be used by all businesses recognized in the program.

Next Meeting

June 3, 2020

2-3:30pm; most likely will be a virtual meeting, meeting details will be confirmed and sent at a later date

Attachments:

ServiceLink press release

ServiceLink Statewide Listing

VFR flier

NH Veteran-Friendly Business Recognition Program Logo Contest flier

Partner Update – NAMI New Hampshire 5/8/2020

NAMI NH services have all gone virtual with the exception of Peer Support provided at NH Transitional Housing in Bradford, NH.

Family Peer Support is offered via video, phone, email and text – based upon the family's stated preference. Under extenuating circumstances, Family Peer Support Specialists are providing face-to-face services on a case-by-case basis with supervisory required for each instance. Other than face-to-face meetings being restricted, all other service provision remains unchanged.

Many NAMI NH Support Groups have gone virtual. Most facilitators ask that individuals contact them prior to the meeting. There is also a weekly statewide virtual group for families with an adult loved one living with mental illness. Contact info for support groups can be accessed on our website at www.NAMINH.org.

The NAMI NH Facebook Closed Groups continue as a great option, 24/7, for support. Learn more here: <https://www.naminh.org/find-support/online-support-groups/>. These groups require an individual request to join. Such requests are usually approved within 24 hours.

NAMI NH Education Programs have also gone virtual. Information is available at www.NAMINH.org. The NAMI NH Info & Resource Line is available at 1-800-242-6264 or at info@naminh.org. Although this is not a crisis line, most inquiries receive a response the same day.

There are a variety of online and virtual programming being offered by NAMI NH staff and volunteers. You can access more information on our website, our social media channels, or by signing up for our biweekly Enews.

NAMI NH has created a COVID-19 webpage to help individuals access information related to mental health during this COVID-19 emergency. To share information on that page or on NAMI NH social media platforms, email Kim at kmurdoch@naminh.org. Access the webpage here: <https://www.naminh.org/resources-2/covid-19/>