



**GOVERNOR'S
COMMISSION ON
SUICIDE PREVENTION**

MARYLAND

**Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention Meeting
January 15, 2020 • 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.
Spring Grove Hospital Center, Dix Building Basement, 55 Wade Avenue,
Catonsville**

Commission Members Present

Robert Anderson	Department of Juvenile Services
Jennilyn Babcock Landbeck	Family Member
Dana Burl	Department of Veterans Affairs
Janel Cabbage (Chair)	Behavioral Health Administration
Christina Drushel-Williams	Governor's Office for Children
Georgette Lavetsky	Deputy Secretary Public Health
Russell Himmelberger	Active/Former Member of the Armed Forces
Kevin Johnson	Faith Community
Lynne Muller	Maryland State Department of Education
Erin Shaffer (proxy for Randall Nero)	Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Jennifer Treger	Mental Health Association of Maryland
Holly Wilcox (Vice Chair)	Academic Community

Commission Members on Phone

Edward Bartlinski	Police, Local Corrections, or Fire and Rescue
Shameka Burke	LGBTQ Community
Amanda Celentano	Department of Aging
Mariam Diallo	High School Student
Amy Kulp	Suicide Prevention Group
Cynthia Macri	Rep of Asian American/Pacific Islander Community
William Powell	National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide
Dustin Richardson	Rep of American Indian Community
Maura Rossman	Local Health Officer
Susan Schwarten	Survivor of a Suicide Attempt
Haley Taylor	Maryland Addictions Directors Council

Workgroup Lead

Lanny Berman	Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup
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Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Staff

Kristin Abrams	Behavioral Health Administration
Natalie Miller	Behavioral Health Administration
Indu Radhakrishnan	Behavioral Health Administration



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Welcome and Introductions

Commission Chair Cabbage welcomed all attendees to the Commission meeting. Commissioners introduced themselves.

Approval of November 20, 2019 Minutes

No corrections were made to the minutes. Minutes were approved.

Health Education and Suicide Prevention Pre-K – 12

Lea Jaspers of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) presented to the Commission about the health education framework developed by MSDE. The existing framework outlines skills and core concepts that must be taught in health education classes, as well as the grade levels that topics must be introduced. The topics of mental illness, depression, and suicide must be first taught by eighth grade and then again in high school. Students will learn to identify warning signs and resources for depression and suicide and apply strategies and skills to respond to these concerns. MSDE is currently drafting a new framework for schools to respond to more recent concerns facing today's youth, such as bullying and issues facing the LGBT community. The new framework will also provide for schools to introduce many health concepts earlier than the existing framework requires. Commissioners made suggestions to consider social media, anxiety, stress, trauma, self-esteem and body image, and safe firearm storage in the new draft.

Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) Updates

BHA's new online training module, *Suicide Prevention for Clinicians: Risk Assessment and Management Techniques*, launched on January 10. The module can be found at mdbehavioralhealth.com/training.

State Suicide Prevention Plan

Commissioners were reminded that the first rough draft of the State Suicide Prevention Plan is due to Commission Chair Cabbage and Commissioner Drushel-Williams by January 31. Commissioners who do not think they can meet this deadline should inform Commission Chair Cabbage as soon as possible.

Training Workgroup Update

Commissioner Treger provided updates for the Training Workgroup. The Training Workgroup prioritized primary care physicians (PCPs) as the first group on which to focus their efforts. The Workgroup recommended that all PCPs, be trained in an evidence-based suicide prevention training program which includes screening for suicide risk, brief interventions, and providing appropriate referrals to services. This training should also provide CMEs to increase PCP buy-in. The Workgroup also plans to recommend the creation of a new policy that would require



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PCPs to receive a designated number of hours of suicide prevention training, but intends to ask PCPs for their feedback before proposing this recommendation. The Workgroup plans to hold regional meetings to obtain feedback on training recommendations, providers' attitudes and biases about suicide, and barriers to screening. The focus groups will consist of large practices and will help identify targeted groups for trainings and targeted groups to administer screenings, as well as proponents to champion the Workgroup's efforts among physicians and within professional organizations. BHA is planning to train physicians in the American Association of Suicidology's Recognizing and Responding to Suicide Risk: Essential Skills in Primary Care.

