



GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

MARYLAND

Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention Meeting
September 8, 2021 1:00pm-3:00pm

Commission Members on Zoom

Robert Anderson	Department of Juvenile Services
Donna Barnes	National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide
Ed Bartlinski	Police, Local Corrections, or Fire and Rescue
Lynda Bonieskie	Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Dana Burl	Department of Veterans Affairs
Amanda Celentano	Department of Aging
Johanna Dolan	Substance Use Recovery Community
Christina Drushel-Williams	Children and Youth Division, Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services
Monica Guerrero Vazquez	Hispanic/Latino Community
Amy Kulp	Suicide Prevention Group
Georgette Lavetsky	Deputy Secretary Public Health
Lynne Muller	Maryland State Department of Education
Dustin Richardson	American Indian Community
Kirsten Robb-McGrath	Department of Disabilities
Susan Schwarten	Survivor of a Suicide Attempt
Haley Taylor	Maryland Addiction Director's Counsel
Kristin Washington	Representative of Active/Former Armed Forces Member
Holly Wilcox (Acting Chair)	Academic Community
Eileen Zeller	Mental Health Association of Maryland

Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Staff

Alex Walker	Behavioral Health Administration
Natalie Miller	Behavioral Health Administration
Indu Radhakrishnan	Behavioral Health Administration
Mary Viggiani	Behavioral Health Administration

Public Attendees

Andrea Walker- Maura Rep	Representing Maura J. Rossman
Taylor Blades	Representing Senator Eckardt
Gabrielle Ryder	Former High School Student Representative

Welcome

Commission Co-Chair Wilcox welcomed all attendees to the Commission meeting and wished the group Happy National Suicide Prevention Awareness Week. Commissioners introduced themselves via alphabetical order.



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Approval of July 21, 2021 Minutes

The July 21st, 2021, meeting minutes were approved without revisions.

Open Seats and Attendance for the Commission

Commissioner Wilcox outlined the requirements for attendance for the commission. Members are required to attend, either in person or remotely by telephone, at least 50% of the meetings during any consecutive 12-month period. Members should notify the Chair of all absences prior to the meeting when possible or send a proxy.

Commissioner Wilcox also announced the three open seats on the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention:

- High School student, who must be in their junior or senior year
- Family Member of an individual who has died by suicide
- Chair of the Commission, which must be approved by the governor and be chosen among the existing commission members.

Next meeting, the group plans to select a chair.

Focus Area Strategy Discussion: Postvention

Acting Commissioner Wilcox reintroduced the focus area for the commission: postvention.

The group discussed current postvention initiatives like:

- Having a grief counselor position within the medical examiner's office who is able to act as a liaison between families and resources
- Healing Conversation Program, developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. This program trains people who have survived a family member's suicide to conduct outreach and support families dealing with suicide loss.
- Dramatic Loss Teams/Crisis Intervention teams in schools are quick response teams that help support students in need of immediate attention.
- Handle with Care is a program in 16 counties of Maryland that is a partnership between local police, local hospitals, and the school system. This program acts as a starting point for conversation for services.
- Center of Peer Excellence based out of the University of Turkey
- NAMI postvention resources
- GBRICS
- 1115 Waiver for Medicaid Reimbursement

The group also discussed postvention concerns like:

- For marginalized communities, postvention is difficult to implement without careful cultural competent considerations.
- Maryland currently does not offer reimbursement for peer services.

Governor's Challenge Updates



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Commissioner Burl shared the Governor's Challenge update. The Behavioral Health Administration of Maryland's commitment to the Veterans Program received authorization via block grant funding to hire a full-time contractual for the service member, veterans, and families community. They'll be responsible for the overall management and functioning of a statewide Service Members and Veterans Families lethal means and safety and safety planning program. The position is full-time contractual and open through September 15th.

BHA Update

Commission staff, Indu Radhakrishnan, announced the Office of Suicide Prevention's current updates. Janel Cabbage has transitioned from her role as Director of Suicide Prevention. Please consider your contacts for any recommendations for the Chair. Commissioner Wilcox will assume the duties of the Chair in the event of an absence, as per the bylaws. The Statewide Care Coordination Project Pilot has been canceled. The office is currently completing COAs for local suicide prevention strategies for the local jurisdictions that applied for funding. The office is conducting two social media campaigns, Meet the Commission Staff and #StoriesofHope. #StoriesofHope is a social media campaign to raise the voices of those with lived experience of suicide. Those with lived experience can share their personal story of hope via google form and must be accompanied by a media consent form. The Behavioral Health Administration and the Office of Suicide Prevention is shifting focus towards youth suicide prevention.

The Office of Suicide Prevention is hosting the 33rd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference on October 6th. The theme this year is connecting responding and recovering and our keynote is going to be to Dr. Rheeda Walker, who is a wonderful and renowned psychologist who has written The Unapologetic Guide to Black Mental Health.

Open Discussion

Commissioner Guerrero-Vazquez discussed National Hispanic Heritage Month with the focus of addressed suicide stigma in the community. Commissioner Burl shared the Department of Veterans Affairs recent customer service training efforts by facilitating suicide prevention training, S.A.V.E., for the entire department.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:46 pm.

The next Commission meeting will be held on November 17, 2021 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.



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