

# Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council



Service Members, Veterans and their Families  
(SMVF)

Subcommittee Annual Report

**2019**

## 2019 GBHSPC Veterans Subcommittee Membership

**Chair:** Steve Christenberry (panhead55@hughes.net)

**Vice Chair:** LT Steve Roth – Topeka Police Department (sroth@topeka.org)

### Members by Regional Recovery Center Areas

<b>Kansas Department of Ageing and Disability Services</b>		
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# SMVF Subcommittee Charter September 2019

## Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council

**Mission:** To ensure that servicemembers, veterans and their families are involved in improving access to behavioral health services which are relevant to military culture in collaboration with key provider organizations and other stakeholders.

**Vision:** There is an expanded and identifiable network of service providers and community supports to adequately meet the behavioral health care needs of veterans, service members, and their families which includes training provider staff about key elements of military culture and organization as well as ongoing engagement of veterans, service members and family members in eliminating barriers to treatment and in creating flexible treatment and recovery options.

**Purpose:** The Subcommittee will continue to develop mental health and substance use services for veterans. The Subcommittee will also address the broader behavioral health care needs of veterans, service members and their families, and work toward increased collaboration among providers in the public behavioral health system the VA and other provider networks that focus specifically on veterans, service members and their families.

**Membership:** Membership on the Subcommittee will be balanced to reflect the following stakeholders. Veterans and service members who experience behavioral health disorders, family members of veterans and service members, behavioral health service providers who are specifically funded to assist veterans and active duty service members, representatives from the public mental health system, state agency prevention staff, educators, and other stakeholders, including veterans service organizations. The Subcommittee will designate a chair or co-chairs. A state agency liaison will be appointed from KDADS to provide staff support to the Subcommittee.

### Prospective Goals for 2019/2020:

1. Identify quality resources for veterans and their families. (Would like to identify resources in all 105 counties but, at the least the five regions.)
2. Initiate digital outreach for veteran and family services using Facebook, Twitter etc.
3. Engage veteran service organizations across the state such as VFW posts and American Legions.
4. Identify current available courses that train providers in military culture.
5. Expand the five-day crisis intervention training across the state for police/first responders concerning veterans in a mental health crisis.
6. Communicate/partner with Kansas Department of Veterans Affairs.

## **History of the SMVF's subcommittee reactivation**

This subcommittee reactivated in June of 2017. The state is divided into five regions with a designated mental health facility as the lead in that region. The plan of the subcommittee was to identify members in those five regions to help accomplish our goals. Many of the subcommittee members received training from SAMSHA technical assistance program for strategic planning in September 2017. From that training the committee established goals to identify quality resources for veterans, their families and children across the state. The committee presented these goals to Secretary Keck in December 2017. Secretary Keck was very supportive of the subcommittee goals.

Currently, this subcommittee is comprised of the chair, co-chair and 18 members from across the state. The group had decided to meet quarterly in 2018 and monthly in 2019. Our first committee meeting was February 1st to begin work towards our goals. The subcommittee has met on April 16<sup>th</sup>, July 17<sup>th</sup> and Sept 9<sup>th</sup>.

Matthew R. McGuire was hired January 14, 2019 as the new CIT/Veterans Program Coordinator for KDADS. He has been hard at work and continues to grow in the new position.

The GBHSPC subcommittee changed our name to the SMVF (Service Members, Veterans and Families) subcommittee as of July 2019.

## **Goals pursued in 2019 by the veteran's subcommittee**

**Goal One:** Identify quality resources for veterans and their families. (Would like to identify resources in all 105 counties but, at the least the five regions.) (Work still in progress)

- ❖ Veteran's subcommittee work on goal one: Several members of the group have identified resources in their region and across the state for veterans, their family and children. Numerous resources have been identified but this work is still in progress within the subcommittee. A broad range of resources are included such as; government at all levels, faith-based organizations non-profits, VSO's etc.
- ❖ Contact information on the KDADS website for veteran services has been updated.
- ❖ KDADS children's program manager is working on a resource/service map for children across the state. This would be a useful resource for veterans and their families.
- ❖ Members of the subcommittee attended a presentation of My RC a website created by a company in Johnson County. This website would be extremely beneficial for veterans and families. It would identify resources across the state and would be update daily.

**Goal Two:** Initiate digital outreach for veteran and family services using Facebook, Twitter etc. (Work still in progress)

- ❖ Recommend hiring an IT person to create and manage a Veteran's Website, Facebook, Twitter and other media platforms
- ❖ Working to identify a subcommittee member that has the expertise to market resources on social media such as; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. if a position cannot be created and hired at the state level.

**Goal Three:** Engage veteran service organizations across the state such as VFW posts and American Legions. (Work still in progress)

- ❖ A subcommittee member is a member of a VFW post and has provided a list of VFWs' across the state and contact information. Subcommittee members will reach out to these posts to determine what type of services they may offer.
- ❖ New subcommittee member, Chris Ellis, has recently joined from the National Guard, the Legion and VSO groups. This will give us additional contacts to reach out to this next year.

