

NH Suicide Prevention Newsletter

A joint publication of NH Suicide Prevention Council, NH Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly (YSPA), and NAMI NH's Connect Project

Winter 2010

Coalition Corner

Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition and Regional Efforts

The Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition continues to play a vital role within the community. The members have been hard at work in a variety of areas to increase awareness of suicide prevention efforts in the region. The Coalition has provided trainings, developed a support group and been involved in local advocacy the last few months. In the fall they prioritized efforts to focus suicide prevention training specifically for providers working with homeless youth at local community-based organizations. The training provided information on how to recognize risk factors and warning signs in teens and how teens can play a role in prevention. Evaluation results indicated participants walked away with an increased confidence in the role of community members in preventing suicide.

Coalition members have been very involved in being a voice of safety concerning the building of the new Memorial Bridge. They requested, in a November meeting at Portsmouth City Hall, that barriers be erected on the bridge to prevent suicide deaths. The Coalition provided images

of other bridge designs that show barriers ranging from simple fences on the sides of bridges, to razor-wire topped fences and bridge walkways completely enclosed with fencing. As the project of rebuilding the bridge moves forward, the Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition will continue to make their voices heard to the NH Dept. of Transportation and the community to include barriers in the bridge design.



The Coalition wants to expand and is looking to include members from all communities within the Seacoast area to continue in the work of suicide prevention. Meetings are scheduled on the second Wednesday of the month from 6pm–8pm. Location varies between the Community Campus in Portsmouth to McConnell Center in Dover. Contact Susan Turner at the Rockingham County Community Resource Network Alliance for Community Health at sturner@rcaction.org for more information on

suicide prevention efforts throughout the Seacoast region.

Moultonborough Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Coalition

The Moultonborough Coalition continues to ensure that everyone in town has access to local resources, educational opportunities and the opportunity to take part in advocacy efforts related to promoting suicide prevention and mental health. Doors are always open at their monthly meetings, and they encourage the community to come and participate. Several students from the nursing program at Lakes Region Community College have stopped by to learn more about the local suicide prevention efforts. The Coalition organized training for first responders working in the Lakes Region General Hospital and Huggins Hospital on Involuntary Emergency Admissions. With the help of local experts from the State's Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team, NAMI NH and the Dept. of Health and Human Services, the training was a success and it demonstrated the importance of collaboration between organizations.

November was an extremely busy month as the Coalition prepared to present on their work and also host a support

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Coalition Corner (cont.)

group. The Coalition was invited to present at the annual suicide prevention conference to highlight the great suicide prevention work being done in the Moultonborough community. The workshop was heavily attended and folks came away from it feeling inspired to do more, and to continue to reach out and collaborate with local community partners. The Coalition also hosted the Annual Survivors of Suicide Loss Day Teleconference on November 20th where many survivors gathered together to support one another. The Moultonborough Coalition meets at the Moultonborough Town Library on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 4pm. Contact Peter Whelley at ptw@sau4.org for details.

North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition

The North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition, formerly known as the Groveton Suicide Prevention Coalition, changed its name a few months ago to be inclusive of other communities interested in partnering around suicide prevention efforts. Current members of the coalition represent area schools, Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital, Weeks Hospital, North Country Health Consortium, Northern Human Services, Police, emergency medical services,

funeral homes and local members of the community. The Coalition, with the assistance of Antioch University and NAMI NH, is currently involved in exploring the development of a web-based information sharing platform design titled "Early Identification Referral and Follow-Up". The purpose is to track how many youth are identified as at-risk for suicide, and determine how many of those youth receive referrals and services. In October, members of the North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition attended a meeting with a group of community stakeholders in Lancaster to discuss this model and the feasibility of implementing it.

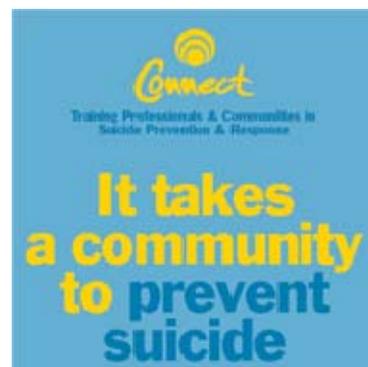
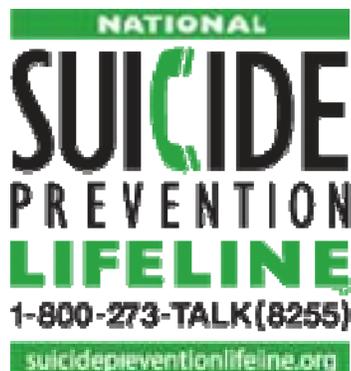
Meetings are every 3rd Tuesday of the month at Weeks Hospital in Lancaster from 3:30-4:30pm. Please contact April Allin at the North Country Health Consortium for any questions related to suicide prevention efforts in the North County at aallin@nchcnh.org or 603.837.2643.

