 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**April 7, 2022**

Attendees

Shelly Sizer, Cindy Whitesell, BG Huber, Joyal Meyer, Dr. Weintraub, Pam Sagness, David Becker, Michelle Panos (all virtual)

Absent:  
Lonnie Wangen, LTC Willoughby

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

**2. Minutes.** Minutes from the Mar 9, 2022 meeting were accepted as written.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **ND Dept. of Health:** With regard to the veteran suicide data, Joyal stated that the ND Dept. of Veterans Affairs request for more detailed veteran death information was sent to the AG’s office for comment and we are still waiting for a response. Shelly asked about the national veteran suicide numbers to which BG Huber replied there were 17-18 per day.
  + **Co-Chair:** Cindy reported that the Minot Military Affairs Committee meets today, and MG Dohrmann is speaking so it should be a well-attended meeting. Cindy will try to do more face-to-face meetings with the AFB to exchange information.
  + **Fargo VA:** Dr. Weintraub reported that they are trying to expand capacity and mental health in our region and looking at ways to expand the use Telehealth. In terms of travel, they are no longer under the COVID restrictions so that allows them to travel more. There is still a restriction for person who's unvaccinated since we have a federal mandate.
  + **ND Behavioral Health Division:** Pam reported that there was a study being done by the interim committees on assessing additional need for Inpatient or residential beds focusing on acute psychiatric needs. The study showed that we have enough beds however they may not be in the right places throughout the state. On the east side of the state many beds are taken by Minnesota patients. Currently CHI is proposing to open a 10-bed unit in Dickinson and a 10-bed unit in Williston. Heartview was recently awarded funding to open a 16-bed residential program for addiction in Dickinson. Hopefully they will work together with CHI to coordinated in-patient and outpatient needs. There is also $5 million to fund additional project like this. Pam also talked about the progress made with the mobile crisis units and about funding for telehealth capability (iPads, etc.) and transportation reimbursement to serve people outside of the 45-mile restriction from the Human Service Centers. There will be an education period when 988 is activated to train people to us 988 instead of calling 911 for mental health related emergencies. If needed, the mobile crisis teams with contact law enforcement.
  + **ND National Guard:** BG Huber reported that the NDNG completed COVID support operations with over 133, 000 personnel days – the largest number of days in NDNG history. About 90% of the force is vaccinated. They are currently prepping for fire suppression and cyber security support. She also talked about units getting ready to deploy or return from the US capitol region, the southwest border or Kuwait. She also shared NDNG suicide data: in 2021 there were 19 ideations, 2 attempts and 0 completions; and two ideations in 2022 so far. This could be the result of anti-stigma messaging and breaking down the barriers to getting help.
  + **Chairman:** Shelly reported that she will welcome inthe Honor Flight back into Bismarck, April 11 at 6PM. These flights bring local veterans to our national capitol for events and return home. On April 12 she will meet with Recruitment and Retention to talk about diversity. On April 13 she will present Sparling Construction with an ND Cares Partner certificate, and on April 14 she will speak at the NDSU, ROTC commencement in Fargo. Lastly, Shelly mentioned that she forwarded ND’s Tricare provider shortage concerns to the Secretary of the Army. At a recent meeting of CASAs she learned that other states are dealing with this issue too.

**4. Old Business**

* Michelle reported that Sparling Construction will become the 20th ND Cares Business Partner on April 23 where we will hold a certificate presentation and Nikki Frohlich will conduct military culture training. We also received an application from the Healing Center Counseling and Consulting, but the presentation date is yet to be set. ND Cares Community Partners stands at 51. She is currently working with a McKenzie County employee to have the entire county join as a partner.
* For the Strategic Plan Update, Michelle reported that ND Cares received radio and TV spots for the Veterans Home, but they need formatting adjustments before they air. Nikki Frohlich has another military culture training planned for Sparling Construction
* The Governor’s Challenge Team roster was discussed and the dates of the first meetings were announced as the mornings of May 16 and 17.
* Michelle also reported latest developments concerning TRICARE. The working group received a list of Domestic Abuse/Sexual Trauma treatment providers broken down by those providers which openings within Tricare’s access standard and those with opening too far out, or with no openings. Tricare also researched providers reimbursement timeliness and determined that 90% of claims were paid within 30 days. We are still waiting for Tricare to determine if the Behavioral Health licensing criteria for substance abuse programs will suffice as a valid licensing entity recognized by Tricare. We are also waiting for clarification on contradictory information in Tricare literature concerning which mental health counselors may practice unsupervised.

**5. Upcoming Events**

1. **UPCOMING EVENTS**
2. **TAPS Peer Mentor Virtual Training:** Apr 25
3. **First Link ASIST Training:** June 8-9, Fargo: $250
4. **First Link Suicide Risk Assessment Webinar:** April 21, May 28
5. **First Link Suicide Prevention Awareness Film Festival:** April 28, Fargo Theater
6. **Minot Military Affairs Committee:** May 6**.**
7. **Brain Injury Network, Powerful Tools for Caregivers online series:** April 5 – May 10
8. **ACOVA Meeting:** May 19, 20, Veterans Club, Steele
9. **Grand Forks Military Affairs Committee:** April 20
10. **Fargo/Moorhead Military Affairs Committee:** April 15
11. **Devils Lake Military Affairs Committee:** April 28
12. **Holocaust Education Events –** Now through May 3, Bismarck Veterans Memorial Library
13. **Williston Military Affairs Committee:** May 6
14. **VA Caregiver Conference:** April 27, Moorhead MN
15. **VA Powerful Tools for Caregivers online series:** April 7 – May 12
16. **Governor’s Challenge Pre-Academy Site Visit 1 (virtual):** May 16-17
17. **Remembrance Weekend:** May 29-31, Ramada Inn Bismarck
18. **Memorial Day Event:** Veteran’s Cemetery, Mandan – May 30
19. **ND Behavioral Health & Children and Family** **Conference** – Oct. 11-13, Fargo

1. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

* The next Executive Committee meeting date is June 2, 2022 at 10:30 - Noon and the next Coalition meeting date is Aug 4, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.