



**Advisory Council Meeting  
Wednesday, June 3, 2015  
1:00 - 3:00 PM**

**Community Room, Metro Nashville Police Department, Hermitage Precinct  
3701 James Kay Lane  
Hermitage, TN 37076**

### **Minutes**

#### **Advisory Council Members Present**

Tim Tatum, MA, LPC-MHSP, Director of Behavioral Health, Pine Ridge Treatment Center (Advisory Council Chair/Southeast Regional Chair)  
Karyl Chastain Beal, M.Ed., Retired/Community Advocate (Advisory Council Co- Chair / South Central Regional Chair / Outreach Committee Chair)  
John B. Averitt, Ph.D., Upper Cumberland Psychological Associates/Police Psychological Officer, Cookeville Police Department  
Ursula Bailey, JD, MBA, Attorney, Private Practice  
Kathy Benedetto, LPC, SPE, LMFT, Senior Vice-President, Tennessee Child and Youth Services, Frontier Health  
Vickie Bilbrey, Volunteer Services Manager, Gentiva® Hospice  
Brenda Harper, Community Advocate/Retired  
Cindy Johnson, Community Activist  
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Cognitive Behavioral Specialists of the Tri-Cities (Northeast Regional Chair)  
Eve Nite, Business Development Specialist, Mental Health Cooperative of Chattanooga  
Stephenie Robb, Executive Director, Behavioral Health Initiatives, Inc.  
Kim Rush, Ed.S., LPC-MHSP, Vice-President of Operations, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System  
Kandi Shearer, Clinical Director, Youth Villages Specialized Crisis Services  
Anne Stamps, Center Director, Cumberland Mountain Mental Health Center/Dale Hollow Mental Health Center (Upper Cumberland Regional Chair)  
Jack Stewart, MA, President, NAMI Greene County  
Ellen Stowers, Assistant Director, Contact Lifeline  
Christen Thorpe, MS, CRC, CATSM, Child and Adolescent Therapist, Pastoral Counseling Centers of Tennessee (Mid-Cumberland Regional Chair)  
Anne Young, MS, CAS, Program Director, Young Adult and Residential Relapse Recovery Program, Cornerstone of Recovery (East Tennessee Regional Chair)

#### **Intra-State Departmental Group Members Present**

Michelle Bauer, Suicide Prevention Program Manager, Tennessee National Guard  
Jacquelyn S. Bruce, Planning and Grants Management Supervisor, Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability  
Wendell Cheek, Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs  
Gwen Hamer, MA, Director, Education and Development, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services  
Teresa Kimbro Culbreath, Litter Grant Program, Statewide Coordinator, Highway Beautification Office, Tennessee Department of Transportation  
Terrence (Terry) Love, MS, CPC, Injury Prevention Manager, Division of Family Health and Wellness, Injury and Violence Prevention, Tennessee Department of Health (Intra-State Departmental Group Chair)  
Sherlean Lybolt, M.A., Mental Health Programs Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Correction

Melissa McGee, Council on Children's Mental Health Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth  
Michelle Ramsey, RN, State Public Health Nursing Director, Tennessee Department of Health  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Noel Riley-Philpo, Risk Reduction, Resilience and Suicide Prevention Manager, Joint Force  
Headquarters, Tennessee National Guard  
Delora Ruffin, MA, Program Specialist, Division of Child Health, Tennessee Department of Children's  
Services  
Melissa Sparks, MSN, RN, Director, Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention, Division of Mental Health  
Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services  
Jacqueline Talley, Treatment Specialist, Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, Tennessee  
Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