Raymond's Coalition for Youth

Raymond's Coalition for Youth (RCFY) continues its efforts to make a positive impact on youth in its community. The coalition received a Drug Free Community Grant through SAMHSA to

prevent youth alcohol and other drug use. The grant enables coalitions to strengthen their coordination and prevention efforts, encourage citizen participation in substance abuse reduction efforts, and disseminate information about effective programs. The Coalition is a great partner in suicide prevention efforts for the community. They are committed to being a viable resource in empowering the community to promote positive youth development. The Connect model peer training for high school students in the district was conducted in the summer. The training curriculum was also given to the health teacher at the Raymond High School, who has added this to her educational piece for all tenth graders. Currently they are working with Ann Duckless from the Connect Project to provide a Connect training refresher course to begin in 2011.

RCFY continues to work hard to generate new involvement, and as a result the membership is constantly growing. Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 9:00am at Lamprey Health Care. If you would like more information about Raymond's Coalition for Youth and how to participate, please contact Celeste Clark at cclark@rcfy.org or 603-895-4735, ext. 125.



New Hampshire in Action

TransForm NH Conference

NAMI NH partnered with PFLAG -NH to provide information and educational resources at NH's first transgender conference, "TransForm NH," held at Franklin Pierce Law School in July. Suicide prevention, mental health education and empowerment information was provided to all attending the conference. The event was coordinated by TransMentors International and the NH Civil Liberties Union to promote transgender visibility, education and support for transgender individuals, family and friends. An estimated 75 attendees and renowned presenters gathered in support of the NH transgender community.

For more information visit TransGender NH (TG-NH), a local nonprofit organization, at www.tgnh.org. TG-NH provides resources, community building, educational programs and advocacy to assist transgender NH residents, as well as significant others, friends, families, allies and professionals. The primary goal at TG-NH is to foster acceptance for trans-identified people and to help celebrate the diversity of all gender expressions.

Manchester VA Medical Center Promotes Mental Health Well-Being and Suicide Prevention

The 4th annual Manchester VA Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Expo was held on September 17th as part of Suicide Prevention Awareness Week. VA staff, patients and local social service agencies all came together to exchange information and provide resources on suicide prevention, PTSD, anxiety



Mae Dunn, Bernice López-Stanizzi, Lee Marcoff and Roberta Barry at TransForm NH.

disorder and to promote help-seeking and supports to area Veterans. It was a great opportunity to meet service members, network, and promote and support VA programs. Contact Loren Haberski, Suicide Prevention Coordinator at the VA for more information at loren.haberski@va.gov or 603.624.4366.

The 7th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference Showcases Suicide Prevention Work in NH

Over 180 individuals gathered together at Loon Mountain Club on November 5th to increase the understanding of suicide in NH, foster collaboration, provide awareness of community-based programs, and learn about suicide prevention initiatives throughout the state. The conference included three plenary speakers. Dr. Phil Rodgers from the AFSP began the morning by talking about the National Best Practice Registry in Suicide Prevention and highlighted two New Hampshire based programs on the list: the Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) workshop and the Connect Suicide Prevention Program. He was followed by "Faces of America," a play produced by Will & Company, on diversity in America today. The

six character vignettes depicted struggles with immigration, mental health, sexual orientation and a wounded military veteran. The day closed with an uplifting and inspiring presentation on Compassion Fatigue by Dr. Donna White, which left the audience laughing and feeling invigorated about prioritizing self-care. The conference was a collaboration between

the Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly (YSPA), the Suicide Prevention Council (SPC) and NAMI NH.

Congratulations to the Planning Committee for a successful and memorable conference!

Pauline Laliberte
Cindi LaPointe
Elaine Frank
Elaine de Mello
Jo Moncher
Dr. James MacKay
Dr. Bob MacLeod
Bernice López-Stanizzi

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Efforts Highlighted on WMUR

Representative Roger Wells - District 8, Ken Norton - NAMI NH and LTC Jeanne Jones - NH National Guard were interviewed as part of a special report done by WMUR on suicide prevention efforts around the state. The report provided NH specific data, reviewed various suicide prevention efforts in NH, and offered warning signs and resource information for individuals at risk for suicide. The spot aired on November 8th. To read or watch the report go to www.wmur.com/health/25648545/detail.html.

New Hampshire in Action (cont.)

Eight New Survivors of Suicide Loss Trained to Talk about Their Personal Loss

The NH Survivors of Suicide Loss Speakers' Bureau Training was held in Keene this past fall. The public speaking training is designed to teach individuals to be able to speak safely and effectively about their losses to the public. By speaking about personal loss and telling the story about a loved one's life and death, survivors can promote healing and understanding, which in turn supports and encourages suicide prevention efforts. If you are interested in hosting a survivor speaker, or if you are a survivor who would like to take the public speaking training, please contact Becky McEnany at bmcenany@naminh.org.

Suicide Prevention Council Continues to Promote Commitment and Action to Prevent Suicide in NH

In honor of World Suicide Prevention Week in September, the Suicide Prevention Council and suicide prevention advocates held a press conference at the Legislative Office Building in Concord to announce new initiatives aimed at reducing the



Cathy Barber, Director of Harvard's Means Matters Campaign, speaks at the September press conference.

number of suicides in New Hampshire. The press conference highlighted innovative work being done in NH including: Fatality Review Committee, Means Reduction Committee, Corrections, and NH National Guard.

Dr. James MacKay, Chairman of the Suicide Prevention Council; Maggie Pritchard, NH Community Behavioral Health Association; Dr. Bob MacLeod, NH Department of Corrections; Cathy Barber, Harvard Medical School; LTC Jeanne Jones, NH National Guard; and Marsha Chapple, a survivor of suicide loss, represented the State's Suicide Prevention Council and presented the accomplishments made in prevention efforts throughout the state.

Public News Service Collaborates with the SPC on Suicide Prevention/Mental Health

Under SAMHSA's Garrett Lee Smith grant funds, the Public News Service is working with the Suicide Prevention Council's Communications Committee to develop and pitch stories to news organizations geared to raising awareness and building support for mental health, and raising visibility in the community to encourage help-seeking and suicide prevention. Recent stories have included highlighting National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month and help-seeking for the Latino and African American community, and recognizing the National Best Suicide Prevention Registry as a great resource for prevention

efforts. The next story will focus on Seasonal Affective Disorder, specifically in rural areas. The exposure of the stories has been great within the New England states, and stories were aired on 46 radio stations. If you would like to see a story on a specific mental health related topic please contact Rhonda Siegel, Chair of the Communication Committee, rsiegel@dhhs.state.nh.us or Bernice López-Stanizzi, NAMI NH at blopez@naminh.org.



Melissa Turner (rd shirt/black jacket) and walkers from the Out of the Darkness Walk.

Out of the Darkness Walk at the Seacoast

The Seacoast Region hosted two Out of the Darkness Walks to raise money for the American Foundation on Suicide Prevention. Hundreds of people walked together to raise money vital to research and education programs to prevent suicide and save lives, to increase national awareness about depression and suicide, to advocate for mental health issues, and to assist survivors of suicide loss.

Melissa Turner and her family organized their first Out of the Darkness Walk on October 16th at Hanson Pines in Rochester. Melissa lost her daughter, Rebecca, a 16 year-old Spaulding High School student, to suicide in March 2008. Throughout the difficult grieving process she found support from Seacoast Hospice and Victims, Inc. She wanted to be able to give back to

New Hampshire in Action (cont.)

the community and organize an event that would get everyone together, engaged in promoting suicide prevention and raising awareness within the Rochester community. Local community members, Spaulding High School students and survivors of suicide loss throughout the state came out to support Melissa and her family by raising over \$9,000 for suicide prevention and education efforts. Contact Melissa Turner at melissaturner40@yahoo.com with any questions regarding the Out of the Darkness Walk.

The Portsmouth Out of the Darkness Walk was held on September 25th at Pierce Island. The 7th annual walk was the most successful one yet. Ken LaValley, Chair of the Walk Committee, is happy to report the positive impact the monies raised will be to the local community. *"I would like to point out that we are able to invest in AFSP sponsored materials and trainings back to the community with half of all Walk funds. This year we invested in the annual Survivor Day meetings for all of NH as*

well as education materials for local schools." The Walk Committee is grateful for the help of volunteers and support from local sponsors; Starbucks, Northeast Delta Dental, the Portsmouth Police Department, Marshall Rental, Dave's Septic Service, Clear Channel Radio and WHEB and Audible Events for DJ service, in raising over \$55,000 this year.

