



**Tennessee Suicide
Prevention Network**

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**TSPN Advisory Council Meeting
Community Room
Metro Nashville Police Department, Hermitage Precinct
3701 James Kay Lane, Hermitage
Wednesday, June 4, 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)
Anne Stamps, Center Director, Cumberland Mountain Mental Health Center / Dale Hollow Mental Health Center (Advisory Council Secretary)
Tim Tatum, MA, LPC-MHSP, Director of Behavioral Health, Pine Ridge Treatment Center (Advisory Council Co-Secretary / Southeast Regional Chair)
John B. Averitt, Ph.D., Upper Cumberland Psychological Associates/Police Psychological Officer, Cookeville Police Department
Ursula Bailey, JD, MBA, Attorney, Private Practice
Nancy L. Badger, Ph.D., Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Services Director, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Vickie Bilbrey, Volunteer Services Manager, Gentiva® Hospice
Nancy L. Badger, Ph.D., Director, Counseling Center, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Renee Brown, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Memphis VA Medical Center (Memphis/Shelby County Regional Chair)
Patsy Crockett, BSW, Case Manager IV, Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Cindy Johnson, Community Activist
Kelly S. Haught, MA, LPC-MHSP, Division Director, Specialty Services, Frontier Health
Emily Hill, Community Education Director, Behavioral Healthcare Center at Columbia
Mike LaBonte, Executive Director, Memphis Crisis Center
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Cognitive Behavioral Specialists of the Tri-Cities (Northeast Regional Chair)
Rita McNabb, Coordinated School Health Director, Cocke County Schools
Debra K. Moore, Community Representative, Bradford Health Services
Eve Nite, Business Development Specialist, Mental Health Cooperative of Chattanooga
Waring Porter, Pastor, All Saints Presbyterian Church
Kandi Shearer, Program Supervisor, Youth Villages Specialized Crisis Services
Angie Thompson, Director of Behavioral Health, Metro Public Health Department
Christen Thorpe, MS, CRC, CATSM, Coordinator of the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

Intra-State Departmental Group Members Present

Jacquelyn S. Bruce, Planning and Grants Management Supervisor, Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability
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
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

Advisory Council Members Absent

Sabrina Anderson, Boys and Girls Clubs of Jackson-Madison County
Kathy Benedetto, LPC, SPE, LMFT, Senior Vice-President, Tennessee Child and Youth Services, Frontier Health
Ellen Stowers, Assistant Director, Contact Lifeline
Becky Stoll, Vice President of the Crisis and Disaster Management Division within Centerstone
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 Absent

Jackie Berg, Training Specialist and Worker's Compensation Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Dustin Keller, LPC-MHSP, Director, Council on Children's Mental Health, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (Intra-State Departmental Group Chair)
Sumita Keller, Customer Services Administrator, Tennessee Department of Human Services
Delora Ruffin, MA, Program Specialist, Division of Child Health, Tennessee Department of Children's Services

TSPN Advisory Council Emeritus Group Members

Sam Bernard,

TSPN Staff Present

Granger Brown, MSW, LMSW, Substance Abuse Outreach Coordinator
Vladimir Enlow, MTS, TSPN Executive Assistant
Josh Richardson, MTSU Field Placement Student, MTSU
Scott Ridgway, MS, TSPN Executive Director

Guests

Jennifer Armstrong, Clinical Care Program Coordinator, Centerstone
Pam Arnell, MA, Arnell's Counseling Service (Advisory Council Co-Secretary / Chair, Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force)
JoAnne Perley, Public Health Graduate Student
Tawanda Scales, Trainer/Postvention Coordinator of the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project
Kay Witherspoon, Suicide Prevention Case Manager, Memphis VA Medical Center

Welcome and Introductions

- Harris called the meeting to order at 11:12 AM, welcoming new members.
- She thanked everyone who completed and submitted the Strategic Planning Session worksheets.

- Introductions proceeded around the room.
- Ridgway reviewed contents of the meeting packets, specifically noting the slides from Arnell's presentation later today and all the responses listed on the Strategic Planning Session worksheets. A summary of recurring themes was also provided to meeting participants.
- Ridgway noted that 90% of Advisory Council members turned in the worksheet.
- Leonard has agreed to facilitate the session; D. Keller had originally been slated to do so, but was not able to attend this meeting due to a last-minute family emergency.

