

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)  
 Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance (ISPA)  
 Summary of Minutes November 27, 2012  
 10:00 a.m. – 2:30:p.m.  
**Approved February 27, 2013**

Illinois Department of Public Health – Operations Center  
 located at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way (Lake Level)  
 Springfield

*with video conferencing available at Illinois Department of Public Health offices located at  
 122 S. Michigan Ave., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Conference Room 711 in Chicago, IL and 2309 W. Main St. in Marion, IL*

		<i>Present</i>	<i>Excused</i>	<i>Un- excused</i>
<b><u>Appointed Members in Attendance</u></b>				
Judy Ashby	LifeSavers Training Corporation	<i>Springfield</i>		
Mariann Blacconiere	Representing service members, veterans and their families	<i>Chicago</i>		
Colleen Daley	Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence	<i>Chicago</i>		
Eric Davidson	Illinois Higher Education Center	<i>Springfield</i>		
Paul Fleming	Survivor		X	
Carol Gall	Mental Health America of Illinois	<i>Chicago</i>		
Samuel A. Giordano Jr.	Representing emergency medical services	<i>Chicago</i>		
Steve Moore	American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	<i>Chicago</i>		
Peter Mulhall	Center for Prevention Research and Development		X	
Nicole Pekovitch	Representing mental health consumers		X	
Lora Thomas	NAMI Illinois – National Alliance on Mental Illness		X	
<b><u>Ex-Officio Members in Attendance</u></b>				
Jennifer Martin	Illinois Department of Public Health	<i>Springfield</i>		
Jessica O’Leary	Office of the Attorney General	<i>Chicago</i>		
Mary Mayes	Illinois Department on Aging	<i>Springfield</i>		
Patricia Reedy	Illinois Department of Human Services	<i>Chicago</i>		
Mary Ratliff	Illinois Violence Prevention Authority	<i>Springfield</i>		
Dr. Sam Gaines	Illinois Department of Public Health		X	
<b><u>Stakeholders in Attendance</u></b>				
Jonny Boucher	Hope for the Day	<i>Chicago</i>		
Mark Flotow	Illinois Department of Public Health	<i>Springfield</i>		
Jessica Gerdes	Illinois State Board of Education	<i>Chicago</i>		
Emily Hallendy	Mental Health America of Illinois	<i>Chicago</i>		
Shantel High	Illinois Department of Human Services	<i>Springfield</i>		
Chuck Johnson	Blessing Hospital	<i>Springfield</i>		
Stan Lewy	Survivor	<i>Chicago</i>		
Katie Mason	Mental Health America of Illinois	<i>Chicago</i>		
Master Sergeant Ed Petrik	Illinois State Police	<i>Chicago</i>		
Gail Simpson	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services	<i>Springfield</i>		

Meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

## **Introductions/Welcome**

Introductions and a welcome were made by Ms. Gall. Quorum is met. Ms. Ratliff provided an overview of video conference etiquette and ways to ensure quality sound during the meeting.

## **Review & Approval of August 27, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

Copies of the minutes were distributed to the members prior to the meeting and copies were available during the meeting. Ms. Reedy motioned for the approval of the minutes, with a second from Ms. Daley. All in favor, motion carried.

## **Update from Illinois Department of Public Health (Reporting: Jennifer Martin and Mark Flotow)**

*National Strategy of Suicide Prevention* – Ms. Martin provided a brief overview of the recently released national plan. In particular, the change in the field of suicide prevention since the first plan was released in 2001 (data, science, environment and policy) which led to the revision of the plan. The revised plan includes four strategic directions (13 goals and 60 objectives.) A link to the national plan was shared with alliance members and stakeholders prior to the meeting. Ms. Martin distributed hard copies during the meeting. ISPA workgroups reviewed the national plan during their October workgroup calls to learn how the national plan complements their respective objectives.

*2012 stakeholder accomplishments* – In preparation for organizing the 2012 annual report, Ms. Martin will ask the alliance members and stakeholders to share their accomplishments from 2012 between now and the next meeting.

*Open meetings act training* – Ms. Martin thanked those who had completed their training to date. Others were asked to complete the training and submit their certificate of completion within the new few weeks.

