 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**October 5, 2023**

Attendees: Shelly Sizer, Cindy Whitesell, Dr. Weintraub, Lonnie Wangen, Joyal Meyer, LTC Ann Willoughby, Michelle Panos (All virtual)

Absent: David Becker, BG Jackie Huber, Pam Sagness

**1. Opening.** Chairman Shelly Sizer briefly opened the meeting.

**2. Minutes.** The minutes from the August 3rd meeting were accepted as written.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **NDHHS, Health:** Joyal stated that the Fatality Review Commission members have been appointed and their first meeting will be in the middle of October, and Meliss Markegard is the presiding officer of the commission. Military related suicides for 2021 (16), 2022 (19) and for 2023 so far, there are (16). The suicide dashboard will be completed after the overdose dashboard.
  + **NDDVA**: LTC Willoughby stated that November 1-2, the ASIST suicide prevention course will be conducted in Jamestown where community partners attend. Dinette Wolf is a new suicide prevention coordinator for the Guard. LTC Willoughby also reviewed the NDNG Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) where servicemembers by self-refer for be command directed to attend. Corean Swart is the new primary prevention coordinator who will help all programs work better together. Laurie Sandlin will be working with Erica Davidson as a sexual assault response coordinator. There will be family Halloween events in both Bismarck, Fargo, and Grand Forks. Concerning the pending government shut down there are mission essential personnel who will need to show up for work but may not get paid, while others are sent home and cannot work. For those service members who experience hardship due to the shutdown, the NDNG has emergency funds to make sure they can eat and put gas in their tanks. For mobilizations and demobilizations, the 188th Air Defense Artillery Battalion is down at Fort Bliss waiting to go to CENTCOM (Southwest Asia). There is a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new operations building in Fargo, Oct 7. Sherry Adams is the new ESGR chairman. She replaces Delton Steele. The funeral for LTC Doug Larson and his family is at Trinity Lutheran Church, which is located at 502 N 4th St, and his burial will be at the Veterans Cemetery, which will be right after the service.
  + **ND Dept of Veterans Affairs**: Lonnie stated that NDNG members can take advantage of the $5000 low interest veteran aid loan. Lonnie also reported that SAVE and CALM training took place at the CVSO training in Mandan. Several veterans from around the state have been through the veterans’ courts in Grand Forks County so the process is working great. The Hidden Wounds bridge ceremony will be pushed back to May of 2024, and it will have a 988 sign with a 988 press 1 for veterans sign to be installed later. In fact, Lonnie is working with the DOT and NDDHHS to install 988 signs throughout the state. He also met with the Ms. Capra of the National Association Community Health Centers, and they have agreed to help the Governors Challenge efforts. In addition, Christy Martinson can put us in touch with all the FQHCs.
  + **Regional VA, Fargo**: Dr. Weintraub stated that the VA Healthcare System is somewhat insulated from the effects of a government shutdown due to an advanced appropriation, so there is no interruption in services. Suicide prevention has been a top priority for the VA, and they will hire more people to support it. They are promoting the COMPACT and PACT Acts. The VA has screened over 65% (24,000 +) of their veterans for PACT Act conditions and around 45% respond positively when asked the question. Secondary screens are occurring in a timely manner and the veterans are connected to services right away.

**4. Old Business**

* Michelle talked about the ND Cares Partner presentations for Dakota Home Care and Mandan Automotive. Shelly talked about her experience at the presentation. In October we will present to the Minot Lodge – formerly Wellington assisted liver, which is already a partner, but with new owners and management a new partner presentation is needed. We would also like to present to Northrup Grumman during the stand down in Minot for providing sponsorship to the stand down every year. We have a new COMPACT Act radio ad running now. Medal of Honor recipient, Clint Romesha will be coming to Bismarck to record a live version for television. For the Governor’s Challenge update Lonnie stated that he requested death records for the last five years, but he hasn’t received them yet. The ND Hospital Association is allowing us to present on the COMPACT Act and Sarah Kemp Tabbut will present on CALM training during the ND Behavioral Health Conference. We’re also promoting the Star Behavioral Health Provider training the National Guard Bureau is paying for. We will also have a booth at Recovery Reinvented and the behavioral Health Conference promoting the program, giving out gun locks and the data books. For peer supports Heather Brandt is supervising the state’s peer support program until they can hire another administrator. Once the conferences are over we can being visiting the veterans organizations that are interested in learning more about the program. A one-page promotional flyer will be developed for marketing purposes. By the end of October about 5500 gun lock will have been distributed by various partners. About 260 people have completed the CALM training. We received information from Maryland on their medicine storage program that we haven’t delved into yet. ND Hopes planned have a booth at the Williston Gun show handing out suicide prevention information, but at the last minute the organizers changed their mind and will only allow them to walk the show. Michelle stated that eventually ND Cares will host the Governor’s Challenge statics dashboard on its website. Lastly, she showed the link to the Psycharmor portal for military culture training.

**5. UPCOMING EVENTS**

Michelle highlighted some of the following events:

1. **Service Dogs of America**: Fall Volunteer Day, Oct 7, Jud
2. [**AFSP Out of the Darkness Walks**](https://supporting.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.eventList&eventGroupID=9AA117B3-F522-BB6D-359D1AA2D75A7958&state=ND)**:** Oct 8, Valley City
3. [**Behavioral Health & Children Services Conference (in-person/virtual):**](https://www.hhs.nd.gov/behavioral-health/conference) Oct 24-26, Bismarck
4. [**Buddy Check Week**](https://www.va.gov/initiatives/national-buddy-check-week-talk-to-10-veterans/), Oct 16-20
5. **Film**: [**I Married the War**](https://imarriedthewar.com/2023/09/26/yes-film-festival-upcoming-screenings-and-more/)**,** Oct 17, Bijou Theater, Beach ND & Oct 19 Fargo Air Museum
6. **Minot Stand Down:** Oct. 19, Armed Forces Reserve Center, Minot
7. **Governor’s Challenge Team Mtg**: Nov 8, Virtual
8. **ACOVA:** Nov16-17, American Legion Post 29, Watford City
9. **FirstLink:** [**Suicide Risk Assessment: Live One Hour Webinar**](https://myfirstlink.org/trainings/), Dec 5

1. **[AFSP Out of the Darkness Walks](https://supporting.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.eventList&eventGroupID=9AA117B3-F522-BB6D-359D1AA2D75A7958&state=ND)::** Oct 8, Valley City

1. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

The next Coalition meeting date is December 7,, 2023, and the next Executive Committee meeting date is November 2, 2023