Research Training Institute Report

- Ridgway turned the floor over to Love for a report on the Research Training Institute (RTI), which he attended earlier this month on TSPN's behalf alongside Jennifer Lockman of the Centerstone Research Institute.
 - The application submitted by the state of Tennessee was one of only eight or nine accepted.
 - Love recalled that many of the leading figures within the national suicide prevention movement were in attendance.
 - Many of the participants were aware of TSPN's efforts and were interested in replicating them within their own state or regional coalitions.
 - Lockman and Love had a research project in mind when they came to RTI, and the information they obtained at the event helped them refine it. The project is unique in that it will evaluate suicide prevention efforts across an entire state rather than a specific institution.
 - The next step of the project will involve contacting TSPN members—including members of the Advisory Council—for interviews about their work with TSPN. Survey participants will have the opportunity to talk about what aspects of the Network they consider most effective, where the agency needs to change or expand, and their vision for the future of TSPN. These qualitative assessments will be used in future grant applications and/or in follow-up research.
 - The grant from RTI covering this project is good for one year. Lockman, Love, Ridgway, and others will be working to collect responses.
- Ridgway thanked Love and the Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH) for their contributions to the project, and to the various state departments who provided information used in the application.
- Ridgway noted that Love has provided several graphs and charts from TDOH for inclusion in the packets. These charts demonstrate important factors in play regarding suicide in Tennessee, such as the stabilization of the suicide death rate since the increase noted in 2008.
- TDOH Commissioner Dreyzehner has authorized the inclusion of suicide prevention in the state's Primary Prevention Initiative—the first time a TDOH commissioner has explicitly listed suicide prevention as a major objective.
- Next week the State of Tennessee is scheduled to submit an application for inclusion in the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). Ridgway sees no obstacles to the application's acceptance, and if it is approved the state can begin submitting data immediately.
- For the benefit of new members, Ridgway explained how NVDRS provides states and communities with a clearer understanding of violent deaths to guide local decisions about violence prevention efforts.
- Ridgway noted that suicide is one of the top five causes of death for people aged 15 to 54 in the state of Tennessee, as shown on one of the charts Love provided.
- TSPN currently submits outcomes tied to the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention to the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), but these reports are not research-based. The RTI research project will provide TSPN and its supporters with definitive information on what precisely TSPN is doing that helps prevent suicide.

- Additionally, the NVDRS data will provide the state with real-time data on suicide that will lead to targeted outreach efforts.

Strategic Planning Session

- Guests reviewed the four-page summary of responses to the Strategic Planning Worksheet. Ridgway provided descriptions regarding certain terms in response to questions from the group.
- Chastain Beal asked Ridgway if there were any items in the “Weaknesses” section that he would dispute.
- Ridgway clarified that MHAMT has a grant-writer on staff, and he has put together some grant applications on our behalf with staff assistance (most notably the Ayers Foundation grant, which will fund projects in select Rural West counties). But MHAMT’s grant-writer has no designated time to work on TSPN projects. Additionally, since TSPN is technically part of MHAMT, it cannot pursue grants for which MHAMT is currently or has previously received funding.
- Regarding the regional representation issue, Ridgway stated that certain parts of the individual regions are better represented than others.
- Ridgway agreed with the need for efforts to ensure sustainability in the event Ridgway leaves the agency, and planned to address this issue after the session.
- The proposal for all regions to work on a single strategy or set of strategies for a given period of time is a good idea in theory, but in practice it would keep regional members from concentrating on projects relevant to local needs.
 - Stamps concurred, saying that regional members are better able to determine what needs to be done. Tatum commented that if the decisions on what projects to tackle are made locally, this ensures more buy-in from regional members.
- Ridgway agreed that the Network could stand to be more visible, although the Primary Prevention Initiative will provide TSPN with increased exposure on the statewide level.
- The central office is need of better equipment and tech support. Currently, TSPN uses MHAMT’s contracted tech support, who charges by the hour. Central office computers are still using Microsoft Office 2007. While traveling, Ridgway has had problems downloading and opening critical files hosted on the TSPN server. These problems could be fixed with the application of additional funding or recruitment of an employee with this skill set.
- MHAMT does not offer clinical support or debriefing for employees, which would be especially helpful following postvention operations. Although TSPN has access to the state EAP program, staff rarely have the opportunity to use this requires navigating the appointment process.
- Averitt expressed concern that he is never consulted regarding the many drug overdoses reported by the police department he works with. He notes that many of these people overdose multiple times. There is often a long wait for the long-term care these people needed.
- G. Brown added that these people rarely receive any kind of aftercare such as would be provided by an attempt survivor support group.
- Scales noted that undocumented immigrants are often completely locked out of mental health services due to their inability to negotiate the language barrier or because the services are only available to U.S. citizens.
- In regards to the “Opportunities” section, Ridgway referenced the Network’s movement on the “zero suicide” issue, from TSPN’s forthcoming participation in the Zero Suicide Academy to the project page on the TSPN website.
- Ridgway appreciated the idea of creating a generic PowerPoint presentation for regional trainers.
- He disputed the general assessment that TSPN was making the most of the available technology. He also noted issues that have come up with the facility housing MHAMT and the central office.
- In addition to the items listed in the “Threats” section, Ridgway noted the high rate of suicide among middle-aged males and the mental health stigma prevalent within this demographic. He

believes TSPN will have to redouble its efforts within this group to keep the suicide rate under control.