**Goal Four:** Identify current available courses that train providers in military culture. (Selecting a course completed reaching out to providers is a work in progress.)

- ❖ The subcommittee discussed several different military culture trainings. Most were free, and some had a cost. The subcommittee decided Psych Armor (15 things every veteran wants you to know) would be beneficial. This is a 15-20-minute video on military culture. The work that still needs to be completed is reaching out to CMHC's, SUD providers, hospitals etc. to have their employees view this video so they have a better understanding of veterans when they come in seeking services. Subcommittee is also working to add trainings to KStrain.org so all have easy access to the trainings.

**Goal Five:** Expand the five-day crisis intervention training across the state for police/first responders concerning veterans in a mental health crisis. (In Progress)

- ❖ This goal is dependent upon the expansion of CIT across the state and a funding source. After receiving the 40-hour basic course this advanced three day course can be taken concerning veterans in a mental health crisis.
- ❖ Partner with Mental Health America of the Heartland for a 1-day course with first responders that includes a 1-hour block of veteran instruction.

**Goal Six:** Communicate/partner with the State of Kansas Commission on Veteran Affairs. (Completed)

- ❖ Veterans subcommittee liaison meet with Director Gregg Burden. Director Burden advised his agency would be happy to work with the subcommittee in any capacity that would be beneficial for veterans. Director Burden advised the primary mission of his organization is to assist veterans in the application process for federal benefits. Our

subcommittee members can assist if they know of a veteran that needs federal benefits by directing them to the State Department of Veteran Affairs.

## **2020 goals and objectives of the veteran's subcommittee.**

- ❖ The subcommittee will meet in the fourth quarter of 2019 to discuss the goals and objectives to pursue in 2020.
- ❖ At the subcommittee meeting in July it was agreed upon to expand the meetings from quarterly to bi-monthly. In August 2019 it was determined the subcommittee needs to meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month for the next 6 months and then evaluated the needs.
- ❖ The subcommittee will determine whether to continue work on a few of the goals set in 2019.
- ❖ The subcommittee will determine whether to focus on suicide prevention and education efforts for veterans, their families and children in 2020.
- ❖ An initiative through SAMHSA in 2019 is to focus on suicide prevention/education for veterans. Topeka, Kansas was selected by SAMHSA as a site for this effort. This is a local effort with the city, county and state for the Mayor's Challenge. The key objectives are listed below.
  1. Build an interagency military and civilian team of leaders from your city and state that will develop consensus on priorities and action items to support implementation of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention at the local level. This has been done via the Governor's Veteran's Suicide Challenge.
  2. Acquire a deeper familiarity with the issues surrounding suicide prevention for SMVF. This is still in progress and working with VSO's, and other veterans organizations.
  3. Increase knowledge about the challenges and lessons learned in implementing strategies by utilizing city to city sharing. Currently working with members that live and work through the states. The subcommittee will reach out to the Rural and Frontier subcommittee as well.
  4. Employ promising, best and evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce suicide attempts and completions at the local level. Best practices still being identified.
  5. Define and measure success, including defining assignments, deadlines, and measurable outcomes to be reported. Defining how and what to measure for success is, completion of trainings by community provides, training VSO's, VFW members, Legion members, housing authority agencies and other community people that inter act with Veteran's in Mental Health 1<sup>st</sup> Aid. Working to identify what the goal number of trained people across the state needs to be.

SAMHSA technical assistance personnel came to Topeka for the Mayor's Challenge Site visit on August 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> to provide attendees training to identify other key players, set goals and objectives, implement strategies, identify other agencies to partner with etc. The training had representatives from the Topeka Police Department, Valeo, VA Eastern Kansas, State of Kansas, City of Topeka HR and Municipal Court and the Shawnee County Suicide Prevention Coalition. Once the Topeka Coalition is established the goal will be to expand this prevention/education effort to other cities in the state. The first meeting of this group will be in November 2018.

### **Goals for 2020**

- Hire a full time IT person to develop and maintain a Veterans Website, Facebook, Twitter and other social media regarding resources and services for SMVF
- Create a website called, LiveConnectedKS.org/com.net
- Push that all schools are asking if the student has a parent or guardian that is currently or has served, establish where the data is being stored and how to access and give information to community partners including but not limited to CMHCs, LHD, and MCOs
- Have PsycArmor training on KStrain.org, make aware to and all CMHCs, LHD, PD, Sheriff Departments, hospitals, FQHCs, EMS, MCOs, Hotlines and any other later identified organizations that the training is there and free of charge.
- Identify all upcoming events, summits, conferences and trainings being offered in 2020 and put on an events calendar.
- Identify Mental Health 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Trainers and train at least 20% of the VSO, VFW and Legion members across the state

### **Report completed by:**

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# SMVF Subcommittee Year in Review