*Strategic plan update* – Ms. Martin provided a draft fact sheet on the strategic plan for the alliance to review, based on a template used for used in other injury prevention programs. The 1-page (front and back) sheet would serve as an executive summary. The alliance would like the workgroups to review it for content during their next workgroup calls. Some of the feedback included moving box outlining the highlights to the right of the page to allow the list of goals to be left justified. The alliance liked there was a quote from the co-chair; also recommend adding 1-2 more quotes, perhaps quotes from the *It Only Takes One* website could be used. Mr. Giordano recommended adding information about are the most common reasons for suicide and define who are high risk groups. Ms. Simpson asked if there was anything in the plan that encourages working with the justice system; in particular train professionals who work with clients with legal problem and could be suicidal. The Springfield community has lost several people that are believed to have taken their life because they were under a cloud of suspension and could be entering the judicial system. The alliance members added it's not just criminal court but also civil court – e.g., stress from divorce, mortgage. The members wondered what other professionals would be involved with these individuals besides lawyers. Mr. Reedy wondered if there is a state agency that would be in a position to outreach to those professionals. Members recommended outreaching to the mental health courts. The group also wondered if the Illinois Violent Death Reporting System looks at life stressors. Ms. Blacconiere stated the veteran affairs hospitals do look at stressors. The alliance asked the workgroups to look at this issue further.

*Youth suicide prevention project* – Ms. Martin announced, through a youth suicide prevention grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Department will offer an online simulation training for school personnel entitled *At-Risk*. After reviewing the various gatekeeper trainings, the Department found this training would reach the maximum number of school personnel. A total of six courses will be offered to middle school, high school and higher education staff over the three year period. Ms. Martin demonstrated the online course during the meeting. The Department is collaborating with the Illinois State Board of Education regarding outreaching to the schools. The training also will assist school personnel in

meeting their Jason Flatt Act requirement. The grant also will support the expansion of the *It Only Takes One* suicide prevention public awareness campaign, implementation of a consensus meeting among stakeholders, a training for higher education, in addition to evaluation of these activities. The Department currently has outreach to school personnel through displays at the Prevention Child Abuse Illinois conference and the regional School Health Days hosted by the Illinois Department of Human Services. Alliance members encouraged the Department to work with mental health centers and local coalitions to assist in providing the trainings in their community.

*2009 fatality data update* – Mr. Flotow reported the Department is still looking at the 2009 data before it's released. When ready, the data will be posted on the Department's website and Mr. Flotow will be able to start taking data requests. It is anticipated 2010 data will be ready in January 2013, and perhaps his staff will be able to release preliminary data for 2011 and 2012.

*Suicide data* – Mr. Flotow recommended that Ms. Martin propose to the Department to add a subsection on the suicide-related data on the Department's health statistics webpage. The benefit would be that each year; Mr. Flotow's staff would automatically update that webpage as new data becomes available. Mr. Martin will pursue.

Ms. Reedy asked Mr. Flotow if he had seen the article from Johns Hopkins showing an increase in hangings. He had not but thought he'd be able to get a copy of the article.

Mr. Flotow also shared he was at a national meeting for maternal mortality and found there are some states that want to include suicide as an external cause to track.

#### **Discussion of ISPA leadership positions and member vacancies** *(Reporting: Jennifer Martin)*

*Co-chair position* – **Ms. Mary Ratliff**, program developer for the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority, accepted the invitation to serve as a co-chair on the Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance alongside Carol Gal from Mental Health America. Ms. Ratliff will represent a state agency while Ms. Gall will continue to represent a non-profit (per the bylaws, one co-chair will represent a state agency and the other a non-profit.)

*Introduction of new appointees* – Mr. Giordano, Jeff Dill and Dr. Mulhall recently were appointed to the alliance. **Mr. Giordano** will represent the field of emergency medical services (*this is a new position on the alliance.*) He is the Associate Professor and Department Coordinator for Fire Science Technology, as well as Emergency and Disaster Management at Harper College. **Mr. Dill** will represent the field of fire services (*this is a new position on the alliance.*) He is the founder of Counseling Services for Fire Fighters which offers behavioral health support to firefighters; trains senior fire officers and educates clinicians on the benefits of understanding the life and emotions of firefighters. **Dr. Mulhall** will represent the field of researchers (*he is filling the vacant position that was left when Amy Brausch, Eastern Illinois University, resigned.*) He is the director of the Institute of Government and Public Affairs's Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois.