- He stated that leadership change at the state level is not the issue some members believe it is, considering that TSPN has received funding and endorsement from three consecutive gubernatorial administrations under both major political parties.
- Ridgway acknowledged members' concerns regarding the uncertainty of the appointment process, pointing out that the Emeritus Group was created to keep former Advisory Council members—especially those not reappointed but still interested in the agency—involved in TSPN projects.
- Following the formal review of the worksheet summary, Ridgway announced the availability of funding from TDMHSAS for the recruitment of two Regional Coordinators serving Middle Tennessee and West Tennessee. It is the intent of TSPN to have these positions filled by July 1. The work of these new employees should resolve some of the issue articulated in the “Weaknesses” and “Opportunities” sections.
- Furthermore, Ridgway is optimistic about the acceptance of a federal grant that will be used to fund an East Tennessee Regional Coordinator.
- Ridgway announced that G. Brown is retiring later this year, but he will provide support and training for the newly hired Regional Coordinators.
- TDMHSAS's funding of these positions and support of TSPN's recent grant applications is a testament to their belief in TSPN's mission and performance.
- TSPN's funding for the coming fiscal year is secure and may even be enhanced by the NVDRS grant. Further funding opportunities may be created by the RTI project and its assessment of needs.
- G. Brown has volunteered his assistance with postvention operations; Thorpe will also be available for these after the conclusion of the current TLC grant cycle.
- Ridgway cautioned that the Regional Coordinator will not take over all the projects and tasks performed by regional volunteers. He added that volunteers will remain critical to TSPN's mission, noting that their work over the past two years carries an estimated value of almost \$450,000.
 - Rather, the Regional Coordinators will work with regional members to arrange for the provision of brochures and other materials for regional events. The Coordinators may sit in on regional meetings in Ridgway's stead.
- The job descriptions for these positions will go out tomorrow over TSPN's statewide mailing list. MHAMT may have already posted the announcement on the Centers for Non-Profit Management website.
- G. Brown has committed to providing orientation and training for the Coordinators.
- Council members will be asked to participate in the interview process once the candidates are suitably narrowed down.
- Ridgway will be in Australia from August 7 through September 1; it is his objective to have the Coordinators in place and in operation before he leaves the country.
 - On a related note, Enlow will be on vacation from July 21 through August 1.
- The West Tennessee Regional Coordinator will probably be based out of BHL or Carey Counseling Center, as Jackson is a more central location to the region than Memphis.
- All three Coordinators will be periodically assessed regarding monthly benchmarks set by the central office and overall outcomes.
- Salary for these positions will be between \$38,000 and \$44,000, contingent on experience and qualifications.
- Each Coordinator will be instructed in the use of TN-WITS for recording data from the Substance Abuse Outreach Project training sessions.
- Once more, Ridgway thanked TDMHSAS for its continuing support of TSPN, specifically referencing the efforts of Assistant Commissioners Rod Bragg and Sejal West for their assistance in arranging this funding.

- Following the close of this segment of the meeting, members broke for lunch at 12:08 PM, reconvening for the business meeting at 12:53 PM.

Review of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

- Following members' review of the minutes from the February session, Tatum motioned for approval of the minutes as submitted. Arnell seconded the motion, which passed without objection.
- Any corrections to the minutes noticed after this point may be submitted to Enlow within the central office.

Membership Transitions

- Harris announced that the Executive Committee has selected Stamps as Advisory Council Secretary to fill out the term vacated by Arnell.
- Arnell was recognized for her previous service to the Network, receiving a commemorative plaque.
 - Ridgway recounted Arnell's contributions for the benefit of new members, explaining how she founded the Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force, provided extensive training to area law enforcement, and conducted original research on the implementation of the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention.
- Since her stroke in December, Anne Henning-Rowan has been moved to a physical rehab facility; there has been little improvement in her condition.
- Ahead of Arnell's presentation, Ridgway circulated copies of the church bulletin insert for dissemination ahead of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September. He noted that these inserts have been especially effective in rural parts of the state.
- Proceedings broke off at 12:59 PM for Arnell's presentation of the findings from her doctoral dissertation, resuming at 1:18 PM.

Regional Reports

Northeast Region

- Leonard reported that the regional Survivors of Suicide group has about 12-15 participants each session. He recommends establishment of a Suicide Anonymous group in the area.
- Leonard and other regional members have staged QPR training sessions at several local churches in recent month. He has found it helpful for Shearer to accompany him during his sessions— Leonard facilitates the course while Shearer provides additional information about bullying and available crisis services.
- The Ninth Annual Memorial Walk is planned for September 21 at Warrior's Path State Park in Kingsport. Phipps Harold has secured a donation for catering from a local barbecue restaurant and is in talks with a possible musical guest.
- "Saving Lives in Northeast Tennessee" will be held on September 26 at Wesley United Methodist Church in Johnson City. This conference is patterned after highly successful conferences staged by the Suicide Prevention and the African-American Faith Communities Initiative in Middle Tennessee, and promises to extend the region's contacts into previously unreached areas.
- Leonard currently has custody of the regional display board and would like to see this exhibited at more events across the region.

East Tennessee Region

- McNabb presented on behalf of Regional Chair Young, who was unable to attend.
- She introduced Bailey, who has been appointed to the Advisory Council representing the East Tennessee Region.
 - Meanwhile Briscoe has accepted the post of Director of the Wellness Center at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. She expects to move there sometime in July. She has

submitted a letter of resignation from the Advisory Council, which has been passed along to Boards and Commissions so they can identify a replacement.

- A regional conference entitled "Saving Lives in East Tennessee" is set for September 17, at Wallace Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville. Regional members have been contacting potential sponsors and possible guest for a panel on faith communities' response to suicide. The central office has circulated a call for presenters at this event.
- An agreement has been struck with a local artisan to create a regional memorial quilt, which will be kept by Young for exhibition at local events. The quilt will be formally dedicated at the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event. The central office created a promotional flyer for the regional quilt and sent this out to the core group last month.
- On September 19, the Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance will host an event on the issue of substance abuse and suicide, facilitated by TSPN Substance Abuse Outreach Coordinator Granger Brown.
 - Members discussed possible partners for this event, namely the local VA, K-Town, Focus Treatment Centers, UHC, Cornerstone, and Blount Memorial Hospital.

Upper Cumberland Region

- Bilbrey reported on behalf of Regional Chair Bartlett, who was unable to attend.
- The Daniel Seal Suicide Prevention Forum is set for September 4 at Avery Trace Middle School. The regional group is partnering with the Daniel Seal Suicide Prevention Foundation for this event.
- The Light of Hope event is planned for September 18 at Nashville State Community College.
- Dr. Christina Mick of Tennessee Tech University has provided QPR to 200 Tennessee Tech students and faculty over the course of the fall and is continuing to lead sessions.
- Region working with the regional chapter of the Society of Human Resource Managers, expressed interest in suicide prevention and mental health information for the Society's upcoming research fair. Ridgway will arrange for them to receive a link to *A Manager's Guide to Suicide Postvention in the Workplace*, a publication of the Carson J. Spencer Foundation.
- The region has an exhibit planned at the Upper Cumberland Resource Fair on June 27 and is considering a youth conference for this fall.
- Bilbrey closed by welcoming Averitt, a new Council appointee, to the group.

Southeast Region

- Tatum acknowledged Nite, who was recently appointed to the Council.
- Tatum will personally facilitate the suicide prevention segments for CIT courses being conducted by the Chattanooga Police Department during the last week of June.
- The region is coordinating outreach to five local health councils representing counties with high suicide rates. This includes a presentation to the Hamilton County Health Council on August 4.
- Tatum recently provided QPR training for 35 members of the Medical Assistants Association in Cleveland.
- Tatum and a psychiatrist from Skyridge were guests on the April 9 installment of a WGOW mental health segment; Tatum used this opportunity to promote TSPN and its website. He has a repeat appearance on this program tomorrow night.
- The central office and regional members are working with Joan Garrett McClane of the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press* for an upcoming article. McClane had requested a ride-along to a firearms retailer to document the presentation of materials associated with the Gun Safety Project, take some photographs, and get some commentary from the proprietor.
- The region has partnered with the Southeast Council on Children and Youth to plan a regional conference during September.
- Ridgway added that the Hamilton County Health Council differs from those in the surrounding counties in that several of its members are personally appointed the county's health commissioner.

- Nite had a meeting with the Health Council six months ago. The group was mostly made up of physicians, and they were very inquisitive and interested in the issue of suicide prevention.
- Thompson added that the Metro Public Health Department, which serves Nashville and Davidson County, has adopted a strong mental health component to its public health outreach efforts.

Mid-Cumberland Region

- Johnson reported that members have already assembled packets for the Nashville Sounds game scheduled for July 21.
- About 250 people attended “How To Save A Life: A Community Response to Suicide”, held March 20 in Nashville.
- The Montgomery-Houston-Humphreys-Stewart County (MHHS) Suicide Prevention Task Force has scheduled two training sessions on suicide among older adults for Erin and Clarksville on July 23.
- Ridgway will co-facilitate an ASIST training at Fort Campbell on June 12-13. The Network has provided ongoing support to the base, with Ridgway attending meetings of its suicide prevention task force. In return, this body usually sends a delegate to the MHHS Task Force sessions.
- Contacts at Fort Campbell are reporting a dramatic decrease in suicide among active-duty and Reserve forces thus far in 2014.
- Members are in the process of planning the annual Suicide Prevention Awareness Month observance, set for September 11 at Centennial Park in Nashville.
- Attendance has increased at the SOS-Clarksville meeting. Parents have requested breakout sessions within the group for teens participating in the group; this will probably require the assistance of an additional facilitator.

South Central Region

- Chastain Beal announced the pending development of a task force serving the counties of Bedford, Coffee, and Moore.
- 50 people attended “Saving Lives in South Central Tennessee”, held April 2 in Decherd.
- Cowboy Up! was a partner in the regional conference and continues to circulate Gun Safety Project materials on behalf of the Network.
- The meeting packets contain flyers for “Faces of Suicide, Volume 1”, which Chastain Beal co-edited. The e-book is available for Kindle via Amazon.
- Chastain Beal turned the floor over to Arnell for a report on the Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force.
 - So far this year Arnell has facilitated training for 85 Columbia State Community College students, as well as 69 law enforcement officers across seven counties.
 - The Task Force has scheduled a repeat of its highly successful Memorial Walk for September 13.
- Harris reported on behalf of the Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force.
 - Task Force members coordinated two depression screenings this spring at senior living apartment complexes, providing copies of the related toolkit to the managers. Another screening session was held at Perry County Medical Center.
 - The annual Awareness Walk will be held on September 13 on the Jerry Dixon Walking Trail in Centerville.

Rural West Region

- Crockett presented a report on behalf of regional chair Anderson, who was not able to make today’s meeting.
- An eight-week course for survivors of suicide is set to begin on June 2. Sessions will be held every Monday from 6:30-8:00 PM at Fellowship Bible Church in Jackson. The group is open to anyone in West Tennessee, not just the Jackson area.

- Two Union University students have expressed interest in TSPN internships; Ridgway expects to hear something back from them by August 1.
- The region is working to train law enforcement officers, recently providing QPR training to 29 correctional officers—including the sheriff—at the Lauderdale County Detention Facility. Officers from Dyer County also participated in the session.
- About 60 people total attended the “Older Adults and Suicide Prevention” training sessions held in Jackson and Martin on April 22 and May 6, respectively.
- Team Mica/TSPN will have an exhibit at the June 28 Jackson Generals home game.
- The group is planning a regional conference for the month of September.
- This is the first meeting for Crockett, who was recently appointed to the Advisory Council, and she is excited about her forthcoming work with the regional group and TSPN.

Memphis/Shelby County

- R. Brown prefaced her remarks with a brief statement on the VA waitlist controversy, reassuring the Council that no such practices ever occurred at the Memphis VA and that all patients, especially those with suicidal ideation, are seen and treated as soon as possible.
- The region is organizing “Saving Lives in Memphis/Shelby County” for September 16 at Hope Church in Cordova.
- The area has two newly QPR trainers. On a related note, Mike LaBonte is currently leading weekly training sessions at the Memphis Police Academy and assisting with crisis intervention at the Memphis Police Department’s request.
- The region has hosted two substance abuse training sessions since the last Advisory Council meeting.
- Attendance at meetings has increased sharply; R. Brown attributes this to outreach efforts by the central office.
- LaBonte added that the Memphis Crisis Center hosts monthly meetings to promote its services to local volunteers.

Davidson County Suicide Prevention Task Force

- Thompson explained that the Task Force is assisting with an effort to map city health indicators and environmental factors. This project is spearheaded by Healthy Nashville and the Leadership Council. The group held a summit in May in which they articulated mental and emotional health as a priority.
- It was also at this summit that the Suicide Prevention and the African-American Faith Communities Initiative was honored with the group’s Innovation Award in recognition of its suicide prevention efforts. Currently, 14 churches and other agencies are participating in the Initiative.
- At the Task Force’s last meeting, members reviewed recommendations from the “Next Steps” document that grew out of the 2011 white paper. Most of the objectives have been accomplished, and the Task Force will develop new ones after Health Nashville issues its project report.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee

- The Committee reviewed plans to reintroduce the Kenneth and Madge Tullis Suicide Prevention Act during the next session of the Tennessee General Assembly.
- Tatum provided a recap of the bill for new members, explaining that it is patterned after the highly successful and widely imitated Jason Flatt Act of 2007.
- Tatum anticipates a grass-roots effort involving regional members to convey public support for the legislation.
- He observed that there is a real need for this suicide prevention training, even among professionals who should theoretically know how to handle a suicidal client. He noted that the most

common type of calls he gets from therapists associated with Skyridge are request for guidance regarding actively suicidal patients.

