

The logo for the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is a dark blue silhouette of the state of Tennessee. Inside the silhouette, the words "Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network" are written in a white, serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "Tennessee Suicide" on the top line, "Prevention Network" on the middle line, and "Saving Lives in Tennessee" in a smaller, italicized serif font on the bottom line.

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**Advisory Council Meeting
Community Room
Metro Nashville Police Department, Hermitage Precinct
3701 James Kay Lane, Hermitage
Wednesday, February 12, 2014
10:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

Advisory Council Members Present

Jennifer Harris, MS, St. Thomas Hickman Hospital (Advisory Council Chair / Chair, Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force)
Karyl Chastain Beal, M.Ed., Retired/Community Advocate (Advisory Council Co- Chair / South Central Regional Chair / Outreach Committee Chair)
Sabrina Anderson, Boys and Girls Clubs of Jackson-Madison County
Stephanie Barger, M.Div., Vice-President of Strategy and Operations, Monroe Harding (Mid-Cumberland Regional Chair)
Jodi Bartlett, Ed.S, LPC-MHSP, MCRT Director, Northern Region, Volunteer Behavioral Health (Upper Cumberland Regional Chair)
Kathy Benedetto, LPC, SPE, LMFT, Senior Vice-President, Tennessee Child and Youth Services, Frontier Health
Mike LaBonte, Executive Director, Memphis Crisis Center
Tina R. Mitchell, GCDF, Executive Director, CrossBridge, Inc./Compassionate Ministries Pastor, Trevecca Community Church
Waring Porter, Pastor, All Saints Presbyterian Church
Stephenie Robb, Executive Director, Behavioral Health Initiatives, Inc.
Anna Shugart, LCSW, Director, Emotional Health & Recovery Center, Blount Memorial Hospital (Chair, Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance)
Anne Stamps, Center Director, Cumberland Mountain Mental Health Center / Dale Hollow Mental Health Center
Anne Young, MS, CAS, Program Director, Young Adult and Residential Relapse Recovery Program, Cornerstone of Recovery (East Tennessee Regional Chair)
Dr. Connie Briscoe, Ph.D., Counseling Center, University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Becky Stoll, Vice President of the Crisis and Disaster Management Division within Centerstone
Christen Thorpe, MS, CRC, CATSM, Coordinator of the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

Intra-State Departmental Group Members Present

Dustin Keller, LPC-MHSP, Director, Council on Children's Mental Health, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (Intra-State Departmental Group Chair)
John Allen, Director of Behavioral Health Services, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration
Sheila Hubbard, Clinical Case Management Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Correction

Lori Paisley, Director of Special Projects, Tennessee Department of Education
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
Sheila Hubbard, Statewide Clinical Case Management Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Corrections
Terrence (Terry) Love, MS, CPC, Injury Prevention Manager, Division of Family Health and Wellness, Injury and Violence Prevention, Tennessee Department of Health
1st 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
Thom Roberts, TN Council for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing, Tennessee Department of Human Services

Advisory Council Members Absent

Pam Arnell, MA, Arnell's Counseling Service (Advisory Council Co-Secretary / Chair, Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force)
Nancy L. Badger, Ph.D., Director, Counseling Center, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Vickie Bilbrey, Community Education Manager, Oak Point Center, Livingston Regional Hospital
Renee Brown, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Memphis VA Medical Center (Memphis/Shelby County Regional Chair)
Anne Henning-Rowan, MS, Community Advocate (Rural West Regional Chair)
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Cognitive Behavioral Specialists of the Tri-Cities (Northeast Regional Chair)
Linda Phipps Harold, Community Advocate
Sandy Smith, Community Advocate
Tim Tatum, MA, LPC-MHSP, Director of Behavioral Health, Pine Ridge Treatment Center (Advisory Council Secretary / Southeast Regional Chair)

Intra-State Departmental Group Members Absent

Jackie Berg, Training Specialist and Worker's Compensation Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Wendell Cheek, Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs
Teresa Kimbro Culbreath, Litter Grant Program, Statewide Coordinator, Highway Beautification Office, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Gwen Hamer, MA, Director, Education and Development, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Deborah Hardin, BS, RN, State Public Health Nursing Director, Tennessee Department of Health
Sumita Keller, Customer Services Administrator, Tennessee Department of Human Services
Sara Smith, MS, State Coordinator, Office of Coordinated School Health, Tennessee Department of Education

TSPN Advisory Council Emeritus Group Members

Clark Flatt, President/CEO, the Jason Foundation, Inc.

