ND Cares Coalition Jan 24th 2019.

Chair Connie Sprynczynatyk opened the meeting with a welcome and introduction by all members of the coalition.

Members on the phone were Bryan Waters, Summer Hanson, Dave Klein, Cindy Miller, Kellie Weiand, Paula Heitmann, Cindy Miller, Pam Sagness, Emily Brown, David Francavilla.

Members present were Robert Becklund, Rebecca Quinn, Davina French, Kirby Schmidtgall, Alison Traynor, Mitch Barta, Tim Wicks, Nicki Froehlich, Lisa Peterson, Suzanne Richards, Patrick Joyce, Amy Ruff, Joyal Meyer, Nicole Berman, Darcie Handt, and Joe Faller.

Cindy Miller began by updating us on Firstlink. This included an overview and statistics for this last year. Also discussed new initiatives including texting for resources and support, and suicide follow up calls.

Rebecca Quinn briefed the Brain Injury legislative initiatives. The main bill is the brain injury definition bill. This is a clean-up bill to define a brain injury. This will include stroke and aneurism patients in the definition. Many other legislative issues fall under the Health and Human Services bills. Legislation also about brain injury and hyperbaric oxygen chamber and treatment which carries a bill with it. A bill to create small adult foster homes.

Lisa Peterson discussed moving women’s prison from New England ND to Bismarck ND. Many individuals do not understand that the prison in New England is privately run. Continuation of Free through Recovery initiatives are in their budget. Pre-trial services bill got a do pass in committee. A bill would create a trauma informed services committee.

Brig General Becklund briefed the National Guard legislative issues including increase tuition assistance, expansion of Camp Grafton South, seeking budget inclusion to restore the 3rd social worker, ability of the Adjutant General to receive private funds to be used to support Service Members, Veterans, Families and Survivors.

Pam Sagness briefed from the matrix that was forwarded to all members. Matrix shows what part of the continuum the bill addresses, the current Dept of Human Services budget, proposed changes from the Governors proposed budget, and then all Dept of Health bills and lastly all bills with the HSR Study. We are requesting an expansion of the Free through Recovery program. Requested funding for peer support certification. Peer support be reimbursed through the Medicaid program. Would like to see the Parents Lead program be restored. A recovery home grant program to support recovery homes and other places to work on skills. Suicide prevention program FTE and budget will move to the Dept of Human Services from the Dept of Health. Lastly Human Service Centers are looking to expand crises services throughout the state. Discussion followed about both the Crisis action team and the peer support specialist program.

Bryan Watters talked about the ND Dept of Veteran Affairs/ACOVA bills including Veterans Legislative name change, two tax exemption bills for retired and military pay, grant out of general funds for the Service Dogs for America, funding for a DAV Van, NSO/VSO funding for the National Service Organizations to help assist their advocate office at the Regional VA, funding to assist conducting Standdowns throughout the state, allow the Dept to work with both public and private entities and form partnerships to assist Veterans, ACOVA would be allowed to help establish investment goals for the Post War Trust Fund, NDDVA could accept and expend private donations also allowing them to apply for third party grants, would allow past military service members access to loan and grant programs and changes to the Veterans employment preference program.

Kirby & Amy talked about the peer support training that Kirby attended. Discussion involved who is in attendance and how that can change each training. As a professional; it is very different from attending as an individual in recovery.

Allison talked about the move from the Dept of Health to the Health and Human Services Division. Working to align the Suicide Prevention Coalition strategy with the HSIR report.

Lisa Peterson talked about the availability of service dogs, through DOCR, which are being trained through their program.

Ad hoc conversation took place about the need for a Veterans Court in ND. Connie said further discussion is required on this topic.

Summer Hanson talked about a couple of yellow ribbon events coming up. Also offered to invite the VJO social worker to a meeting to provide additional information about the program.

Kellie Weiand discussed a couple of Women’s event in New Town and Cando; and a Standdown in Devils Lake.

David Fancavilla gave out a phone number (VA Whitehouse Hotline) for individuals who cannot get an answer from the VA or who have a compliment. Address any issue(choice, care in the community, etc) 1-855-948-2311.

Joe talked about the current 46 communities. Website is running but not a big draw. Facebook is getting the word out about events, scholarships and other Veteran related subjects. The newsletter went out in early January. The next teleconference is scheduled for Mar 7th for members, communities and businesses.

Darcie talked about the current 16 businesses. Discussed how important the NDNG Legislation to allow the foundation to accept and then expend funds to support the Service Member, Veterans, Families and Survivors is to support our business initiative. This will allow businesses to provide funds which ND Cares can then use to support SMVFS. Talked about our objective to integrate Military Culture into college courses. Have met the objective at Minot State but looking to expand to NDSU and UND. Looking at conducting our next ND Cares training in Fargo. Working with Grant Larson of the Fargo ND Cares to get it scheduled. We are getting a 17 to 1 return on investment with our Broadcasters Association media contract. Discussed our relationship with Firstlink to help improve the available resources within their database. Also asked that individuals let us know if you are speaking with outside entities about ND Cares to help support that objective. Employer Summit for Minot ND has been cancelled due to lack of registration. March 29th there will be a Vietnam Veterans ceremony at the Capitol.

Next coalition meeting will be scheduled for early May 2019. We will poll the group for the best dates.