A picture containing text, computer, indoor, computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect. **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
 March 6, 2025, 10:30 AM  
  
 Attendees: Cindy Whitesell, Kodi Pinks, Bryan Watters,   
 Michelle Panos (All virtual)  
   
 Absent:** David Becker, Shelly Sizer, Lonnie Wangen, Rodney  
 Gellner, Pam Sagness, BG Huber, LTC Willoughby

**1. Opening.** Michelle Panos briefly opened the meeting as Cindy Whitesell had technical difficulties.

**2. Presentation:** Andrea Hochhalter, President of the ND Peer Support Association, established in 2022, talked about her organizations planned efforts concerning veterans. There are approximately 1200 individuals who have completed peer support training in the state of North Dakota – around 250 are certified. One of the requirements of a 3-year grant is to identify a population of disparity – they chose veterans. Their goal is to assistance in long term recovery and wellness, foster future of hope, a future of health. They are directing peer supports to the Military Culture endorsement on the PsychArmor website and plan to incorporate veterans’ topics during “lunch and learns” for their member and establishing a resource library. They are also looking for a veteran to join their board of directors and eventually on their advisory council. Michelle invited them to become an ND Cares Business Partner.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **NDDVA:** Bryan Watter briefly spoke about the PeoplePrism data and their difficulties getting complete data. Lonnie continues to work with the legislature on veteran specific bills and especially concerning bill that would allow entities other than certified veterans service officers to work on benefits claims. These entities could charge a fee equal to a portion of the veterans’ benefits.
  + **NDHHS:** Kodi Pinks reported that we are still at 3 suicides for the calendar year and the numbers for 2024 is still 22, but it could change all the way up until April when they close out the 2024 cases.

**4. Old Business**Michelle reported on the Nathan Griffen veteran-988 video was filmed and so now they're in the editing phase. The 2024 ND Military Data Book is with designer and just waiting for updates. For Priority Area One of the Governors Challenge initiatives, Safety Planning training is on Monday. There have been 312 SAVE-trained so far, and there should be for more 40 when Tammy from the VA completed the more recent training. Nikki will present military culture training at the energy country behavioral health summit coming up. In April we’re offering military culture training at the armory in Bismarck for Understanding Veterans and in the Military. For Priority Area 2, peers support, we will send out flyers for the upcoming training in Minot and PSAND’s board position. For Priority Area 3 Michelle shared the Pause to Protect organization’s website where maps show where firearm industry establishments have agreed to be safe storage places – there were just a handful in North Dakota but two were in Minot. We will be reaching out to them as part of the Governors Challenge and asking them to be involved. Michelle briefly talked about the ND Cares budget and stated 67% has been expended and there is 33% left for the end of the biennium. The upcoming budget cut should not have an impact on effectiveness. There has been no change to the funds in the National Guard Foundation account. The number of spots on air via the Broadcasters Association contract is down a bit but should ramp up with the 988 campaign through the state. Lastly Michelle talked about the latest meeting with TriWest. The change over from the previous contractor did no go well as all the files were not transferred completely or correctly. Members were having difficulty signing up and providers were not showing up in the directory; This problem needs to be cleared up before we can commence the mapping project.

**5. Upcoming Events**

Michelle highlighted some of the events listed below:

1. [**2025 Legislative Session Deadlines**](https://ndlegis.gov/sites/default/files/resource/69-2025/legislative-deadlines/2025-legislative-deadlines.pdf)
2. First day of Legislative Session: Jan 7
3. [**FirstLink Trainings**](https://myfirstlink.org/trainings/): **What Happens When You Call 988**, Jan 15, Virtual
4. [**Star Behavioral Health Providers Training**](https://starproviders.org/providers-tier-training/)
5. [**ND Brain Injury Network Events**](https://www.ndbin.org/events/upcoming)
6. **NDSPC** [**Quarterly**](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/QA7elUdHSve6NDwjWtGfGw#/registration) **Meeting:** Jan 8, Virtual
7. [**ACOVA Meeting**](https://www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/popup.php?op=view&id=178828055&crd=nddva): Feb 13-14 Comfort Inn, Bismarck
8. ND Cares/VA Provider Mental Health Summit: April 23, RJB Armory, Bismarck
9. [**American Red Cross Military & Veteran Caregiver Network Jan Events**](https://www.redcross.org/get-help/military-families/services-for-veterans/military-veteran-caregiver-network/mvcn-calendar.html)
10. [**NDSPC Hope Cafe**](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwkfu2qrD0jEtAsAT_ex1_Y385tqqxpUlMg#/registration): **Safety Planning Resources, Feb. 11, Virtual**
11. Governors Challenge Innovations Conference: May 20-22, Austin TX
12. Suicide Mortality Review Conference: Washington DC, Summer 2025.

1. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

The next Coalition meeting date is February 6,2025, and the next Executive Committee meeting date is April 3, 2025.

The meeting ended at 11:36 AM.