Mr. Giordano and Dr. Mulhall were in attendance at the meeting and provided a few minutes to introduce themselves. Mr. Giordano has worked in the field since the 1970's and has responded to suicides. He also serves on the Department's Emergency Medical Services advisory committee and is a fire fighter in addition to a paramedic. Mr. Giordano and Mr. Dill have worked together on several projects with the Chicago Fire Department and the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association with regards to firefighter suicide issues, in addition to produced a video for Harper College on firefighter suicide which Mr. Dill utilizes in his presentations. Mr. Dill also serves on Mr. Giordano's Fire training Advisory Board at Harper College. Mr. Giordano mentioned the chief of Mr. Dill's department is the new president of their international association and could be a great resource. ~ Many alliance members previously have met Dr. Mulhall through other suicide prevention

projects. He collaborated with the Department on several projects regarding writing grant and assessing community development. Dr. Mulhall also volunteered to serve as the chair of the ISPA Data Workgroup.

*Vacancies* – Ms. Martin reported follow up letters were sent to the following agencies, requesting they nominate a representative to serve on the alliance: Illinois Hospital Association, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and the Center on Halsted.

#### **Guest speaker on traumatic brain injury and suicide: Tregg Duerson**

Tregg Duerson is the son of former Chicago Bears player Dave Duerson who died of suicide. Mr. Duerson spoke about his family's story and how his father suffered silently and quietly. His father's brain was donated to Boston University and found he suffered from chronic and traumatic encephalopathy, a brain disease linked to concussions. Mr. Duerson has partnered with Mental Health America of Illinois (MHAI) to bring awareness about the correlation between traumatic brain injury and suicide. A public service announcement (PSA) he did with MHAI was showed during the meeting. Mr. Duerson also has partnered with the Department of Defense to discuss the link between TBI and suicide in addition to TBI and post traumatic stress disorder. He started a foundation to donate concussion tests to under privileged children. MHAI asked Mr. Duerson to share what he hoped to see from the IOTO campaign. He'd like to see more development with suicide survivors (survivors want to help;) segment message to other efforts (e.g., Hope for the Day, LOSS;) and increase awareness. Members asked if he would be willing to travel to other parts of the state. Currently he is working and attending school but he'd be willing to do what he can. Alliance members started to brainstorm on how they could assist in promoting the PSA. Mr. Johnson plans to share it statewide. He also has a contact with the St. Louis stadium. Ms. Daley mentioned she could share it with her members of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV.) In fact, ICHV wants to focus more this year on suicides. Ms. Blacconiere can add the PSA to the stream on their televisions as a hospital broadcast and share with her networks.

#### **Discussion from alliance member with regards to their involvement on the Illinois Joining Forces, Behavioral Health Committee's Suicide Prevention Subcommittee** *(Reporting: Ms. Gall,)*

A copy of the press release outlining Governor Quinn's launch of "Illinois Joining Forces" (IJF) Veterans Support Partnership was shared with the members. Ms. Gall provided an overview of the project which is modeled after the national Joining Forces effort. IJF is a new statewide public-private partnership that will improve support for service members, Veterans and their families. There are 10 workgroups, and an organization can join. The Behavioral Health Workgroup has four focus areas – alternative therapies, education and training, conduct more formal needs assessment and suicide prevention. This is an opportunity to leverage efforts. Ms. Blacconiere mentioned the alternative therapies included such activities as scuba, horseback and music. Mr. Giordano stated he has seen an increase rate in retired members; Ms. Blacconiere explained that could be a result of delayed onset of post traumatic stress disorder. In addition to Ms. Gall, Ms. Reedy, Ms. Thomas and Ms. Blacconiere are also involved with them project. They are asked to keep the alliance updated on the IJF initiatives.

#### **Workgroup Updates**

Data Workgroup – The data workgroup met with staff from the Child Health Data Lab (CHDL) to discuss data from an article entitled "Chicago Leads Nation in Teen Suicide Planning, Attempts" based on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Report (YRBS.) The workgroup reviewed data regarding suicides and suicide attempts requiring medical care for Chicago residents aged 14 to 18 years. The data contained two sets of information – one with the YRBS data from 2007 and 2009 with the appropriate questions, for comparison's sake, and one tab with the numbers of actual suicides and suicide attempts requiring medical attention. When comparing Chicago to other larger cities – Chicago stands out. CHDL also had hospital discharge data.

Ms. Martin also mentioned it anticipated CDC will support another funding cycle for the National Violent Death Reporting System. When that occurs, the CHDL will apply in collaboration with the Department.

State Agency Review and Support Subcommittee – Ms. Reedy, chair of the State Agency subcommittee met with Ms. Angie Brechline, chair of the Education and Training Workgroup, to discuss how their two groups can collaborate to identify opportunities to train professionals statewide by adding suicide prevention to existing trainings and conferences. They also discussed the idea of requiring professional be trained in suicide prevention as part of their licensure. One approach would be work with professional organizations to advocate amending their requirements so their professionals are competent. They also reviewed legislation from Washington which requires all clinicians be trained. Ms. Reedy and Ms. Brechline will continue to research this topic.