Physician Public Awareness Campaign Mockup

Mockups for the first three tiers of the campaign were reviewed. BHA is currently in discussion with their Communications office before rolling out the campaign. BHA is also creating a toolkit for the campaign, which will include suicide risk screeners, information on how to bill for screening, and information on how to implement screenings into practice.

Means Safety Workgroup Update

Commissioner Kulp provided updates for the Means Safety Workgroup. The Workgroup, in conjunction with the Training Workgroup, has spoken with Dr. Wintersteen, who developed the Pennsylvania Youth Suicide Prevention in Primary Care (YSP-PC) model. The YSP-PC model focuses on engaging PCPs in rural communities to effectively screen for suicide risk through the creation of local stakeholder groups, improved collaboration between medical and behavioral health providers, the provision of suicide assessment training to PCPs and suicide intervention training to therapists, and the provision of a web-based screening tool for providers. Dr. Wintersteen's lessons learned will inform the efforts of both workgroups moving forward.

The Means Safety Workgroup is also currently identifying partners for implementation of their recommendations. Local police departments have expressed interest in receiving and disseminating gun locks, but the Workgroup is seeking additional partners for gun lock dissemination, as well as opportunities to promote the online training, *Counseling on Access to Lethal Means*. The Workgroup has also contacted the Maryland Licensed Firearm Dealers Association and New Hampshire's Gun Shop Project for guidance on appealing to firearm communities about safety and responsible ownership. They plan to conduct focus groups to learn more about firearm owners' perceptions and practices around safety. The Workgroup is pursuing avenues to raise awareness of Extreme Risk Protective Orders (ERPO). Of note, the Maryland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers is hosting a three-hour ERPO training in the spring. Additionally, the Commission has partnered with the Education Fund to Stop Gun Violence to administer a survey of clinicians' familiarity and use of ERPOs. The vast majority of the responses received to date have indicated little awareness of ERPO petitions.



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Data Workgroup Update

Commissioner Lavetsky provided updates for the Data Workgroup. The Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) portal is slated to be updated with more recent data about suicides. A content page about suicide to include on the EPHT is currently in development. The content page will provide information on suicide risk, warning signs, and how to intervene. The Workgroup also plans to present data tables and graphs using 2017 suicide data from the Maryland Violent Death Reporting System (MVDRS) to the Commission. The Workgroup also plans to utilize other sources of morbidity data on intentional self-harm and will create and disseminate data products.

Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup Update

Dr. Lanny Berman provided updates for the Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup. Dr. Berman has contacted other states who have attempted to implement suicide fatality review teams. Dr. Berman first spoke with Garra Lloyd-Lester, Director of Suicide Prevention in New York. New York has funded a pilot project in four counties through the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention. Their pilot project is limited to the use of publicly available epidemiological data sources only, which often do not provide information on other circumstances, such as sleep disturbances, that are relevant to suicide risk. Dr. Berman has also contacted Kim Repp, an epidemiologist from Oregon. Oregon has implemented a suicide fatality review team in one county. 30 organizational representatives provide data on individual cases. Dr. Berman also spoke to Misty Leitsch, Interim Director of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network. She advised that Tennessee previously proposed legislation to establish a statewide suicide fatality review team, but the statute was stalled and evolved into the development of a state suicide prevention coordinator position. Dr. Berman has adapted Tennessee's legislation for Maryland and has submitted it to Commissioner Eckhardt for comment. Dr. Berman also plans to speak to Maryland's Child Fatality Review Teams and Overdose Fatality Review Teams for potential overlap and collaboration, as well as brainstorm potential data sources that go beyond the MVDRS data.

Commission Business Cards

Commissioners will not be required to have business cards, but may have them if interested. The front of the card will have the Commissioners' name printed on it. Commissioners suggested providing crisis information on the back of the business card. Commissioners interested in having business cards should contact Commission Chair Cabbage so that a quote for printing may be established.

Open Discussion



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The Washington Post had an article on the rising rates of workplace suicides on January 14, 2020. The Congressional Black Caucus recently released a report to Congress titled, *Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America*. MSDE is also holding their annual training for all school-based suicide prevention points of contact. Commission Vice Chair Wilcox and Brandon Johnson of SAMHSA will be presenting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 pm.

The next Commission meeting will be held on March 18, 2020 at Spring Grove Hospital Center, Dix Building Basement, 55 Wade Avenue, Catonsville, MD 21228 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm.