

# Suicide Prevention Meeting Minutes

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Wednesday February 14, 2024 | 2:00pm-4:00pm | Otter Tail County Government Services Center + Microsoft Teams Meeting

## Introductions:

In attendance: *Beth Rader, Allen Westby, Eric Schwirian, Dale Hexum, Aaron Cadyong, Emily Frustol, Leah Jesser, Reese Ellison, Jess Steinbrenner, Jean Long, Jordan Schroeer, Amber Branca, Kristi Goos, Joanna Chua, Sarah Kemp Tabbut, Maesey Seals, Jayne Hallstrom, Devonie Smith, Melissa Dahl, Alicia Roelofs, Reed Reinbold, Tammy Murdock, Mandi Scheel, Abby Drouillard, Medley Shamp, Krystal Crance, Payton Dittman, Tamara Uselman, Jody Lien*

## Grant and Coalition Overview:

Overview of the four-year MDH grant, including dates, amounts, coalition priorities, and workplan goals.

- Dates: July 2023 – June 2027
- Amounts: \$400,000 over the four years; \$100,000 per year
  - Salaries and Contractual Services
  - Partnership with LRHC for Zero Suicide Framework
  - Implementation of selected strategies
- Suicide Prevention Coalition
  - Gather and analyze data
  - Identify priority populations within our community
  - Develop and implement a comprehensive action plan for suicide Prevention
- Workplan Goals
  - Increase individuals, organizations, and communities' capacity to develop and implement a comprehensive public health approach for suicide prevention.
  - Promote factors that offer protection for suicidal experiences across the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels.
  - Identify and support individuals who are experiencing mental health challenges or who are having suicidal experiences.
  - Connect, heal, and restore hope to those impacted by suicide.
  - Strengthen access and delivery of care for mental health and suicide.

## Vision Casting:

Discussion on our vision and mission for the coalition as well as the name of our group.

### *Vision Statement Ideas:*

- No suicides
- Normalize mental health
- Reduce stigma
- Provide easy and quick access to mental health services and resources
- Create awareness of resources available (promote and educate)
- Ensure our services are fully equipped to provide help whenever needed (24/7/365)

- Educate the public on resiliency and SEL
- Create vulnerability between community members and provide safe spaces to open up
- No judgement
- Foster a community that has each other's back
- Provide REAL hope
- Engage the community
- Lessen isolation

*Mission Statement Ideas:*

- What do we do?
  - Provide hope
  - Prevent suicide
  - Educate and equip the community
  - Support
  - Build resources and make them easily accessible
  - CARE
  - Create a safe environment for community members to seek help when they need in
  - Create services readily available to help those in need
  - Provide more opportunities for community wellness
  - Collaborate on opportunities for building resiliency
  - Inform
- Who?
  - EVERYONE
  - People who are feeling suicidal or in crisis
  - Those in our circles – who we interact with
  - Otter Tail County Community
  - Those without hope
  - All ages
- Why?
  - No one deserves to live in mental darkness
  - Because we care
  - Provide help
  - Each human life is precious and is in the image of God
  - End suffering due to suicide
  - To provide safe spaces for all
  - Reduce stigma
  - To bring full awareness and understanding
- How?
  - TALK
  - Ask questions
  - Check in frequently with those around you
  - Spread awareness
  - Free and easy access to mental health
  - Show compassion

- Engage community members
- Decrease risk factors and promote protective factors
- Well-made website
- Community events
- Mental health workshops
- Trainings
- Outreach opportunities
- No wrong door + immediate access

*Coalition Names:*

- Including “team” instead of coalition
- Brain Health
- Sticking with straightforward “Suicide Prevention \_\_\_\_\_” so that it is easily found and recognizable.
- Using the acrostic/creative approaches as a part of the mission
- CARE: community, awareness, resilience, empower
- Suicide Prevention Advocates

**Bylaws:**

- Using “charter” instead.
- Including more on the membership list: veterans, human services, youth, first responders, farmers

**Review of Comprehensive Plan: Leah**

Brief overview of the draft comprehensive plan that was started by the workgroup in 2022. Reviewed statistics, strengths, and areas of opportunity within our county, as well as strategies for our community.

**Looking Ahead Discussion:**

*What is currently happening in our community?*

- Community Needs – Crisis Services are losing inpatient beds.
  - This is leading to an influx of civil commitments – those in crisis are being forwarded to jails since they are at risk of harming themselves or others. People in mental health crises are being looked after by those who have not been trained or equipped in this area.
  - This also means, people in need in our community are being referred all over the state, or even out of state to Fargo.
  - What is the why?
- Positive – There is now a coordinated response to calls dealing with mental health issues.
  - This includes law enforcement and human services
- Positive – NAMI has free trainings that they offer throughout the state. Along the same lines, Aaron Cadayong has also been able to put on some trainings for staff development days, and happy to do more.

- Need to address the perception that these trainings cause an influx of suicidal experiences or that they can negatively affect the community.
- Use positive promotion on these trainings.
- Sometimes an “uptick” in the reports of suicidal experiences in a community following a training can mean that the education is working. It shows that people are noticing the signs and are reporting them.
- Positive – youth involvement.
  - Fergus Falls seniors brought in a speaker to talk to the whole school and community about suicide. Although the community event had low participation – the whole school body heard the message of the speaker.
  - Fergus Falls schools will also be putting on listening sessions to hear from students on what they need, and what we can do to meet those needs.
  - Josie from Parkers Prairie has agreed to be a part of this coalition – one of the youth voices we can lean on throughout this process.

*What are actionable items that we can start planning for right now?*

- Promotion:
  - Aaron has 988 resources/posters that he can provide
  - THRIVE and other resiliency building materials
- Looking for those “captive audiences” that you can “sprinkle in” mental health topics
  - Churches
  - Farming community events
  - Parent/teacher conferences
  - Regional Meetings (larger employer groups – invite ourselves to speak at their meetings)
- Promote and start local support groups for loss survivors
- Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council and maybe creating a Student Advisory Council
- Looking for training opportunities (again with the proper messaging)
- Attend local community events – set up a table with resources/provide that space to hear people’s stories and needs.

**Additional Information Shared following the meeting:**

From KSS – some of these initiatives may be ending next year, but as of right now this is what is offered in terms of Suicide Prevention + Mental Health.

- Suicide Awareness/Mental Health Awareness lessons in 8th grade and 9th grade Health classes (mandatory class for all 8th and 9th graders)
- Suicide Prevention talk with 9th graders in FACS classes (School Counselors)-all 9th graders take this class
- Suicide Prevention presentations to 9-12th graders last November and also to general public (Duck Cup Memorial)
- Recognizing Mental Health Awareness Month in May, two weeks of activities
- Suicide Awareness Listening Sessions
- In-house Lakeland therapists
- Access to the Mobile Mental Health Crisis Response team at school

- Student group (Aubrie Bauman, Rylynn Krein, etc.) HOSA
- ACEs presentation by Lakeland in Intercultural Communication
- SEL lessons offered during advisory time 7th-12th grade
- Staff Development breakout sessions offered 3x a year on staff development days—QPR, postvention,
- Every Monday in REACH we have Monday check-ins which in a sense is checking in on each student's Mental Health after the weekend.
- Different Group Activities we do in REACH also work on students' Mental Health and being able to freely speak out when they are having difficulties with certain situations (school,home, friends).
- Lots of mental health/suicide preventions signage all over the school