If you would like to participate in the Out of the Darkness Walk in Portsmouth or take part in developing a Seacoast version of the New Hampshire Life Keeper Quilt, please contact Ken at

ken.lavalley@unh.edu.

Theatre of War Showcased during Mental Illness Awareness Week

A team effort between the NH National Guard, the NH DHHS, NAMI NH, the NH Suicide Prevention Council and White River Junction VA Medical Center resulted in two presentations of Theatre of War on October 6th. The innovative project presented readings of the ancient Greek play "Ajax and Philocetes" by Sophocles to the military and community members in Pembroke and Concord. The ancient play depicts the psychological wounds inflicted on warriors by war and the challenges for families and communities reintegrating Soldiers returning from war. The presentations aimed to destigmatize psychological injury and open a safe space for dialogue about the challenges faced by service members, veterans and their caregivers and families. Visit www.theater-of-war.com for more information.



Colonel Rick Greenwood speaks at the Concord Theater of War presentation.

Announcements

SPC Public Policy Committee Welcomes Vicki McKinney-Vareschi of Keep Sound Minds

Vicki McKinney-Vareschi, Executive Director of Keep Sound Minds recently joined the Suicide Prevention Council's Public Policy Committee. Keep Sound Minds is a nonprofit organization located in Stratham whose mission is: to promote mental health awareness through empathy with those with mental illness concerns, to educate the public about mental health issues, to encourage everyone to

advocate for change and seek help for themselves and others, and to inspire people to join the cause. Visit www.Keepsoundminds.org for more information.

During the next few months, the Public Policy Committee (at the urging of Keith Pomkowski) will be focusing on gathering information on two areas: looking at what types of suicide risk assessments are done when individuals are admitted to county jails or other local police lock-ups, and looking at building suicide prevention training into teacher recertification. Both areas

are identified as public policy priority areas in the State Suicide Prevention Plan.

NAMI NH's Annual Conference Coming in March

SAVE THE DATE!!
Saturday, March 26, 2011
"All Together Now!"

An all day conference including a keynote presentation, workshops, a plenary session, resource exhibits and an opportunity to meet old and new friends. For more information visit www.NAMINH.org and click on Calendar of Events.

Communities Build Capacity

Schools Benefit from Suicide Prevention Training through Title IV Funds

Congratulations to the following schools for receiving Dept. of Education's Title IV funding from the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. This is a very competitive grant that provides financial assistance for drug and violence prevention training that meets Best Practice Standards as well as other related activities in elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education. The following schools focused their grants on suicide prevention by collaborating with NAMI NH to bring Connect training and consultation to their schools/community: Souhegan Coop High School in Amherst, Kearsarge Regional High School and Middle School in North Sutton, Gilford School District and Bow School District.

CALM Training Provided to Emergency Departments, Mental Health Clinicians and Primary Care Providers throughout NH

The CALM (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) training developed by Elaine Frank, a public health expert, and Mark Ciocca, a psychologist, teaches healthcare providers why and how to restrict access to potential lethal means for an individual who is at risk for suicide. Lethal means restriction is an evidence-based practice and CALM is listed on the National Best Practice Registry on Suicide Prevention. NAMI NH has contracted with CALM to provide training as part of the Garrett Lee Smith (GLS)



Suicide Prevention grant; as part of this grant the NH School Nurses Conference, the Elliot Hospital Emergency Room Department and the Avis Goodwin Community Health Center have been trained. If you would like more information about the CALM project, please contact Elaine Frank at Elaine.M.Frank@Dartmouth.edu. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of training for your organization through the GLS grant, contact Bernice López-Stanizzi at blopez@naminh.org.

AMSR Training Builds Capacity for Mental Health Clinicians and Promotes Hope for Clients

The Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR) training is a one-day workshop for mental health professionals. Designated a National Best Practice, the workshop focuses on competencies that are core to assessing and managing suicide risk and was developed by the American Association of Suicidology and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

Twenty mental health clinicians gathered in Concord to attend the training that focused on clinical evaluation, formulation of risk, treatment planning, and management of individuals at risk for suicide to protect their lives and promote their well-being. The training was conducted as part of NAMI NH's Garrett Lee Smith Grant. For more information, please contact certified AMSR trainers, Toni

Paul or Elaine de Mello at edemello@naminh.org or tonipaul24@yahoo.com.

