 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
 January 12, 2022**

Attendees: Connie Sprynczynatyk, Shelley Sizer, Joyal Meyer,  
 Breton Weintraub, Michelle Panos

Absent: Pam Sagness, BG Jackie Huber, Davina French  
 David Becker, Cindy Whitesell, Lonnie Wangen

**1. Opening.** Connie briefly opened the meeting.

**2. Minutes.** Minutes from the November 17, 2021, meeting were accepted as written.

**3. Old Business:**

* Michelle Panos reported that the cities of Columbus and Jamestown are now ND Cares Partner Communities. The City of Columbus city sign presentation was December 8 before their city council meeting and when well. The City Auditor previously worked for family programs at Minot AFB several years ago as a contractor. In Jamestown presentation occurred during their council meeting where she spoke to them about the various activities they could engage in with no cost to them. She them gave them examples of service member or veterans organizations that are actively fundraising. The Jamestown Sun wrote a front-page article about the presentation. Connie suggested that the League of Cities maybe interested in an article about this for their City Scan magazine. Michelle also mentioned that ND Cares will participate in the League’s Spring Workshop in March.
* For the strategic plan update Michelle reported that Sara Kemp-Tabbut of the VA and Nikki Frohlich of Military Outreach will partner to offer military culture training to VA community providers. The training will also offer continuing education units. Michelle is also working on content for the next Partner Update newsletter such as a Department of Labor business event, Lethal Means Safety and Storage and updates on the new ads ND Cares is running and another suggested action item for community of business partners. Nikki Frohlich is working with the DVA and other veterans’ organization on a stand down in Bismarck sometime in August. She will also invite tribal veteran service officers to participate.

Michelle also reported that the Broadcaster Association wanted to know which ads (spots) ND Cares wanted to run for the coming year. Michelle reached out to the Veterans Home and FirstLink to see if they wanted to update the ads. The Veterans Home is working with a PR firm to produce come TV and radio ads that should be reach by the end of January. FirstLink will be creating a new add to announce the implementation of the 988 National Suicide Crisis Line sometime this year. ND Cares will run that ad once it produced along with the 30-sec TV spot of SGT Nathan Griffin talking about his suicide ideation. The Griffin TV spot will run as soon as FirstLink adds the partnership phrase to the last frames of the TV spot. We will not use the radio version because when they edited I, the PR firm did not leave in the fact that Griffin is in the military. The Steve Anderson spots will run until September. The Chief Miller radio spot will be retired. Shelly Sizer suggested that a tribal member veteran would also a good candidate for a TV or radio spot.

* On the TRICARE matter, Connie reported that she had to change pharmacies because Sanford is no in the Tricare network but oddly the nursing home pharmacy was indeed in network. Connie also suggest that the larger Tricare problem could be mentioned in the next CASA report and Shelly agreed. Shelly too received an out-of-network letter from her pharmacy. Shelly bring up the subject at the next CASA meeting and see if any other states are experiencing the same problems.

Michelle reported that shortly before Christmas the TRICARE working group was on a conference call with staff from AG’s office who represent the licensing boards and affected by the Tricare barriers. Generally they seemed to be supportive of the working group’s efforts to acquire the waivers. There will also two members of the board on the call. They confirmed that ND’s education and experience requirements are more stringent than many other states. Kirby explained that Tricare only recognizes degrees from institutions that are CACREP accredited and NDSU is the only one in the state. There was a suggestion that we provide Tricare with information about how providers must also be licensed through the Behavioral Health Division stringent criteria. Perhaps that criteria would satisfy the requirement. There was another suggestion ask Tricare if the substance use professional providers that the US Dept. of Transportation truck drivers to see, would qualify. Lastly is was mentioned that the Behavioral Health Division makes available the Substance Use Disorder Voucher for those with no insurance or if their insurance is inadequate.

Dr. Weintraub suggested that if the Tricare contractor is not living up to access standards in their contract perhaps there is remedy at the federal level. He recommended contacting counterparts in other states to determine if they have similar problems.

1. **New Business**
   1. **Executive Committee Updates**
      1. **Fargo VA:** Dr. Weintraub reported that COVID cases are up but still relative low compared to where they were a year ago but that could change because hospitalization lag behind the case numbers - they will know within the next few days. If so, hopefully the cases will involve fewer people on ventilators and in ICU.
      2. **ND Dept. of Health:** Joyal Meyer reported that she is on the planning committee for the Suicide Prevention Conference where they have secured national speaker Dennis Gillen who had brother die by suicide within 11 years of each other, as the keynote. In-person attendance numbers will be capped at 125 at to allow for proper table spacing. People are “encouraged” to wear masks but are not mandated to do so. There is also a virtual option. Kodi Pinks is working on presenting updated suicide data 2020 that will include Violent Death Reporting System (ND-VDRS) information. They are hoping that the YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance system) data will be completed and available to present.

The Department of Health is continuing with COVID efforts including contact tracing where some of the DOH employees are periodically call back to help with that. They are certainly still providing school close contact notifications to parents.

* + 1. **Shelly Sizer:** Shelly reported that the United States Army Recruiting Command is  
       gearing up for a June educational conference at Fort Stuart in Georgia and she will reach out to Kristen Baesler of DPI for prospective attendees. To incentivize people to come they are offering a tandem skydive jump. The idea is to get into as many schools as possible and talking about what the Army. Another effort is to recruit more people who already credentialed as doctors and nurses. If Kristen cannot attend them perhaps Nick Archuleta, the head of the NDEA. Connie suggested that if Kristen Baesler cannot attend then perhaps Shelly can approach the chair or vice chair of the Education Committee or Sen. Dick Dever, or the president of the North Dakota School Boards Association. Michelle also suggested Reice Haas in the governor’s office. HaJoyal recommended Robin Lang, Associate Director of Education Improvement of DPI.   
         
       There is a quarterly CASA conference this afternoon and she will bring up the Tricare issue.

**5. Upcoming Events**

The events were discussed as written. **6. Next Meeting Date**

The next Executive Committee meeting day is scheduled for March 9th or 10 depending what   
 is convenient for everyone.