- Ridgway spoke up to dispel certain rumors that had sprung up around the professional licensure legislation as it was being considered by the General Assembly:
 - The bill was not pulled due to complaints from the Tennessee Psychological Association (TPA) and other professional groups. In fact, TSPN worked with these groups and their lobbyists to refine the bill and explain why it was needed.
 - The real reason the legislation was pulled was due to the need to include several important amendments and edits. Additionally, TSPN central office staff were not able to lobby for the bill as much as they would have liked. A contributing factor was the six postvention operations the Network had to help facilitate in as many weeks—it simply left Ridgway and others with no time to go to the General Assembly and promote the bill.
 - A lobbyist with TPA has agreed to work on the bill's behalf when it is introduced next year.
 - Additionally, the bill was not pulled because of attached fiscal notes. Quite simply there were never any associated with it. For one thing, fiscal notes are not added to bills until they pass out of committee; in the second place, analyses by TDMHSAS and TDOH both stated that the bill would not place a financial burden on the state. Ridgway explained that at least this way when the bill is re-introduced, TSPN will not have to worry about this issue.
- Ridgway wants this legislation to be a high-profile bill during the next legislative session and is hoping for action from TSPN members to make that happen.
- He notes that a similar bill was signed into law in California just recently, also by way of a grass-roots campaign.
- This is an election year, and some of the bill's previous supporters may not be running or may be defeated. After the election is over, TSPN can create an information sheet on the bill suitable for provision to legislators.
- Ridgway also rejected the notion that TSPN developed this bill solely so they could market suicide prevention training and charge people for it. TSPN has never charged anyone for the training *per se*, although fees have been charged to cover the cost of materials. TSPN's motive for creating and promoting this bill is to ensure that people in the mental health field, especially practicing psychiatrists, have access to suicide prevention training at a level appropriate to their knowledge and background.
- Ridgway is planning to meet with representatives of the Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare to confirm their support of the bill when it is re-introduced. He is already assured of the support of several other mental health and social service agencies.
- As noted by Tatum's earlier comments and those from other people who work in this field, psychologists, counselors, and other mental health professionals are often not provided with suicide prevention training during their coursework.
- Bilbrey recalled her work with the Alzheimer's Association of Tennessee to support various bills. They typically send in a caravan of supporters in branded t-shirts to meet with legislators. The publicity they generate has led to a phenomenal success rate for the passage of legislation they support.
- Ridgway noted that the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention did send 25 activists to the General Assembly (the day after Mental Health Day on Capitol Hill) and were able to enlist several legislators as co-sponsors. He has word that prior to the bill's withdrawal, support for the legislation was nearly unanimous in the Senate but not as assured in the House, partly due to the rumors about the bill Ridgway addressed earlier.
- During the next push for the bill, Ridgway plans on having people from every discipline and background testify about the bill before the committees.

- Sparks cautioned that while suicide prevention activists in Kentucky and Washington were ultimately successful in getting this kind of legislation passed, neither bill passed the first time it was introduced. She complimented the Network on their efforts to pull the bill together so quickly.
 - She also suggested that after this bill makes it onto the books, TSPN might want to consider pushing for suicide prevention curriculum to be included in college curricula. This way psychology and social work students will be grounded in suicide prevention from the very beginning, reducing the number of unprepared professionals.
- Tatum noted that each TDMHSAS region has a legislative liaison; these people may be able to help with promotion the bill.
- In other news, the Committee reviewed the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation as revised by the central office and recommended no edits of its own.
- Ridgway articulated the proclamation goal of 100% participation by Tennessee counties. Last year 82 of the 95 counties participated, although the Network received over 100 proclamations total from city and county mayors.
- The proclamation is scheduled for statewide dissemination in two weeks. He anticipates high response since this is an election year and public officials want photo ops.

Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluations Committee

- Leonard reported that today's meeting involved a review of the proposed implementation of the "zero suicides" platform by the Zero Suicides Initiative Task Force.
- The Task Force's own statement for the project asserts that this is an aggressive undertaking with ambitious goals.
- R. Brown, a member of the Committee, offered to join the Task Force in order to assure implementation of the platform within the state's VA centers.
- The Committee appreciates the intent of the project but believes the stated objective of reaching every last hospital, ED, and substance abuse treatment facility in Tennessee by 2016 is asking too much. They recommend either pushing the deadline back or setting smaller goals in advance of the 100% outreach objective stipulated by the Task Force.
- Committee members were also unsure about the logistics involved in this project, how to engage every employee from the CEO on down. They suggested having designated instructors within each target facility who could lead the training sessions on TSPN's behalf.
- Ridgway explained that he hopes to learn more about implementing the project during the Zero Suicide Academy he will attend later this month. At this point the Network is simply trying to promote the project and encourage participation—hence the article about the concept in the most recent newsletter.
- The engagement of CEOs of managed care organizations (MCOs) will help the Network reach parts of the state where TSPN does not have active contacts.
- The formal start of the Initiative will be announced statewide on July 1.
- Ridgway recalled that Tennessee First Lady Tennessee Crissy Haslam was asked to be honorary chair of the Task Force, but declined citing other commitments. Ridgway and Sparks are co-chairing the Task Force.
- In response to a question from Averitt regarding accountability, Leonard explained that the Network will keep track of how many people and facilities are reached in the course of the project.
- Enlow added that one of the main selling points of the project for participating facilities is the opportunity for endorsement by TSPN as a regional or statewide leader in suicide prevention—a potentially valuable marketing tool.
- Ridgway pointed out that target facilities will be inclined to share this information system-wide for risk management purposes. He also noted the potential cost savings to MCOs—spotting and heading off potential suicide crises in patients and referring them to walk-in treatment centers

while they are still at moderate risk is more cost effective than treating the injuries associated with suicide attempts and deaths.

- Dave Covington, a member of the National Action Alliance who used to be the Vice-President Clinical & Program Outcomes for Magellan, noted a marked decrease in the number of suicides during the three-year pilot “zero suicides” program in place at its facilities—outcomes which were included in the framework document published later. Having anyone and everyone who interacts with patients trained in suicide prevention allows for earlier referrals.
- Averitt asked declared that the successful implementation of this project will be a credit to TSPN’s reputation.
- Sparks indicated plans for a publicly accessible database showing the results of the training and outreach efforts.
- In regards to a follow-up question from Averitt, Sparks alluded to the project’s later expansion to corporate levels of mental health facilities.

Outreach Committee

- Committee chair Chastain Beal delegated this report to Bilbrey, who reported on the development of the new memorial quilt.
- Currently, the quilt has six panels. If more panels are not received by the June 15 deadline, the Quilt Committee will issue instructions to proceed with creation of the quilt. However, it will be smaller than the others.
- The Committee resolved to invite Scott Couch to emcee the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event. Annette Lake will give the keynote, and Flatt will facilitate the dedication of the quilt.
- Members of the Committee discussed plans for the statewide symposium scheduled for next May. The Committee suggests the inclusion of a panel for survivors of suicide attempts.
- Publication of all three newsletters continues on schedule; anyone not getting these should contact the central office.
- All suicide support groups across the state are functioning and growing.

Intra-State Departmental Group

- Sparks acknowledged Love’s contributions in regards to the Research Training Institute and the cause of injury prevention within TDOH.
- The meeting was largely a recap of members’ efforts on behalf of TSPN and suicide prevention.
 - Cheek continues his involvement with the Commissioner’s Council on Armed Forces and Their Families, organized by Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs (TDVA). Suicide prevention remains one of the three core priorities of the group.
 - Riley-Philpo discussed continued efforts to provide risk reduction and resiliency training within the Tennessee National Guard. Of particular concern is the difficulty military health care providers have experienced in trying to access appropriate psychiatric care for troops in crisis. Riley-Philpo has been invited to participate in the next crisis center directors’ conference call to help resolve this issue.
- TDMHSAS is planning a PSA on the subject of veteran suicide. However, the project is currently on hold pending the development of a comprehensive listing of veteran mental health resources and peer support centers to accompany the spot. The Department would also like to make sure military health care professionals are more informed and more comfortable about seeking outside help.
- Sparks acknowledged TSPN’s ongoing role in training nurses at regional TDOH offices.
- Sparks turned the floor over to Bruce for an update on the state’s Employee Assistant Program (EAP). Bruce informed the group that all EAP offices have staff trained in QPR and that the program itself has been nationally certified. More information about the program is available on the EAP website (<http://www.tn.gov/finance/ins/eap.shtml>).