**Advisory Council Members Absent**

Sabrina Anderson, Executive Director, Boys and Girls Clubs of Jackson-Madison County (Rural West  
Regional Chair)  
Renee Brown, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Memphis VA Medical Center (Advisory Council Co-Secretary  
/ Memphis/Shelby County Regional Chair)  
Patsy Crockett, BSW, Case Manager IV, Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
Lisa Daniel, Chief Executive Officer, Memphis Mental Health Institute  
Jennifer Harris, MS, Director, Senior Care Program, St. Thomas Hickman Hospital (Chair, Hickman-Perry  
Suicide Prevention Task Force)  
Kelly S. Haught, MA, LPC-MHSP, Division Director, Specialty Services, Frontier Health  
Emily Hill, Tennessee Career Center at Columbia  
Mike LaBonte, Executive Director, Memphis Crisis Center  
Rita McNabb, Coordinated School Health Director, Cocke County Schools  
Debra K. Moore, Community Representative, Bradford Health Services  
Christopher Morris, Ed.S, Assistant Principal, North Side High School  
Waring Porter, Pastor, All Saints Presbyterian Church  
Katie Rosas, Community Outreach Specialist, Focus Treatment Centers  
Becky Stoll, Vice President of the Crisis and Disaster Management, Centerstone  
Angie Thompson, Director of Behavioral Health, Metro Public Health Department (Chair, Davidson County  
Suicide Prevention Task Force)

**Intra-State Departmental Group Members Absent**

John Allen, Director of Behavioral Health Services, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration  
Shannon Hall, MA, Grants & Special Projects Director, Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland  
Security  
Lori Paisley, Director of Special Projects, Tennessee Department of Education

**TSPN Advisory Council Emeritus Group Members**

Sam Bernard, Ph.D., the PAR Foundation  
Clark Flatt, President/CEO, the Jason Foundation, Inc.

**TSPN Staff Present**

Amy Dolinky, BA, TSPN East Tennessee Regional Coordinator  
Vladimir Enlow, MTS, TSPN Executive Assistant  
Samantha Nadler, TSPN Middle Tennessee Regional Coordinator  
Scott Payne, M.Div, TSPN West Tennessee Regional Coordinator  
Scott Ridgway, MS, TSPN Executive Director

**Guests**

Fadi Hakeem, Field Placement Student, Middle Tennessee State University  
Reneze Trim, Field Placement Student, Southern Adventist University

### Welcoming Remarks

- Tatum called the meeting to order at 11:41 AM.
- As the caterers are late, the meeting will proceed with Nadler's presentation.
- A get-well card was circulated for McNabb, who was unable to attend today's meeting due to serious illness.

### Special Presentation

- Nadler came to TSPN this past July, having been formerly employed by Family and Children's Services in Nashville. She is trained as an instructor in both QPR and ASIST and is a rising star within the nationwide lived experience movement. In her time with TSPN, she has been able to generate impressive outcomes in terms of training, outreach, and publicity.
- At this point Ridgway turned the floor over to Nadler for her presentation on the lived experience survey.
- Nadler began by thanking TSPN for providing her with a platform for sharing her experiences as the survivor of a suicide attempt. She gave the Task Force an overview of her lifelong battle with mental illness and her experiences with hospitals and mental health systems that were not prepared to deal with someone who had just attempted suicide. She also explained how she became involved with the lived experience movement.
- The term "lived experience" refers to first-person knowledge about suicidal thinking and/or behavior from having lived through one or more suicidal experiences. Sometimes another term, "lived expertise," is used, which denotes the combination of lived experience and relevant training or practice that enables a person to apply personal knowledge to professional activities.
- Nadler shared preliminary results of TSPN's lived experience survey, which is being promoted over the TSPN mailing list:
  - About one-third of respondents had a history of multiple attempts. Nearly half acknowledged past suicidal ideation without an attempt.
  - Roughly three-quarters of the participants were open about their attempt history in their personal lives; about half had disclosed it professionally.
  - The majority of survey participants were interested in participating in lived experience projects, such as speaking at awareness events, involvement in the "Live Through This" photography project, participation in a lived experience retreat, or facilitating a support group.
  - The needs survey participants expressed the most were:
    - Support groups (this was mentioned in half the free responses)
    - The inclusion of narratives and insight from people struggling with suicidal thoughts, not just attempts
    - Activities like 5K runs
    - Money for billboards to promote resources
    - Decreased stigma within the suicide prevention movement
    - Changes in crisis response protocol, especially not automatically involving the police
- Nadler discussed *The Way Forward: Pathways to Hope, Recovery, and Wellness with Insights from Lived Experience*, a report published by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.
  - The overarching goal of *The Way Forward* is to inspire better resources, and more support for the person experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings, with the hope of saving lives and preventing future suicide attempts.
  - The report is intended for policy- and decision-makers, agencies that fund suicide prevention research and programs, program developers, clinicians and other professionals, and the family and friends of people with lived experience.
  - The common themes are respect, collaboration, and inclusion at every step, from crisis to recovery.
  - Its primary recommendations:

- Attempt survivors as helpers: self-help, peer support, and inclusion
- Family, friends, and support network
- Clinical services and supports
- Crisis and emergency services
- Systems linkages and continuity of care
- Community outreach and education
- A “call to action” for the lived experience movement
- The Task Force recommends that suicide prevention and behavioral healthcare organizations engage, hire, and/or collaborate with peer support professionals. Beyond work as peer support professionals, attempt survivors should be included as key partners in a wide range of suicide prevention efforts.
- The Task Force recommends developing, evaluating, and promoting programs specifically intended to help the family and friends of attempt survivors.
- Additionally, medical and behavioral health providers need to integrate principles of collaborative assessment and treatment planning into their practices.
- Providers of crisis or emergency services should develop formal partnerships with organizations which offer peer support services and especially organizations that are operated or driven by people with lived experience.
- Hospitals and providers of crisis services need to establish formal strategies for ensuring continuity of care by helping people transition to community supports.

Following Nadler's presentation, Ridgway recalled how Ken and Madge Tullis, co-founders of TSPN, tried to share the story of the former's history of suicide attempts but were rebuffed by leaders within the suicide prevention movement. However, if it was not for their efforts to share their experiences, TSPN would never have been established.

- It was not until two years ago that the American Association of Suicidology embraced the lived experience movement, with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention committing to it shortly afterwards.
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### **General Housekeeping/Introductions**

- Ridgway distributed copies of the conflict of interest form, to be signed by Advisory Council and Intra-State Department Group members and provided to TDMHSAS. Members may obtain a copy of the document they signed from the central office as needed.
- Council members also reviewed the "Roles and Responsibilities" document and signed off on this as well.
- Vacancies within the Council are almost filled; Boards and Commissions is still waiting on paperwork from a prospective new member for the Southeast Region.
- Ridgway mentioned that the last meeting of the Intra-State Departmental Group was one of the most well-attended in recent memory.
- Ridgway recalled that attendance at recent Council meetings has been even higher than back when TSPN held two-day retreats at Montgomery Bell State Park. (He explained that these had been discontinued due to budget issues.)
- Ridgway encouraged members of the Council to communicate RSVPs for future meetings via directly reply to announcements sent out by Enlow, rather than to the Regional Coordinators.
- He observed that the attempt to coordinate RSVPs for this meeting through Outlook Calendars had not gone smoothly since not everyone uses this e-mail platform. Going forward, the central office will rely on direct-reply RSVPs.
- Ridgway cautioned members that while the Regional Coordinators are available to provide assistance in coordinating events and trainings, they do not take the place of regional members. TSPN's strength has always been in its volunteers across the state, and the Network will still depend on them for outreach and local connection.
- Besides, the Coordinators have neither the travel budgets nor the flexibility in schedule to attend and manage every last event personally.
- Tatum recalled that years back when the concept of Regional Coordinators was first proposed, there was some resistance because of the threat it might pose to TSPN's network of public—private partnerships.
- Ridgway extended a formal welcome to the Advisory Council's newest member: Jack Stewart, President of NAMI Greene County, who will represent TSPN's Northeast Region.
- Ridgway pointed out the registration forms for the Suicide Prevention Symposium in the meeting packets, and encouraged everyone to spread the word about this event.
- With no further remarks to present, the meeting proceeded with introductions.

### **Approval of Minutes from Previous Advisory Council Meeting**

- Rush motioned for the approval of the February minutes as submitted. Harper seconded and the motion passed without objection.

- The group then broke for lunch at 12:35 PM.

## **Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network ~ Regional Reports**

### **Northeast Region**

- The meeting reconvened at 1:16 PM with regional reports, lead off by Leonard's summary of projects within the Northeast Region.
- Leonard discussed having presented to a social work class at ETSU, which hosted a TSPN exhibit at both its Wellapalooza event and a recent job fair.
- Regional members are planning outreach to other smaller colleges in the area.
- Leonard acknowledged Payne's efforts to schedule and lead substance abuse training sessions.
- Payne has been invited to speak to the United Way Vision Council in Kingsport about integrating suicide prevention outreach into their community projects.
- Finally, planning is already underway for the region's annual Suicide Prevention Awareness Walk.

### **East Tennessee Region**

- Young reported that regional members are planning a town hall meeting entitled "Diversity in Faith: Perspectives on Suicide", set for September 17. It is patterned after a similar, highly successful event in the Rural West Regional last year.
- The event will include a panel discussion with a variety of faith leaders assembled, representing the Roman Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, Unitarian, and Church of Christ traditions. The keynote speaker is a highly regarded Methodist minister, and the moderator is a retired Episcopalian priest.
- Panelists will receive and respond to the same questions posed to those participating in the Jackson event.

### **Upper Cumberland Region**

- Stamps announced that presentations had been made to the Upper Cumberland Adult Abuse Coalition and four local law enforcement agencies.
- Averitt... gun permits... Gun Safety Project
- Starting this Tuesday, Harper has begun reaching out to local gun shops regarding participation in the Gun Shop Project; most of these establishments have been responsive to the idea.
- There have been several QPR trainings in the region since the last Advisory Council meeting.
- The Upper Cumberland Region will once again partner with Daniel Seal Suicide Prevention for an event this September, in addition to its annual "Light of Hope" observance.

### **Southeast Region**

- Nite reported that regional members are concentrating on key aspects of suicide prevention:
- Since 50% of people who die by suicide have seen a physician a month prior to death, regional members are working on outreach to local ER and primary care providers.
  - She offered her thanks to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Departments and several county TDH offices for hosting QPR training sessions for their staff.
  - Local EDs have expressed interested in training for their staff as well, with the first such sessions scheduled for August through October.
- The region received a report by the local sheriff's office regarding a 400% increase in suicidality among inmates at the county jail. Meanwhile, the local psychiatric facility has received four times as many referrals as it has beds and has would-be patients on a waiting list.
  - To resolve this issue, regional members have obtained certification from the CIT Institute to present suicide prevention training to all jail staff, starting this fall.
- Significant progress has been made on the Gun Safety Project thanks to the assistance of students from the UT-Chattanooga College of Social Work, who have visited gun shops and firing ranges

on TSPN's behalf.

- Members are reaching out to local substance abuse treatment facilities, providing information on suicide risk not just to staff but also to clients and their families. This has the added benefit of reaching people before they re-enter the community and while they are in a secure environment.
- Regional members have training sessions planned, as well as exhibits at local conferences for criminal justice professionals and health care providers.
- Finally, the region is working with the local vital statistics office to get real-time suicide data.
- Sparks mentioned that TDMHSAS is in the process of creating a standardized suicide prevention training curriculum for jails and prisons, and offered to share this with Nite for review.