DBHRT Members Receive Suicide Postvention Trainings

Over 50 members from the state's Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) were trained in NAMI NH's Connect Training on Reducing Risk and Promoting Healing After a Suicide. The workshop builds the capacity for DBHRT members to assist a family and the community when responding to a suicide death. Trainings were hosted by the Greater Derry Public Health Network in Derry and Northern Human Services in the Conway area.

DBHRT is a trained team of volunteers who can mobilize resources to provide post-disaster mental health services statewide. Contact Paul Deignan, Disaster Behavioral Health Coordinator, at paul.deignan@dhhs.state.nh.us.

Care Managers Working with Service Members and Families Trained in Suicide Prevention

Easter Seals NH recently sponsored Connect military suicide prevention and postvention trainings for its Care Coordinators involved in the Deployment Cycle Support Program. Care Coordinators work for the statewide network of organizations providing Deployment Cycle Support to deploying service members and their families, and include: Child and Family Services, Family Resource Center of Berlin-Gorham, Familystrength, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center and Milford Regional Counseling Services/Harbor Homes/Healthy

Communities Build Capacity (cont.)

at Home. Participants learned how military service and culture can impact on suicide risk and protective factors and learned how to recognize and connect with individuals who are at risk of suicide.

Easter Seals NH Veterans Count partnered with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services and the New Hampshire National Guard to implement a program that offers support to military families dealing with deployment. Thousands of individuals in New Hampshire are served through this program. For more information on the Easter Seals NH Veterans Count program go to <http://nh.easterseals.com> and click on Veteran's Services.

North Country Continues to Build Capacity in Suicide Prevention

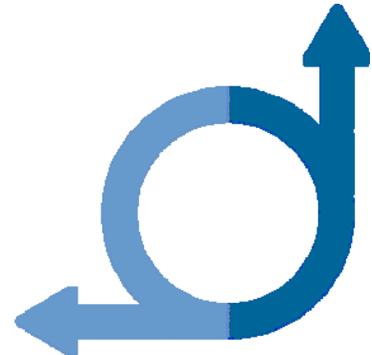
A series of trainings have been done in the North Country to continue to build suicide

prevention capacity and promote awareness within communities. Becky McEnany from NAMI NH, April Allin from the North Country Health Consortium and the North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition have been instrumental in gathering the community together to expand Connect training across key service providers. The Coalition would like to thank Northern and Southern Coos County Regional Police, the Emergency Services & First Responders in Lancaster, the Family Resource staff at Littleton Hospital, and all of the primary care providers from Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in Colebrook who participated in trainings during the summer and fall.

Derry Community Comes Together to Promote Healing for Families and Provide Education about Suicide Prevention

The guidance department of Pinkerton Academy in

collaboration with the Center for Life Management, Community Alliance for Teen Safety, the Hempstead Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group and NAMI NH hosted a community forum on October 26th to help the attendees better understand suicide loss and learn about warning signs and other prevention strategies. A presentation, "Helping Adults Support Grieving Teens - Recognizing the Warning Signs of Depression and Suicide", was held at Pinkerton's Stockbridge Theatre where parents, guardians and community members all engaged in a dialogue about recognizing warning signs that a child may be in trouble.



Power Voices Highlight

The Samaritans, Inc. would like to recognize one of their best volunteers and supporters, Cilla de Hotman, for the time and talent she lends to the organization. Cilla has been involved with the Samaritans since 2004 in many capacities; first, as a Board member, then as a participant, and then as the facilitator of the Safe Place Support Group. When asked what is most fulfilling about her current role at Samaritans, Cilla says, "In order to triumph over tragedy we must find the good somewhere. I find that helping other survivors handle the

aftermath makes me feel better about myself. Helping others see that there is life after a suicide loss, that's what is most fulfilling to me." A survivor herself, she is committed to the Safe Place support group for survivors of suicide loss, to helping others through this difficult time, and to making new connections that bring us closer together.



Cilla de Hotman

The Samaritans, Inc. office is located in Keene and provides 24

hour confidential and anonymous hotlines for adults and teens; education to youth in area schools on suicide prevention; the Safe Place support group for individuals who have lost a friend or loved one to suicide; and education and outreach programs for the community. The

leadership is currently organizing for spring activities. If you'd like more information, please call 603.357.5510 or visit www.samaritansnh.org.

National Suicide Prevention Highlights

White House Issues Presidential Message

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention received a special message from the White House supporting National Survivors of Suicide Day, acknowledging the pain and tragedy of suicide loss, and recognizing the efforts of those who are working to prevent suicide throughout the nation. Citing the critical importance of identifying and helping those at risk, the President pledged his Administration's support for mental health screening and treatment for service members and veterans, and efforts to reach vulnerable youth, including those who may have been the victims of bullying. National Survivors of Suicide Day is an annual event taking place the Saturday before the Thanksgiving Holiday each year. It is a day of healing for those who are bereaved by suicide loss. To read the President's letter, visit www.afsp.org and click on the White House image.

National Action Alliance on Suicide Prevention Convenes

On September 10th, World Suicide Prevention Day, public and private sector leaders came together to announce the founding of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. The Action Alliance has the responsibility to take the steps necessary to accelerate the work of suicide prevention, including better research and better training for counselors and primary care physicians. The focus will be on: updating and advancing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention; developing effective public awareness and social marketing campaigns, including targeted

messages for specific segments of the population that can change attitudes; and advancing suicide prevention among high-risk groups.

The co-chairs leading the alliance are public sector co-chair Secretary of the Army John McHugh and private sector co-chair former U.S. Senator Gordon Smith, who was instrumental in ensuring the passage of the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act. To learn more, go to www.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org.

Youth Depression Screenings Incorporated in New Healthcare Reform Law

On July 14th, the White House announced youth depression screenings are part of the new prevention benefits in the healthcare reform law. Free depression screenings for youth ages 12-17 are among a list of preventive services health insurers must now cover at no cost to patients. The law's emphasis on prevention means, for example, consumers purchasing new plans will no longer have to face co-payments or other forms of cost-sharing for preventive services, such as depression screening, drug and alcohol misuse screening and smoking cessation efforts. Visit www.healthreform.gov for more information.

12th Annual International Survivors of Suicide Day

On Saturday, November 20th approximately 140 survivors of suicide loss gathered together around the state in healing, support and understanding. Sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), the Survivors

of Suicide Day event takes place annually on the third Saturday of November. These gatherings brought local people together in nine locations throughout NH to connect with others who have lost a friend, family member or co-worker to suicide, and who understand the powerful and troubling emotions they experience. Participants watched the nationally produced teleconference and then shared their reactions and their own personal experiences.

We'd like to recognize the volunteers who facilitated the event, the local communities who came together to organize it and extend a special thanks to Becky McEnany, NAMI NH, who coordinated all the NH sites. Thank you also to the AFSP and the NH Bureau of Behavioral Health for their support.

Concord

NAMI NH

Facilitators: Lisa MacNaughton
and Bernice López-Stanizzi

Conway

Northern Human Services

Facilitators: Cathy Brings and
Becky McEnany

Hampstead

Hampstead Public Library

Facilitators: Dan Wells and
Roger Wells

Lancaster

All Saints Catholic Church

Facilitators: Ron Pelchat and
Elaine de Mello

Manchester

VA Medical Center

Facilitators: Lauren Haberski,
Marsha Chapple and
Ann Duckless

Merrimack

Merrimack Home Health &

National Suicide Prevention Highlights (cont.)

Hospice Care

Facilitators: Maureen Sloan, Diane McEntee and Ron Hart

Moultonborough

Moultonborough Public Library
Facilitators: Peter Whelley, Elizabeth Fenner-Lukaitis, Frances Strayer and Todd Ringelstein

Portsmouth

Seacoast Hospice at North Church
Facilitators: Edie McCaddin-Bower, Sarah Curtin and Wayne Gagnon

Westmoreland

Maplewood Nursing Home
Facilitators: Christine Brehm and Cilla de Hotman

Interested in organizing a conference site in 2011? Contact Becky McEnany, NAMI NH via email at bmcenany@naminh.org.



Funds for Community Healing Available

The Community Health and Healing Fund seeks to encourage grassroots community activities that reduce risk, such as building local capacity to promote community healing and establish support. This funding opportunity offers the general public an easy way to support the launch of a new project, trainings for local community members, developing local resources for survivors of suicide loss, and many other local initiatives that support health and community healing.



The North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition secured funding to provide books to recent NH survivors of suicide loss. Ron Pelchat, a member of the Coalition was moved when he

heard Catherine Greenleaf, author and survivor, speak about her experience and book at a suicide prevention event. Catherine's book, *Healing the Hurt Spirit: Daily Affirmations for People Who have Lost a Loved One to Suicide* is offered through the Survivors Resource folder to promote healing. These folders are distributed by the Office of the Medical Examiner to the next of kin after a NH suicide death.