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- In the interest of time this report was skipped, but Ridgway directed guests to a related spreadsheet in the meeting packets. This chart shows the most recent call volumes from Tennessee call centers answering the line.

Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

- Thorpe announced that TLC is nearing the end of its third grand cycle. A report on preliminary outcomes is included in the meeting packets.
- She notes that TLC met or exceeded all its objectives except the one related to the Tennessee Higher Education Suicide Prevention Network (THESPN). This project involved partnering with colleges to have campus-specific instructors train students, faculty, and community members.
 - Thorpe explained that locating Project Instructors for each of the colleges in the project took longer than expected, but all of them are actively leading training sessions.
 - The target for THESPN may not be met by the July 31 end-date for this grant cycle, but the trainers are closing in on the objective and will definitely reach the required number of trainees during the next grant cycle.
- TDMHSAS has applied for a fourth round of funding for the project. Even as the current cycle winds down, project staff are still coordinating QPR sessions and providing pre/post-survey data to partners at Centerstone Research Institute.
- TLC is currently collaborating with TSPN, TDMHSAS, MHAMT, and others to develop an online e-learning project for emergency departments.
 - While TLC already has an in-person curriculum in place, the vagaries of ED shifts and assignments make getting every last member of a department in the same room impossible. The e-learning course allows for ED staff to take the course on their own time.
 - After weeks of development, a pilot version of the course should be available by the end of the summer.
- Thorpe concluded by noting that ASIST training goals were only a few trainees short of completion as of the February meeting, and these have since been fulfilled.

TDMHSAS Update

- Sparks observes that she and her staff have spent the better part of the last month on the Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) grant. The grant awards will probably be announced in September ahead of official rollout on October 1. Her division is working under the assumption that the application will be accepted.
- The new grant will include enhanced follow-up for youth served by the project. A review of outcomes has demonstrated that children and adolescents on private insurance are actually less likely to receive follow-up after receiving mental health care than those without. Youth in the latter cohort are typically on TennCare and already receive wraparound services.
- The grant also focuses on improved knowledge among first responder so they can better assist with crisis interventions.
- Lockman continues to make progress on the evaluation component of the project.
- Sparks explained the restructuring of the Department's youth crisis response network and the shift of operations to local crisis centers. A map included in the meeting packets outlines the assignments of counties.
- Youth Villages regional offices will now serve most parts of the state with some exception. The northeastern part of Tennessee is assigned to Frontier Health, the Knoxville area was delegated to the Helen Ross McNabb Center, and Mental Health Cooperative will take calls from Metro Nashville-Davidson County.
- All the regional contracts will be continuously monitored and evaluated over the course of the next fiscal year.
- Sparks announced the System of Care's logo design contest; she encouraged guests to share the promotional flyer included in the meeting packets.

- Also included in the packets is a press release outlining the Department's response to Tennessee's prescription drug abuse epidemic; the document is also available for review on the Department's website.
- A standardized version of the law enforcement training has been approved for accreditation, and next month it will be made available to trainers. The program includes guidelines for working with people with autism and intellectual disabilities.
- A booster for the Shield of Care project, an evidence-based suicide prevention curriculum for staff of juvenile justice facilities, is set for release on July 1. It includes a standardized crisis assessment which incorporates the Columbia Suicide Risk Severity Scale.
 - Shield of Care evolved out of the findings and recommendations generated by TLC's third grant cycle.

Executive Director's Report

- Ridgway expressed his thanks for Sparks's continuing involvement TSPN, as well the ongoing support of Grinder and TDMHSAS Commissioner Doug Varney.
- He acknowledged Armstrong, who will join him at the upcoming Crisis Center/Contact USA conference. Chastain, Beal, Johnson, and Ridgway will participate in a panel at this event.
- This weekend G. Brown will operate an exhibit on TSPN's behalf at the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association Conference in Murfreesboro. While the vendor registration fee was very expensive, TSPN's presence at the event will open doors regarding outreach to funeral homes across the state.
- The next meeting of the Advisory Council will be on September 10, immediately following the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event and a luncheon sponsored by Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital.
- The central office will send out a request for nominations for this year's Regional Suicide Prevention Awards—along with the Madge and Ken Tullis, MD, Suicide Prevention Award—on Monday.
- Ridgway personally facilitated a QPR session for 40 Adult Protective Services (APS) staff on May 28 at the request of Raquel Hatter, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services. Feedback from the session was overwhelmingly positive.
- Training will be eventually provided to another 100 APS staff members by January 2015.
- G. Brown will be honored for his service to TSPN and for his 40 years of work in crisis services during the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event.
- Ridgway closed out his report, and the meeting, with his sincerest thanks to Advisory Council members for their commitment to the Network.

Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.