### **Mid-Cumberland Region**

- Thorpe announced that QPR trainings have been provided for Vanderbilt University counseling students, new hires at Mental Health Cooperative (MHC), the Martha O'Bryan Center, the Jean Crow Advocacy Center (a new DV resource in Nashville), and the Sumner County TDCS office among others.
- Outreach efforts have included an exhibit at the TCSW annual conference, the recent #22toomany rally (intended to raise awareness about the toll of suicide in veteran population), Mental Health Day on the Capitol Hill in March, a recent gun safety class in Williamson County, and a radio interview in partnership with NAMI Tennessee.
- Local efforts regarding THESPN have been on the increase, with outreach to Tennessee Tech, Belmont University, the MTSU School of Nursing, the UT College of Social Work, Austin Peay, and PSU, and John A. Gupton College (a private professional school of mortuary science located in Nashville).
- In recent months members have stepped up outreach related to the Gun Safety Project, visiting 36 local firearm retailers. Thorpe acknowledged the efforts of several very dedicated volunteers.
- In May, TSPN sponsored a workshop as part of Your Heart on Art's "Inside the Darkness" traveling project; several local members and TSPN staff participated in the session.
- The Davidson County Suicide Prevention Task Force has begun a new research effort that involves using local death certificate data going back to 2013 to identify significant trends/patterns in suicide. The project will also incorporate MHC crisis services data, and regional members plan to work with FCS and Centerstone (which take calls from the Lifeline) once the IRB is approved
- Thorpe noted the efforts of Adam Graham with MHC, who is spearheading this project and who is chair of the Task Force as of last week (having been personally recommended by Thompson). Graham is in the processing of writing the IRB for this project.
- Upcoming events:
  - Exhibit at the Social Emotional Learning conference
  - Exhibit at the Nashville Sounds game on August 6
  - Suicide prevention training focused on the LGBT community, scheduled for June 11 and GLSEN Middle Tennessee
  - Suicide Prevention Awareness Month events planned for September 10 at Cumberland University in Lebanon and September 17 at Sevier Park in Nashville. Additional events will be announced later.

### **South Central Region**

- Chastain Beal reported that the Hickman-Perry County Suicide Prevention Task Force has run several QPR sessions and depression screenings over the last few months.
- Additionally in this region, there have been several outreach projects in partnership with Contact Lifeline, MADSAM, and Cowboy Up. Volunteers from the region, as well as volunteers from Cowboy Up have reached out to several local gun shops on behalf of the Gun Safety Project.

- Chastain Beal hosted two Grief After Suicide retreats this month in Columbia; these events are getting smaller in scope but still attract visitors from outside the United States.
- She thanked Nadler for her assistance in coordinating local projects.

### **Rural West Region**

- Robb announced that last month saw the region's first Suicide Prevention Awareness Walk in Jackson, which had 45 people in attendance—very good attendance figures considering the rain that day. Plans are in place to make this an annual event.
- There were two mental health referrals that occurred during the course of the event.
- Robb also provided information about the successful Suicide Prevention Night activity at the Jackson Generals game.
- Regional members are planning local conferences for both the fall and spring, as well as QPR trainings and exhibits at local health fairs.
- Pathways hosted a Mental Health First Aid Class and distributed TSPN materials to participants.
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### **Memphis/Shelby County Region**

- Dolinky provided information about the Suicide and the Black Church Conference set for Memphis on June 17-18.
- Not long after she started with TSPN, Dolinky launched a push for additional volunteers for outreach. This effort has been successful, with ten agencies sending volunteers to help Dolinky with organizational and outreach tasks.
- The region is planning an event for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and is currently searching for a speaker for this event.
- Also, an exhibit is planned for an upcoming Memphis Redbirds game.
- The region is partnering with the Memphis-Shelby County Health Department's Community Health Improvement Program, which has made depression screening one of its current priorities. This will involve several training and outreach projects organized by TSPN.
- Dolinky was interviewed by the Memphis Commercial-Appeal regarding local efforts on the Gun Safety Project.
  - Distribution of materials associated with this project concluded in February, with all targeted establishments contacted.
  - Dolinky noted that two of these were next door to an outpatient psychiatric facility, which she discussed during the interview.
  - Dolinky mentioned that the article was picked up by several other newspapers around and outside Tennessee, providing excellent visibility for the Network.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Executive Committee**

- Tatum presented information on two items discussed by the Executive Committee.
- The first of these was the revision of the vendor contract authorizing MHAMT's administrative oversight of TSPN. The document was updated to clarify language regarding the roles and responsibilities of the MHAMT Board of Directors and of the TSPN Executive Director. The Committee has approved an updated document which will be presented to MHAMT President/CEO Tom Starling on Monday.
- The second of these was TSPN's pullout from the V13ION ride due to legal proceedings in process, as alluded to in a previous e-mail from the TSPN central office. Tatum explained that the Executive Committee met by conference call and made this decision out of a need to make sure its staff and volunteers were fully supported in their efforts.

- All V13ION logos and materials have been removed from the TSPN website and its social media accounts.
- Tatum said that the Outreach Committee is welcome to offer suggestions on other events that reach the population groups that TSPN would have reached through V13ION.

### Advocacy Committee

- Stowers presented the Committee's report on behalf of Committee Chair Stamps.
- The Committee reviewed the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation and recommended only one change, specifically a revision of the stated estimate of the number of people affected by suicide deaths.
- The Committee also reviewed the professional licensure legislation ahead of anticipated re-introduction to the General Assembly in January 2016. They offered the following edits.
  - In the first clause, the number "950" should be changed to "900" in line with the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation.
  - In the fourth clause, the number "six (6)" should be changed to "twenty-five (25)" in line with the latest research.
  - In the sixth clause, the word "ninth" should be changed to "tenth", "third" to "second", and "thirty-four" to "twenty-four" in line with the latest statistics from the Tennessee Department of Health.

### Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluation Committee

- **Young submitted a motion from the Committee to select and honor an agency that had made significant strides towards the Zero Suicide Initiative as a Champion of Suicide Prevention at the statewide Suicide Prevention Awareness Month event in September. Benedetto seconded this motion, which passed without objection.**
- Several members of the Committee are also on the Zero Suicide Initiative Task Force, and they shared proceedings on the implementation on the Initiative within their respective agencies. Members discussed plans for a series of learning collaborative on the Initiative; these sessions would include presentations on related topics, such as means reduction and safety planning.

### Outreach Committee

- Nite provided this report on behalf of Committee Chair Chastain Beal.
- All members of the Committee received a set of registration forms for the Suicide Prevention Symposium; they were encouraged to distribute these as appropriate and reminded to register themselves.
  - This year's symposium will include a social media team which will live-tweet the conference, overseen by Nadler. It was noted that live-tweets from the AAS conference this April reached over 24 million Twitter accounts worldwide.
  - The central office is currently developing a list of breakout session hashtags and sponsor Twitter accounts.
- The Committee began planning this year's Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event. The Committee is interested in establishing a sense of balance and unity between survivors of suicide and the lived experience movement.
  - Members are interested in changing up the traditional order of the program, as well as bringing in a speaker on behalf of the lived experience movement.
  - The Committee is open to suggestions for additional program ideas.
- Nite addressed TSPN's pull-out from the V13ION event. She noted that while TSPN's inability to move forward with this event is disappointing, the takeaway from this event is that TSPN is capable of "stepping outside the box"—in other words, pursuing new and unorthodox approaches to suicide prevention to reach key population groups.

### **Intra-State Departmental Group Update**

- Love explained that the Group was “on the cusp” of several interesting projects.
- The Group has received completed surveys from almost all state departments and agencies represented, and will use this along with the forthcoming wellness assessment to develop suicide prevention strategies for state departments. These efforts may be supported by grants currently in the application process.
  - The results of the survey will be analyzed at a planning session for the Group, set for August 12. The information from these surveys will be used to plan specific projects.
- McGee provided an update on her ongoing efforts to embed evidence-based suicide prevention practices, such as C-SSRS, in state agencies. Nurses at TDH regional offices may receive specific training on this tool.
  - McGee suggested TSPN working with TCAD Support Services to support its “No Wrong Door” project, which will insure that people approaching this agency for services can be quickly transferred to the appropriate state agency.
- Sparks announced that TDOC is currently working on a suicide prevention curriculum for corrections and law enforcement offices. The curriculum is already being provided to corrections officers and will be expanded to law enforcement soon.
  - Sparks commented that so far this year, there have been three inmate suicides and one officer suicide within the Tennessee prison system.
- Hamer provided a few remarks about the upcoming Suicide and the Black Church Conference.
  - This year’s event will be the seventh in the series of biannual conferences.
  - The event typically brings in over 300 people from across the country and internationally.
  - While the event is primarily geared to leaders of faith communities, it is open to the general public, and 50 seats are still available.
  - The event is taking place on the campus of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.
  - Hamer mentioned that Ridgway will present on the subject of postvention, and Dolinsky will co-facilitated a presentation on youth suicide prevention awareness.
- Riley-Philpo shared that 10% of Tennessee National Guard staff are trained in ASIST, and that she is willing to arrange the inclusion of non-TNG members in upcoming sessions.

### **Other Business**

#### **TDMHSAS Update**

- Sparks discussed that Year 2 of the TLC follow-up project is on track to begin on July 1. This phase of the grant will expand to cover youth and adults statewide, not just in Middle Tennessee.
- She encouraged members to register for the Suicide Prevention Symposium if they had not done so already.
- Sparks personally presented information on Tennessee’s Zero Suicide Initiative and suicide prevention in general to the Tennessee Organization of Nursing Executives last month.
- She discussed the pending release of the suicide prevention training curriculum for law enforcement and its pending presentation to 1,000 officers. A similar curriculum for corrections officers is in development.
  - The advancement of this curriculum is in response to a surge in waitlisted mental health clients (especially in recent months) which was creating long delays in inpatient admission. Her division has been working with EDs to encourage the beginning of mental health treatment while patients are in the ED, as opposed to just waiting for a psych consult. The object is to re-educate them about suicide risk and get them to start resolving the

immediate pain of someone in a mental health emergency. They may be able to stabilize such patients to the point they may not even need inpatient treatment—an important point, considering that recent research indicates inpatient treatment is not always the most appropriate course of action for people in crisis.

- Nadler confirmed this point, having shared her experiences with unsupportive ED staff during her earlier presentation.
- The overall goal is providing more therapeutic support in the patient's natural environment.
- Sparks has also learned that all the state's managed care organizations administer health assessments to every client, and that these include questions on depression and suicide risk. Clients flagged by the assessment may be referred to the organization's behavioral health sector and/or crisis services. Sparks explained how this tactic was improving client interactions and helping to create safety plans for people in crisis.
- Sparks also spoke about a developing data-sharing agreement with Vital Statistics for cross-walking data during crisis calls.
- TDMHSAS is also working to embed suicide prevention within the curricula of Tennessee colleges as part of an ongoing grant initiative. Sparks stated that no psychology or social work student should graduate without being prepared to deal with people in crisis.
- Sparks closed by acknowledging the efforts of Hamer and others to develop faith-based responses to suicide, noting research that shows many veterans in crisis seek help from their churches and clergy before reaching out to crisis services.

#### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

- Ridgway provided a brief overview of recent call volumes.
- He pointed out that Frontier Health is now taking calls on behalf of the Lifeline within northeast Tennessee.
- Helen Ross McNabb has discontinued the application for connection to the Lifeline. Ridgway said that regional members need to make sure some agency in the area is available to take Lifeline calls.

#### **Executive Director's Update**

- Ridgway circulated a list of possible names for the proposed suicide prevention/intervention/postvention training program for schools.
  - The program emerged out of a suggestion from TDOE regarding a learning collaborative on the issue.
  - The plan is to invite relevant six staff members from each school system (Coordinated School Health officers, counselors, administration, central office staff, etc.). The morning segment will consist of an overview of prevention, intervention, and postvention. After lunch, participants will use what they have learned to develop an action plan for their school district.
  - Ridgway announced that 50,000 school staff in Tennessee have participated in online youth suicide prevention training courtesy of the Jason Foundation.
  - The names on the ballot were suggested during a brainstorming session by central office.
  - The first of these will be held in TSPN's Upper Cumberland Region, which has been affected by several teen suicide deaths in recent months, and will be opened up to 13 school systems in this area.
  - The primary goal of this initiative is to provide schools with information about what they should do before, during, and after a suicide crisis and help them develop an action plan as well as recommended policy changes.
  - Ridgway explained that the process is not intended to assign blame the failure of current