Funds also supported start-up meetings for a Suicide Survivor Bereavement Support Group for individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. Work with the Seacoast Coalition indicated a need to support survivors of suicide loss in this region. The coalition printed 400 rack cards

advertising the Seacoast Suicide Bereavement Support Group, including the meeting location and dates for the remainder of this year. Cards have been distributed in the region to promote survivor attendance. This initiative was started by Kathy Toof and CG Shaffer, members of the Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition. Their first group meeting was held in the fall at the Portsmouth Public Library. For monthly meeting dates and time, contact Kathy Toof at Katt1076@comcast.net or CG Shaffer at cgshaffer@gmail.com.

Requests for an application for the Community Health and Healing Fund, along with additional information on past projects, are available by contacting Bernice López-Stanizzi at blopez@naminh.org or go to www.theconnectproject.org and click on Newsroom.

International Highlight

Northern Ireland Follows NH Model

Ken Norton spent Thanksgiving in Northern Ireland keynoting a suicide prevention conference. He then provided numerous presentations to local coalitions as well as prison and law enforcement officials. Since “The Troubles” ended with the Good Friday Accord in 1998, the country has experienced an increased rate of suicides. They



(l to r) NAMI NH Connect Project Director, Ken Norton, Northern Ireland Minister of Health Michael McGimpsey and Contact/Lifeline Executive Director Fergus Cumiskey.

have been keen to learn how NH has approached suicide prevention, intervention and response through NAMI NH’s *Connect* Program’s model of engaging communities and the use of protocols for key service providers. During a conference to plan their National Strategy in 2005, Ken was invited to present on the work done in NH and as a result Northern Ireland has incorporated the community-based model into their National Strategy. The trip was a great opportunity to see the progress made toward a lasting peace, how areas of Belfast are incorporating NH’s model and how having national health care allows for much more integration of services between



Suicide Awareness mural in West Belfast.

physical health, mental health and crisis response. Ken hopes to be connecting colleagues in NH with counterparts in Northern Ireland as a means of furthering dialogue and exchange.

Suicide Prevention Award Winner

Major Michael Moranti of the NH National Guard Receives the Elaine Frank Award on Suicide Prevention

Major Michael Moranti received the 2010 Elaine Frank Award for his outstanding work and commitment to suicide prevention at the NH National Guard. Assigned to implement a suicide prevention program for the NH National Guard, Major Moranti partnered with the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team, NAMI NH, DHHS/BBH, the Veterans administration and other groups, and brought them together as a

Health Promotion Council. Major Moranti utilized *Connect* Suicide Prevention training and its emphasis on community resources and intervention strategies to complement the standard issue Army training, and helped develop and advocate for a policy that insured Soldiers and Airmen who died by suicide received full military honors. This



MAJ Michael Moranti

policy was adopted by the Adjutant General in NH, and circulated around the country to other National Guards. He also partnered with BBH and the Medical Examiner to develop an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for real time sharing of information regarding suicide deaths. His efforts resulted in the NH National Guard being identified as a model program in testimony before the US Senate Armed Services Committee.

Resources

2009 Suicide Prevention Annual Report Released

The report titled "Suicide Across the Lifespan" includes a summary of accomplishments and an extensive data report. It is a result of the collaborative work of many groups, committees and organizations in NH who have dedicated time and resources to study the issue of suicide and to look at prevention and postvention across the lifespan. Copies of the report may be viewed or downloaded from www.theconnectproject.org.

Family Resource Connection

The Family Resource Connection (FRC) supports suicide prevention efforts throughout NH. Over the past few years, the FRC of the NH State Library has been honored to partner with NAMI NH by providing mental health information and materials directly to any individual or organization in NH. NAMI NH, through its *Connect* Suicide Prevention Program, has donated additional materials to help individuals, families, organizations and communities cope with the personal and collective loss after a suicide death. The FRC often provides information to NH school districts that have suffered loss due to suicide in their school communities. FRC Director Nancy Cristiano was on the gatekeeper and postvention committee during the development of the Connect protocols, and also participated in the development of the NH Suicide Prevention State Plan in 2004. *"I applaud all those who have contributed to the cause of Suicide Prevention in NH—and outreach awareness continues to bring more support for preventing suicide in NH."*

The FRC, launched 14 years ago, is a collaboration of efforts between the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services, the Dept. of Education and the NH State Library. It serves as a statewide clearinghouse, whose primary mission is to serve the needs of NH's children. It provides information, resources, and support for NH families, caregivers, educators and other professionals concerning aspects of caring for, educating and raising children, with an emphasis on children with special needs. For more information, visit their website at www.nh.gov/nhsl/frc.