TSPN Staff Present

Granger Brown, MSW, LMSW, Substance Abuse Outreach Coordinator

Vladimir Enlow, MTS, TSPN Executive Assistant
Scott Ridgway, MS, TSPN Executive Director

Guests

Lena Higgins, Volunteer Behavioral Health

Abilash Philpose, Office of Injury Prevention and Detection, Division of Family Health and Wellness, Tennessee Department of Health

Tawanda Scales, Trainer/Postvention Coordinator of the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

Tom Starling, President/CEO, Mental Health America of Middle Tennessee

Jane Young, Greater Nashville RC -Area Agency on Aging and Disability

Welcome

- Harris called the meeting to order at 11:58 AM.
- She announced the presence of several recently appointed members of the Advisory Council:
 - Dr. Connie Briscoe of the Counseling Center at UTK
 - Becky Stoll, Vice President of the Crisis and Disaster Management, Centerstone
 - Christen Thorpe, Project Coordinator of the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project
- She also noted that several new members of the Intra-State Departmental Group were also present:
 - Sheila Hubbard, Statewide Clinical Case Management Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Corrections
 - Terrence (Terry) Love, MS, CPC, Injury Prevention Manager, Division of Family Health and Wellness, Injury and Violence Prevention, Tennessee Department of Health
 - 1st Lt. Noel Riley-Philpo, State Suicide Prevention Program Manager, Joint Force Headquarters, Tennessee National Guard
 - Delora Ruffin, MA, Program Specialist, Division of Child Health, Tennessee Department of Children's Services
- Harris introduced a guest of hers: Jane Young, a former member of the Advisory Council who works for the Greater Nashville RC -Area Agency on Aging and Disability. She maintains an interest in TSPN, especially its Older Adult Suicide Prevention Plan, and is interested in further re-involvement with the Network.
- Harris announced the circulation of two cards for signature: a get-well card for Henning-Rowan, who is still recovering from her stroke, and a sympathy card for Hamer, whose mother-in-law died earlier this week.
- Harris then led a round of introductions ahead of the regional reports.
- Following introductions, Harris recognized Barger, who has formally rotated off the Council after six years of service. She received a plaque recognizing her contributions to TSPN.
- Harris closed out her opening remarks by welcoming Dr. Keller ahead of his summary of the dissertation he presented as part of his doctoral work at Northcentral University.

Regional Reports

- The meeting reconvened at 12:35 PM after the close of Dr. Keller's presentation.
- Harris commended Dr. Keller for his talk, the first time a member of the Network has presented original research during an Advisory Council meeting.
- Arnell had been scheduled to present findings from her own doctoral dissertation, which completed as part of her coursework at Argosy University. But since she was unable to make it to today's session, she will make her presentation at the next Council meeting in June.

Northeast Region

- Benedetto reported on behalf of Leonard, who was unable to attend today's session due to expected heavy snowfall in the eastern part of the state.
- All counties were represented in this year's Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation project. Several counties had multiple cities and towns participating.
- The Northeast Region's 8th Annual Memorial Walk was held at Warrior's Path State Park on September 29. Over 150 people (record attendance) enjoyed a picnic lunch, a walk through the park, and the memorial balloon release. Music was provided by local performing artist Beverly Shuck. The event was promoted in the September 25 edition of the *Kingsport Times-News*.
 - Next year's event has already been set for September 21, 2014. Members are interested in having a local memorial quilt ready in time for the event.
- Approximately 150 people attended the "School Community Crisis Response" presentation held on September 24 at Northeast State Community College.
 - Benedetto thanked the sponsors of this event: Northeast State Community College, Mountain States Health Alliance, and Wellmont Medical Center.
- Attendance at the local SOS group averages 15 people monthly.

East Tennessee Region

- Young reported that feedback from the "Preventing Tragedy, Providing Hope" conference on September 25 was extremely positive. The event was one of the most successful events ever staged by the East Tennessee region. Young thanked Flatt and Briscoe for their involvement with the event.
- TSPN had a display with materials at this year's VolAware street fair on October 2. The event kicked off the state's observance of Mental Health Awareness Month. The event had excellent turnout, reaching an estimated 4,000 people, and plenty of TSPN materials were given out.
- For the second year in a row, the East Tennessee Region had every constituent county represented in the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation project.
- The regional focus for 2014 will involve continued efforts with gun safety, further analysis of targeted concern in order to determine appropriate concentration of resources, and continued education for awareness and prevention of suicide targeting high-suicide-rate counties.
- Young then turned the floor over to Shugart for a report on the Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance.
 - Shugart announced that five regional members had been trained as QPR instructors since August.

- It is the Alliance’s goal to train 3,000 people in QPR over the course of a year. Since September, 350 people have been trained. Shugart observed that the hardest part of the project was convincing prospective trainees of the relevance of and potential use for the training.
- In response to increased suicide numbers in Blount County, the Blount County group is beginning a multi-year project of conducting QPR trainings in the county. The first one, held September 30 at the Blount County Library, hosted 71 participants. The event was heavily promoted in local media; the *Maryville Daily Times’s* coverage of the event included a photo of team members.
- Maryville College will stage its annual “Feeling Blue” observance on the week of February 10-14. Alcoa High School is also planning to stage a “Feeling Blue” project.
 - Past “Feeling Blue” campaigns at Maryville College have lasted a month; this year organizers are trying to schedule everything within a single week. This week was chosen as it coincides with Valentine’s Day, and it includes an emphasis on mental health and relationships.
 - The recent winter weather has been interfering with this effort; the mindfulness event scheduled for tonight has already been postponed.

Upper Cumberland Region

- Stamps reported on local events at the request of regional chair Bartlett.
- She discussed continuing involvement with the Daniel Seal Suicide Prevention Foundation, including participation in the Color Run set for April 5.
- Regional members are providing training to local TDCS in-home workers—Stamps knows from personal experience that homebound patients frequently express suicidal thoughts.
- Bartlett reported discussion has already begun on this year’s Light of Hope event; plans are to reserve Dogwood Pavilion again. A partnership with the local National Guard armory (which offers an ideal venue for the event) was also discussed. Speakers for the event have already been contacted and confirmed.
- Members have been promoting “The Epidemic Is Here!”, a substance abuse prevention conference to be held at the Education Center within Cookeville Regional Medical Center on February 7.
- Training sessions continue for school systems across the Upper Cumberland Region, and the regional quilt and display board are routinely exhibited at community events.
- During the next quarter, regional members plan to intensify local outreach related to the Gun Safety Project.

Mid-Cumberland Region

- Barger announced that “How to Save a Life: A Community Response to Suicide”, is set for March 20 at St. James Community Church in Nashville. About 150 people are expected to attend. This conference is unique in that it will feature a much wider representation of faith traditions during its panel discussion.
 - She mentioned that the Mid-Cumberland Region has not staged a conference of its own in some time, but has been inspired by the success of prior faith-based conferences in Murfreesboro. The current event maintains a faith-based element but broadens the focus.
- The region has put in a request for selection as Nashville Sounds Charity of the Night, requesting an exhibit date sometime in May. Barger explains that this project has been

the most successful at reaching middle-aged white males as well as families.

- In lieu of their next meeting, the Montgomery-Houston-Humphreys-Stewart County Task Force will travel to the towns of Dover and Waverly, providing suicide prevention materials at key venues in those cities. These are the county seats of Stewart and Humphreys Counties, respectively; their suicide rates were among the highest in the state.
- The faith-based coalition operating in Davidson County has recently extended into neighboring Rutherford County, and there has been discussion of creating a task force for this county focused on lifespan suicide prevention projects.

South Central Region

- Harris gave the regional report on behalf of regional chair Chastain Beal.
- The region is working with Regina Peery to explore further partnership with Cowboy UPI. The group is also reaching out to the Making A Difference Suicide Awareness Movement (MADSAM) and Contact Lifeline's Tullahoma office regarding assistance with their projects—this may help Tennessee extend its work in some of the region's outlying counties.
- Harris commented on the "Moment of Remembrance" event held November 21 at Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative in Centerville. There were several new survivors present, as well as city and county officials who had not previously appeared at this event.
- The Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force is in the process of developing a second memorial quilt using panels contributed by area survivors.
- Harris noted that Hickman County Schools schedule suicide prevention presentations for their wellness classes every semester.
- Future plans include a depression screening project for April (the spring being the peak period for suicides) and "Saving Lives in South Central Tennessee", planned for April 2 in Decherd.
 - Unlike previous regional conferences, all the speakers and presenters at this event will be local.

Rural West Region

- Anderson reported on behalf of regional chair Henning-Rowan, who is still recovering from a stroke she suffered in late December. She reported that Henning-Rowan had been making some progress, but after a series of seizures about two weeks ago she was heavily medicated. She is capable of carrying on a conversation in her more lucid moments, but everyone's thoughts and prayers are still needed.
- The region hosted one of Bernard's "School Community Crisis Response" presentations on October 25 at Union University, with over 200 people in attendance.
- On January 15 the region recently hosted a very successful training in Jackson, with 55 people in attendance.
- A support group for survivors of suicide will begin meeting in Jackson in April. This project has been planned on and off for several years but is finally happening thanks to the efforts of some committed local survivors.
- Members are staging two training sessions on suicide among older adults—one in Jackson on April 22; the other in Martin on May 6.
- In upcoming months, the region will focus on distribution of Gun Safety Project materials within Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, and Madison Counties.

- The region continues to stage exhibits at local high school and college health fairs.
- Anderson acknowledged the efforts of former TSPN intern Daphane Turner regarding the redevelopment of the regional display board. She also thanked Robb for her logistical support during local conferences and events, and for arranging monthly meeting space at Behavioral Health Initiatives.

Memphis/Shelby County Region

- LaBonte reported on behalf of regional chair R. Brown, who was in Washington, D.C., on VA business and could not attend today's session.
- Members have distributed their share of Gun Safety Project materials, having reached every gun shop and firing range in the county. Reception to the project has been highly positive.
- TSPN's Memphis/Shelby County Region also hosted Sam Bernard's "School Community Crisis Response" lecture in Cordova on September 17. Over 200 people turned out for this session, which was sponsored by Delta Medical Center, Hope Church, Lakeside Behavioral Health System, Parkwood Behavioral Health System, and TSPN.
- The region is currently planning to host a substance abuse training session hosted by G. Brown.
- The region continues to be TSPN's most active in terms of QPR trainings. Lamar Frizzell of Delta Medical Center was recently certified as a trainer, and several Crisis Center volunteers have attested to his skills as a presenter.
- LaBonte leads training sessions for the Memphis Police Department every Thursday, and the Memphis Fire Department has also expressed interest.

Southeast Regional Summary

- Ridgway offered a summary of projects in this region, on behalf of the local Advisory Council.
 - He mentioned that Badger and Smith were unable to attend because of poor weather conditions in the Chattanooga area, Tatum was attending a Joint Commission meeting, and the position vacated by Monica Middlebrooks remains unfilled.
- Ridgway recapped "Saving Lives in Southeast Tennessee", held October 3 at the AIM Center in Chattanooga. Roughly 100 people attended, and feedback was highly positive.
- In light of the 2012 suicide data, the region has opted to focus on Marion, McMinn, Meigs, and Polk Counties during 2014. These are the counties with the highest six-year average suicide rates.
- During the coming quarter, members will arrange presentations at county health councils—one has already been staged for the Hamilton County group.
- Regional members also staged a meeting with first responders in the area in collaboration with TDMHSAS. Ridgway recalled that Anita Bertrand was in attendance.
- Suicide prevention training continues on the UT-Chattanooga campus and the surrounding community. Training is also held periodically for CIT courses held in the area.

Review of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

- Following members' perusal of the September meeting minutes, Harper noted that she was not listed in the roll call despite having attended the meeting.
- Anderson motioned to accept the minutes with this revision. LaBonte seconded and the motion passed without objection.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee

- Anderson chaired this meeting on behalf of absent Committee Chair Tatum, summarizing the group's review of the Kenneth and Madge Tullis, MD, Suicide Prevention Training Act of 2014 (a.k.a. HB 2123/SB 2377), which would authorize the inclusion of suicide prevention training in professional licensure requirements for counselors, social workers, and occupational therapists in Tennessee.
- The group recommended several amendments to the bill for purposes of clarity.
 - They recommended changing Section 2 to read, "The department of health, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, and/or each board..."
 - Section 1(c)(3) should be changed to read "...experts in suicide assessment, treatment, and/or management..."
 - The Committee also believes that Section 1(e)(7) should be amended to specify degreed professionals in the mental health or substance abuse fields.
- Ridgway disagreed with this last point, and was backed up by Stamps, Stoll, and Young. They argued that not everyone who works in state hospitals, group homes, or peer support centers has an advanced degree, but these people need to be trained regardless. The intent here is for system-wide training for any and all individuals who may come in contact with suicidal persons, right down to secretaries and receptionists. Restricting the training to degreed individuals shuts out many potential gatekeepers.
- Ridgway connected the plan to the "zero suicides" concept to be considered by the Council later today. Including everyone in the system creates the potential for early intervention that prevents mental health situations from reaching critical mass.
- Porter said that the Committee was trying to refine the definition of the professionals targeted by this legislation. Anderson added that she thought the training requirements would extend only to people with direct client contact. Stoll observed that this often included people without advanced degrees.
- Stamps wondered if the language in question should be replaced with "any other person" instead of "any other professionals". Ridgway pointed out the need to keep the training requirements restricted to agency personnel.
- Ridgway agreed to get back with the Council and the Advocacy Committee later regarding the wording of Section 1(e)(7).
- Meanwhile, Anderson noted the list of House and Senate committee members included in the meeting packets, and the sample advocacy narratives also available for consultation during interactions with these members.
- Ridgway mentioned that policy developers from the National headquarters of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) at the State Capitol today lobbying in support of the bill. They are being accompanied by the head of the local AFSP chapter. G. Brown, Ridgway, and Saunders met with them yesterday afternoon at the central office. All told, AFSP probably has 25-30 people downtown working in support of this bill.

- Ridgway plans to submit a single amendment covering all the necessary edits to the bill rather than several separate amendments.
- He mentioned that any reference to nursing will be struck from the revised bill since nursing licensure requirements do not require CEUs.
- Also, Section 1(f)(1) says the legislation will go into effect in 2017. This was originally written as 2016 and was inexplicably changed during the write-up process.
- Under Section 1(b)(3), suicide assessment, treatment, and management were originally separated by commas, but have been needlessly broken up into separate clauses. These formatting issues will also be addressed in the amendment.
- At the advice of counseling and social work advocates consulted regarding the bill, the training requirement has been revised from six hours every six years to two hours every two. This keeps training costs down for people in these professions.
- Ridgway says that the selling point for this legislation is that not only is it the right thing to do in terms of saving lives, but that the requirements are even more progressive than the legislation in Kentucky and Washington that inspired it.
 - Another point to make is the cost of suicide in terms of medical expenses and work loss, both for people who survive suicide attempts and years of potential life lost in the cases of people who die.
 - TSPN already provides training sessions, conferences, webinars and other activities which can count towards the training requirement—all of which are available at little to no cost.
 - Furthermore, the training keeps managed care costs by preventing mental health crises from becoming life-threatening and medically expensive events.
- Stoll wondered if TSPN was prepared to meet the needs of the people who would need training if this legislation became law. Ridgway explained that the number of people involved with these boards is actually rather small, far less than the number of teachers the Network processed after the Jason Flatt Act was passed.
- Ridgway observed that the current version of the bill was modeled on the Flatt Act, which is already having results in terms of the number of teachers trained and the leveling off of youth suicides in Tennessee.
- Legislation is already on the books regarding professionals' "duty to warn", so the current bill fits in with existing law.
- Ridgway acknowledged Sparks and TDMHSAS for prior review of the legislation before its submission to its General Assembly co-sponsors.
- He cautioned that the bill is not without its opponents, most of whom are merely objecting to an outside authority trying to tell them how to operate. But Ridgway points out that the two hours required by the amended bill, out of the total number of hours required by most licensing boards (120 for the Tennessee Psychologists Association, for example) are asking for very little—especially in terms of the lives that can be saved.
- G. Brown mentioned having brought up the bill with individual counselors and social workers, and they thought the legislation made good sense.
- Ridgway stated that is critical that TSPN members call and/or e-mail members of the House and Senate committees listed on the handout to garner their support for the bill. Members also need to contact their representatives in the General Assembly about co-sponsoring the bill—all they have to do to get their names on it is to contact Sen. Doug Henry or Mike Stewart, the bill's original sponsors.

- Flatt reported being asked about the bill by two different lobbyists, who informed him that members of the General Assembly were already taking sides on it. He believes this is a good sign. Whenever legislators are *not* talking about a bill, it usually means its chances of passing are poor.
 - Flatt has agreed to testify at a scheduled hearing on the legislation sometime in March.
- The AFSP has also pledged to help as necessary.
- Ridgway requested that if members' calls or e-mails are acknowledged by members of the General Assembly, they should contact the central office so he can inform Henry or Stewart.
 - He noted that Henry is the longest-serving member of the Senate, will probably retire after this year, and is in poor health besides. If the bill fails to pass this year, TSPN may not get another chance.
 - He recommends calling Henry and Stewart regardless of outcomes to thank them for their sponsorship of the bill.
 - Members of the Council will note that the House and Senate contact sheets do not specify political party. This is a bipartisan issue and will need bipartisan support.
 - Ridgway mentioned that he was able to approach Stewart, his representative in the House, about the bill, and it was Stewart who obtained Henry's support.
- Stoll requested an electronic form of the bill, the committees list, and the advocacy narrative. Ridgway said that these would be sent to participants in today's meeting later today, and a Constant Contact message to all members of TSPN would go out later.
- Ridgway added that the Kentucky and Washington bills were both named after people who died by suicide. The Tennessee version is named after Ken and Madge Tullis in honor of their roles as co-founders of TSPN. He noted that several people had asked the Tullises about the bill, and they had referred them to the central office.

Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluation Committee

- **Young, speaking on behalf of the Committee, presented a motion to change the title of TSPN's brochure on elder suicide prevention from "Saving Senior Lives in Tennessee" to "Saving Older Adult Lives in Tennessee", and to dedicate the next printing of the brochure to Bob Leech, a recently deceased founder of the Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force, and Gloria Chastain Lewis (mother of Chastain Beal). Harris seconded the motion, which was ratified without objection.**
 - Harris said that this latter gesture would be very meaningful to members of the Task Force.
- This morning the Committee discussed the *Suicide Care in Systems Framework* published by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, paying particular attention to the concept of "zero suicides" and of suicide as a "never event". The document was based on a multi-year study of best-practice suicide prevention efforts within four different programs.
 - The Committee reviewed the possibility of establishing a statewide committee to implement the "zero suicides" framework in within hospitals, mental health centers, career centers, churches, and other agencies.
 - Young described this project as an "aggressive undertaking" in the area of suicide prevention. The Committee plans to submit a formal motion authorizing the creation of this committee to the Council.
 - The proposed committee would be co-chaired by Ridgway, with the position of

chair likely occupied by TDMHSAS Commissioner Doug Varney or an appointed subordinate.

- Membership of the committee would include stakeholders who can coordinate top-down policy changes in their agencies, such as the CEOs of managed care organizations (MCOs) and hospitals.
- A website would be developed to provide information about the project and feature the logos of agencies endorsing and participating in it. Partner agencies could then claim that their crisis management programs had been endorsed by TSPN—a potentially valuable marketing tool.
- In response to an inquiry from Chastain Beal, participating entities would agree to arrange training in best-practice suicide prevention protocol (i.e., QPR or ASIST) for any and all personnel who may come in contact with suicidal persons, from executives to support staff.
- Ridgway explained that the document was released by the Action Alliance in 2011, and Tennessee would be the first one to attempt the implementation of the “zero suicides” protocol on the statewide level.
- He noted that Sparks and Stoll both served on the nationwide task force that developed the document. Stoll is Vice President of the Crisis and Disaster Management Division within Centerstone, and this agency will likely be the first one to endorse the program.
- The online portion would likely take the form of a link on the TSPN website that would include information on best-practice guidelines and agencies that have endorsed the project. Enlow should be able to create this page fairly quickly once a format is approved.
- Meanwhile, the statewide committee would help promote the project and give it the momentum it needs.
- Ridgway is fairly confident that TSPN can secure the involvement of the state’s three MCOs.
- Stoll mentioned the toolkit available at the Action Alliance’s homepage for the project (zerosuicides.org); Ridgway said that this toolkit will be included on the proposed TSPN page and promoted by the committee.
- **The Committee formally submitted its motion to create a committee devoted to broad statewide promotion of the “zero suicides” concept. Stoll seconded this motion, and it passed with no objections.**

Outreach Committee

- Harper presented the Committee’s report on behalf of committee chair Chastain Beal.
- This morning members of the Committee discussed the next Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event and opted to return to Trevecca Community Church, a site which has served TSPN well in the past. The church gymnasium is available on September 10, the previously announced date of this event.
- **The Committee submitted a motion to stage the 2014 Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event on September 10 at Trevecca Community Church. Benedetto seconded and the motion passed without objection.**
- The Committee also discussed a proposal to stage another statewide symposium. Members opted not to hold this in May as had been suggested, as it would conflict with planning and promotion of previously scheduled regional conferences. Instead, they suggested that

symposia should be held every other year, with a series of regional conferences during off years. This means the next symposium would occur in May 2015.

- **The Committee submitted a motion to stage statewide symposia every other year, with regional conferences held in years not marked by such an event, and to hold the next statewide symposium in May 2015. Shugart seconded this motion, which passed without objection.**
- In regards to the “Love Never Dies” Memorial Quilt, Chastain Beal has received six panels which will be incorporated into the quilt presented at the next Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event.
- Members have recommended the incorporation of a blank square into this quilt to symbolize survivors of suicide who are not ready to acknowledge their loss publicly.
- Based on feedback from last year’s Suicide Prevention Awareness Day observance, members recommend inviting Scott Couch back as emcee. They would like to use the same format as last year’s event, citing the steady flow from one segment to the next.
- The Committee has fielded a recommendation for more attention to the problem of murder-suicide as well as suicide risk among domestic violence victims. To this end, they wish to pursue partnerships with domestic violence support agencies and groups focused on end-of-life support (noting the high number of suicides that involve a chronically or terminally ill person).
 - Ridgway recalled a nationwide report several years ago in which Tennessee was ranked as one to the top states for murder-suicides. TSPN communicated with the Community Awareness and Support Center (CAAS) which released the report, immediately following. However, CAAS has not responded to TSPN’s recent follow-up e-mails. Nevertheless, he would like to revisit this concept.
 - He pointed out that TDOH does not track how many suicides were committed in the context of murder-suicides. The only way TSPN can make the distinction is if there is a news report on the incident. From what we can tell, murder-suicide continues to be a regular occurrence in Tennessee.
- Stoll announced that Thomas Joiner, a well-regarded suicidologist out of Florida State University, recently came out with a new book on murder-suicide entitled *The Perversion of Virtue: Understanding Murder-Suicide*.
 - Ridgway was familiar with Joiner, having previously invited him to speak at a Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event. But his requested speaking fee proved cost-prohibitive.
 - The central office will send out more information on Joiner’s book later this afternoon.

Intra-State Departmental Group Update

- Love explained that this morning’s meeting served as an opportunity for new members to learn about the Group’s role within TSPN. He noted “significant turnover” within this body, with old members leaving and new ones coming on.
- Love referenced the Tennessee Department of Health Commissioner’s Council on Injury Prevention, where he recently presented. Suicide prevention was one of the agenda items, and guests were very interested in Love’s remarks.
- Love thanked Ridgway for his recent assistance with TSPN’s Research Training Institute application, and also acknowledged the contributions of Jennifer Lockman of Centerstone.
 - The application was submitted just this past week. If accepted, the Network will receive support for its reevaluation of the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide

Prevention. Delegates from the state of Tennessee (Lockman, Love, and Ridgway) namely, will also participate in a conference at the University of Rochester in New York State later this year.

- Sparks shared details on a recent NPR report on Army base training in suicide prevention using the ASIST model.
- T. Roberts brought it to the Group's attention that the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline could stand to add a video component for people who are deaf and/or hard-of-hearing, who are not comfortable talking on the phone, or would appreciate face-to-face contact.
 - He plans to develop a formal proposal to the Group in which they would recommend this option to the Lifeline.

Other Business

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Ridgway led a review of call volumes reported by the Lifeline as compiled by Mental Health America of New York City.
- He noted a curious leakage of calls during the past two months; all of these bounced to Boys Town National Hotline, headquartered in Nebraska.