- systems to respond to crises, but to determine what needs to be done.
  - Ridgway envisions implementation of the learning collaboratives statewide, with sessions for the South Central, Southeast, and possibly Northeast Regions following successful implementation of the project in the Upper Cumberland. He hopes to have all these regions covered before the end of the calendar year.
  - Ridgway notes that several of the school districts targeted by this program paid to have Mental Health 101 brought into their school systems when they could have had I.C. Hope for free.
- Ridgway provided additional information about the Suicide and the Black Church Conference.
  - The conference will include a screening of a documentary on former WNBA star and mental health advocate Chamique Holdsclaw. Donna Barnes of the National Organization for People of Color against Suicide (NOPCAS) and Dr. Paul Quinnett of the QPR Institute were consultants on the film.
    - The documentary discusses the stigma associated with mental health treatment among both athletes and African-American women. Ridgway noted that Holdsclaw struggled with mental illness for ten years before she was formally diagnosed, and part of the reason is that she was taught the mental illness was not a “black thing”.
    - Ridgway would like to arrange a screening of the documentary in Knoxville (home of the University of Tennessee, where Holdsclaw played before entering the WNBA) sometime during September as part of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.
- Ridgway remarked on the professional licensure legislation that the Advocacy Committee reviewed earlier today. The Network plans to re-introduce the bill to the General Assembly in January.
  - Ridgway has confirmed plans by Tennessee Senate Majority Leader Bo Watson to sponsor the bill, and he can probably get Jeremy Faison to sponsor it within the House.
  - Plans are to begin promoting the bill this fall, with mention made that other states have passed or are considering similar bills.
- Ridgway was very pleased by the *Memphis Commercial-Appeal* article, particularly the reporter’s close consultation with Dolinko regarding the nature and projects of TSPN. The article has already led to people in other states asking for copies of our materials.
- On a related note, TSPN has been working with the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence to develop a customized brochure on suicide-proofing private residences, aimed at parents.
- Also, the state board that oversees and licenses firing ranges in Tennessee has reviewed the “11 Commandments of Gun Safety” brochure and, after TSPN makes one minor edit to the file, authorized distribution of the brochure to every gun safety class held in Tennessee.
- In regards to the Suicide Prevention Symposium, Ridgway acknowledged Nadler for taking the lead in developing a social media team for the event.
  - He encouraged all those in attendance today to circulate the registration brochure and get people signed up for this event.
  - Registration for this event has been slower than anticipated; admittedly some would-be registrants are waiting to confirm the funding of contracts and positions before finalizing their plans. Even so, Ridgway anticipates 250 people participating in this event.
- Last year there were 21 distinct events across Tennessee in association with TSPN’s Suicide Prevention Awareness Month observance. With the help of the new TSPN staff members, Ridgway is hoping to have even more and looks forward to members’ reports regarding local events.
- The central office will distribute the revised copy for the mayoral proclamation via e-mail.
  - Last year there were 138 proclamations received, representing 86 out of 95 Tennessee counties.

- Ridgway stressed that TSPN volunteers, not staff, will be primarily responsible for collecting these signatures.
- In response to a question from Averitt, each region develops a list of counties and assigns members to secure proclamations in one or more of those counties. These assignments will be made at upcoming regional meetings.
- Ridgway announced that a field placement student from UT-Martin has been assisting Dolinky since December and has been working to build a suicide prevention leadership team on campus.
  - Ridgway explained that even though the college is involved with THESPN and has a Suicide Prevention Coordinator on staff, the school's inexperienced reaction to a recent suicide death on campus and the corresponding blowback from the college community showed that they needed a better plan.
- Ridgway applauded the ongoing work of Leitsch and the Zero Suicide Initiative Task Force to implement the Initiative across multiple agencies across the state.
  - He noted that early implementation efforts at Centerstone and Frontier Health have greatly informed subsequent approaches and planning.
  - He cautioned that the Initiative is focused solely on behavioral health organizations, primary care settings, and hospitals. No other groups are involved with the Initiative at this time and messaging regarding the Initiative should be aimed only at the groups Ridgway just mentioned.
  - He announced that yesterday Delta Medical Center confirmed plans to hire a part-time Zero Suicide Coordinator to focus on this project.

#### **Adjournment**

- Tatum reminded all Council and Intra-State Departmental Group members to turn in their learning collaborative ballots, conflict of interest forms, and signed copies of the Roles and Responsibilities document.
- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:19 PM.