NH Mental Health Clinicians Survey Results

The Professional Practice Committee of the Suicide Prevention Council developed a survey for mental health clinicians to obtain information about the current clinical practices of therapists who work with suicidal clients. The committee recruited mental health professionals from various geographical regions of the state, as well as a cross-section of disciplines providing services to people struggling with suicide, to take the survey. Individuals representing clinical psychology, mental health counseling, employee assistance programs, school counseling/psychology, pastoral counseling, drug and alcohol counseling and social work were actively engaged in the work of the committee. A total of 343 participants completed the survey. Regardless of discipline or treatment setting, respondents reported they frequently encountered a wide variety of suicidal activity in their practices. Survey results suggest that most mental health providers learn how to work with people in

suicide crisis *after* they have graduated from their professional programs. Given this, it is interesting to note how helpful the sample viewed continuing education workshops that deal with suicide. In general, the responses were encouraging. Over ninety percent reported that educational workshops on suicide prevention are "helpful," which offers a valuable glimpse into the current practices of mental health providers in NH. For details on the survey and general information on the Professional Practice Committee, please contact Dr. Betty Welch at bwelch@elliott-hs.org or Elizabeth Fenner-Lukaitis at elizabethfl@dhhs.state.nh.us.

Headrest Summer/Fall Newsletter

For information on how to talk to your kids about drugs, the perspective of DHMC's Chief of Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology on drug and addiction services, and statistics on how Headrest and New Hampshire fit into our community needs overall. To download, go to www.headrest.org and click on Link to Newsletters. Headrest is New Hampshire's crisis call center. All crisis calls through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are routed to their Lebanon location. The 24-hour crisis hotline serves individuals living in NH and the Upper Valley of Vermont. Trained counselors provide information and referral services to at-risk populations. Through active listening, counselors assist with the following: suicide risk assessment and intervention, domestic violence intervention, substance use assessments and other relevant issues.

Get Involved

Suicide Prevention Council Data Collection and Analysis Committee

The SPC's Data Collection and Analysis Committee is searching for a co-chair. For more information about roles and responsibilities, please contact Patrick Roberts at proberts@naminh.org.

Suicide Prevention Leadership Summit

Planning is underway for the Suicide Prevention Leadership Summit. The New Hampshire community has the opportunity to honor the work of those who impact suicide prevention and the importance of awareness in the

State. A gathering of the subcommittees working under the Suicide Prevention Council, community coalitions and support groups will meet (date to be determined) together to re-establish their commitment to the cause of suicide prevention, and establish future efforts to sustain the work of prevention efforts in the state. For more information contact Bernice López-Stanizzi at blopez@naminh.org.

Join the New National AFSP/ SPAN USA Field Advocate Network

Whoever you are; a survivor of suicide loss, a consumer of mental health services, a professional, or an interested

member of the community, there is something you can do to make a difference in suicide prevention, education and research. Make your voice heard by joining with thousands of Suicide Prevention Advocates nationwide. Join us in helping prevent suicide through education, research and advocacy. Sign up to become an AFSP/SPAN USA Field Advocate. Be kept up-to-date on legislative and regulatory issues and have the opportunity to participate in grassroots advocacy activities, including Field Advocate Action Alerts when AFSP/SPAN USA needs you to contact your elected officials. For an application or more information, go to www.spanusa.org and click on the Field Advocate Program link.

Y-CARE HOW YOU CAN HELP SOMEONE WHO IS SUICIDAL

YOU You are never alone. You are not responsible for anyone who chooses to take their own life. As friends, family and loved ones, all you can do is listen, support and assist the person in getting the help they need.

CONNECT the person to resources and to a supportive, trusted adult.

ACCEPT and listen to the person's feelings and take them seriously.

RESPOND if a person has a plan to attempt suicide and tell someone you trust.

EMPOWER the person to get help and to call The Trevor Lifeline (866-488-7386).

Because... suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15 to 24-year-olds.

Because... LGBT youth are up to 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their straight peers

Because... depression is treatable and suicide is preventable

Because... when You CARE, you can help save a life!

★ The Trevor Project

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