Tennessee Lives Count Project

- Thorpe began her report by introducing Scales, TLC's new Youth Trainer/Postvention Specialist.
- Thorpe pointed out the spreadsheet in the meeting packets documenting number for each program objective by quarter and by year. The current grant cycle ends on July 31.
- She reports that TLC has met or exceeded all but two training goals associated with the grant.
 - The goal for the ASIST training component is 100 trainees, and the the current tally is 99. An ASIST session scheduled for April 29-30 at MHAMT (facilitated by G. Brown and Ridgway) will put TLC over the top.
 - The session will be opened up to TSPN members first and then the general public.
 - Recruitment for the Tennessee Higher Education Suicide Prevention Network (THESPN) is not as advanced, but is making progress.
 - Thorpe summarized this project's objective: to certify 35 college/university staff across the state as QPR Instructors who would then train 250 students/community members each. So far, the project has identified these 35 partners; which have been engaged in large part by regional members. TLC is working with these identified 35 to train their 250 individuals on their respective campuses.
 - Thorpe acknowledged that the training projects at some colleges had been slow to start, but she is encouraged by several new recruits. Thorpe credited Scales for assisting with the groundwork for these latest additions to the project.
- Meanwhile, TLC has met its goals for the emergency department trainings. The curriculum for this segment was developed in partnership with the Joint Commission.
 - Thorpe explained that implementation proved difficult at first because of problems getting all the ER staff at a given hospital in place at the same time. Everyone's shift is different, with some staff members coming in just as others are leaving. So Thorpe worked with MHAMT interns to translate the training curriculum into a half-

hour interactive e-learning module. Thorpe hopes that the module will eventually be included in the orientation for new ER staff at participating hospitals.

- Also, TLC has exceeded its goal of 1,500 trainees in QPR training. In doing so, it is helping Centerstone Research Institute gain adequate data for their current gatekeeper study. The project is exploring whether or not there are certain inherent personality traits/characteristics that make someone a better gatekeeper-- the first study of its kind.

Tennessee License Plate

- A list of people who have reserved plates is available in the meeting packets.
- Reservation of plates is still available. We are currently far behind the number of reservations we will need to guarantee production of the plate; hence we will need everyone's help in spreading the word.
- Ridgway articulated plans for increasing promotion of the project in the months leading up to the June 30 deadline.
- The promotional flyer included in the meeting packets has is being distributed at regional meetings, and thanks to the efforts of license plate co-developer Robert St. John it appeared in a recent edition of the *Johnson City Press*.
- We are currently working with Lamar Advertising to arrange promotion of the project on billboards, financed by donations by Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital. Ridgway circulated a mark-up of the billboard design, developed in large part by Sanders.
- The Network is soliciting additional patrons for the billboard project; their company logos will be posted on the billboard in recognition of their support.
- The table off to the side includes abundant copies of the flyers; guests are encouraged to take some and give them out wherever appropriate.
- In response to an inquiry from Stoll, Ridgway pointed out that the flyer is available for download off the homepage.
- Ridgway mentioned that AFSP is planning to relay the flyer to all its members statewide.
- In the meantime, he encouraged members and guests to spread the word about the project at every opportunity.

TDMHSAS Update

- Sparks began by welcoming Scales to the TLC Project. As TLC winds down its current grant cycle, Sparks is hopeful that the state will be approved for another run. She and TLC staff are already brainstorming ideas for future TLC projects.
- Sparks's sources within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have suggested that the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act programs might be expanded from a youth focus to work on suicide prevention across the lifespan.
- She is willing to take suggestions from TSP N members about future TLC projects; these may be sent to her at melissa.sparks@tn.gov.
- Sparks is currently working with the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to develop a cross-training system for professionals working with individuals with intellectual disabilities and mental health crisis workers. She spent two days last week meeting with consultants from New Hampshire, where such a program is already in place, regarding the development of a specialized training program.
- She participates on a Professional Advisory Council for home health services, providing input related to mental health needs and mentioned the potential need for home health nurses to receive suicide prevention training.

- The Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) has been fully integrated into the state's crisis response and assessment network. The scale has been endorsed by all three of the state's MCOs and its use mandated by all associated health providers. Sparks believes widespread implementation of this scale will do much to remove the subjectivity that can sometimes cloud the risk assessment process.
- Sparks participates on an advisory board for the TN Chapter of the National Association of Dual Diagnosis and will attend the group's conference in August. The conference will focus on dual diagnosis and trauma-informed care.
- She recalled how her division's partnership with local law enforcement agencies recently paid off after one police departments' officers helped de-escalate a situation involving a psychotic and extremely dangerous suspect.
- TDMHSAS's focus in coming months will be on children and youth services. The Department recently released an Announcement of Funding for Child and Youth Mobile Crisis services. Sparks mentioned that this may require "tweaking" of the standardized assessment.
- Ridgway commented on the growing trend towards the regionalization of Mobile Crisis services, assigning them to local mental health centers rather than a centralized location. Sparks explained that the move was based on feedback from community stakeholders of diverse backgrounds regarding Mobile Crisis operations. They overwhelmingly recommended shifting Mobile Crisis operations to more local agencies.
- As Sparks concluded her report, Starling thanked her for the regular presentations she makes to regional health councils, noting that she is a very popular speaker on this circuit, and that she promotes TSPN and its project at each one of these engagements.

Executive Director's Report

- Ridgway recognized Starling for his assistance in promoting the professional licensure legislation, including the use of MHAMT's lobbyist.
- *Status of Suicide in Tennessee 2014* was published in January and has received the most press coverage of any TSPN report to date. This is largely due to a radio interview Ridgway provided to the Tennessee Press Service, which was carried on 60 radio stations across the state.
 - The report has since been covered in the Tennessean and other local papers, and on WZTV, Nashville's Fox affiliate. The most recent profile of the report came via the Chattanooga Times-Free Press.
 - The report was dedicated to Sally Afflick, a longtime member of the Memphis/Shelby County Region who died on December 5. She was particularly noted for staging exhibits at community events across the county.
 - In Afflick's obituary, her family stipulated that in lieu of flowers donations could be made to TSPN. Since her death the Network has received over \$1,000 in donations from friends of the family.
- Ridgway acknowledged having to step out earlier during the regional report because he received a call about a shooting death in a parking lot of Union University. Intent has not been determined.¹
- Ridgway referenced the Research Training Institute application mentioned by Love earlier. He is hopeful for the application's acceptance, given Centerstone's partnership on this

¹ The death was ultimately ruled a homicide with an arrest made on the evening of February 15. Local police believe that the death was staged to look like a suicide.

proposal. He noted Lockman's extensive expertise in this kind of research, including her prior analysis of TSPN training efforts.

- In other news, TSPN recently calculated the hours contributed by TSPN volunteers during calendar 2013, in preparation for MHAMT's volunteer luncheon on Friday.
 - Through our analysis, we developed an estimate of 353 volunteers across the state (admittedly a low estimate) who put in an estimated 13,132 hours of work on the Network's behalf. This averages out to 37 hours and 12 minutes per volunteer.
 - The estimated value of a volunteer hour in the state of Tennessee (2011 estimate) as derived by the leadership network Independent Sector is \$19.42 an hour. Therefore, we estimate the value of the work done by our volunteers at \$255,023.44.
 - For comparative purposes, the 2012 estimate came out to 9,801 hours. Ridgway attributes the 26% increase to the Network staging more regional events during that year.
- Ridgway announced that the Office of the Governor is in the process of making appointments and reappointments to the Advisory Council. He acknowledged Briscoe, Stoll, and Thorpe, all of whom are recent appointees to the Council.
- Briscoe is filling the vacancy recently created by M. Roberts, who rotated off the Council after his current term. Like Barger, Ridgway planned to honor him for his contributions to the Network at today's meeting. But he was unable to attend due to the approaching snowstorm. M. Roberts will instead receive a commemorative plaque at the next meeting of the Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance.
 - Ridgway observed that with a new gubernatorial administration in place, attempts were being made to bring new members into existing boards and commissions like TSPN's Advisory Council.
- The Network's two specialty newsletters— *Out of the Shadows* for survivors of suicide and *can you hear me?* for survivors of suicide attempts—continue to receive contributions from local readers.
 - Ridgway thanked T. Roberts for the article he contributed to the December edition of *can you hear me?*
- The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) has recently created a division to engage survivors of suicide attempts, soliciting their input on research and strategies. Ridgway observed that this is essentially what K. Tullis, a longtime advocate for the voice of attempters, has been recommending for several years.
- Ridgway recapped two highly effective postvention efforts in the past month and recognized Thorpe for her assistance in both operations.
- Enrollment is still available for the AAS psychological autopsy course scheduled for March 25-26 in Nashville; 27 people have signed up including 4 delegates from Fort Campbell.
 - The event will be held at the Non-Profit Conference Center located within Building B, 295 Plus Park Boulevard, Suite 201—adjacent to the central office.
 - Riley-Philpo and Shugart are among those who have signed up for this course.
 - Only 14 seats are left, and registration will be cut off later this month.
- UT-Knoxville and TSPN are co-sponsoring a course for QPR instructors, scheduled for February 28. Information about the course has been sent out over the TSPN mailing list and will be sent out again sometime next week.
- MHAMT will hold its annual volunteer lunch this Friday, February 14, at the FiftyForward building in Nashville. Several Advisory Council members have been invited to this event. Ridgway appreciates MHAMT's inclusion of TSPN volunteers in this function, which

demonstrates MHAMT's appreciation of the public-private partnership that has made TSPN what it is today.

Adjournment

- Ridgway thanked Council members for their ongoing contributions to the suicide prevention movement, and suggested caution on the way home given the developing weather situation.
- He encouraged members to take as much as they wanted of the materials on the back table. These included copies of Status of Suicide in Tennessee, promotional flyers for the license plate, spare copies of the advocacy narrative, and assorted materials from the Lifeline and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- With no other business to address, Harris thanked everyone for attending this meeting. She announced that the next Advisory Council meeting had been confirmed for Wednesday, June 4, at this same location.
- Following unanimous passage of a motion to adjourn, the Council did so at 2:14 PM.