Ms. Martin is working with the data unit of her office to convert the survey to inventory suicide prevention activities to an online format. Once completed, she will ask members of the State Agency Review and Support Subcommittee to pilot the survey prior to forwarding it to the alliance.

Ms. Mayes and Ms. Martin drafted a letter to be sent to the agency directors for the appointed members to reacquaint the directors to the alliance – e.g., what the alliance is, keep them informed of what we are doing, encourage them appoint an designee if they have a vacancy. Ms. Mayes had addition edits to make to the letter and the subcommittee will review further during their next workgroup meeting.

Community Awareness Workgroup – the workgroup reviewed a draft outline for suicide prevention webpage on the Department’s website. A final draft was presented during today’s meeting. It included data, who is at risk, warning signs, what to do if you are concerned about someone, in addition to links to national and state publications and resources. Ms. Martin explained the webpage is short and simple – it is better to post the basics online then expand later. The alliance provided additional recommendations, such as:

- Can a different header be used than the “Injury Prevention Illinois” header? If a suicide prevention header could be developed that would be ideal.
- Mr. Flotow will double check the data listed (e.g., is it the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death, which age groups have the higher rate.)
- Ensure all versions of Illinois’ strategic plan are posted; but only list the most current national plan.
- Add My Healthy Vet ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)) weblink.
- Can this webpage be linked from other state agency websites?

Based on these changes, the alliance approved the draft webpage outline during today’s meeting. Ms. Martin will make these changes and submit the proposed webpage to the Department for review.

Ms. Gall shared MHAH has made a commitment to move the *It Only Takes One* public awareness campaign forward and is looking for different ways to leverage the campaign. If you have ideas, please contact Ms. Gall.

Education and Training Workgroup – (prefer to the report above by the State Agency Review and Support Subcommittee regarding their collaboration with the Education and Training Workgroup.)

The workgroup was invited to review the suicide prevention components of the School Nurse Emergency Care course manual. The manual addresses emergencies involving mental/behavior health, including suicide, and the appendix has a suicide prevention protocol. Two workgroup members offered to review the manual and provide suggestions/recommendations for these sections of the manual that could be incorporated into the next revision of the SNEC manual.

During the last alliance meeting, the workgroup mentioned their interest in hosting another statewide conference. Since the last meeting, further discussion was had between the co-chairs and Department staff and it was determined the workgroup could proceed with developing a proposal. The workgroup agreed if they host a conference, then it should be limited to a one-day event. They also discussed the possibility of hosting regional conferences versus a statewide conference in order to generate a larger response of participation. The workgroup began discussing the pros (e.g., more convenient than a multi-day event) and cons (e.g., economic times, travel limitations) of a conference. They agreed it should be done at a low cost (e.g., free facility, free speakers, and lunch on your own) and there should be no/minimal registration fee with continuing education units available. Before moving forward with the proposal, the workgroup wanted to present the idea to the full alliance. If the alliance is okay with the idea, then a request for others to join the workgroup will be made. Ms. Martin mentioned it is critical to have a strong planning committee. The alliance provided the following feedback:

- Mr. Giordano offered Harper College a potential location. It is a free facility that will hold 250-275 people, with a cafeteria onsite. He also serves on the executive board of the Board of Illinois Community Colleges (representing 48 colleges) and could connect us with other colleges.
- Ms. Blacconiere also offered the VA hospital as a potential location for the conference.
- Members felt a conference would bring attention to the alliance's work.
- Need to determine the topic areas
- Possibly offer the conference every other year, and rotate in different parts of the state.

The following members agreed to join an ad hoc committee to develop a proposal: Ms. Ashby, Mr. Lewy, Ms. Ratliff, Ms. Simpson, Mr. Boucher, Ms. Gall and Ms. Mason. An email will be sent to the entire alliance and list of stakeholders inviting them to join the ad hoc committee.

Ms. Martin thanked the workgroup members who helped staff/coordinate displays at the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS,) Family and Community Services program's regional DHS School Health Days trainings between October and November in Springfield, Mt. Vernon, Rockford, Arlington Heights and Lisle. - including April Jervis, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP,) AFSP volunteers, Angie Brechlin and Laura Moski, SwedishAmerican Center for Mental Health, Katie Mason, Mental Health America of Illinois and Mariann Blacconiere, Hines VA Hospital. Ms. Martin also thanked Vyki Jackson, School Health Program Coordinator, for the opportunity to display at her events and thanked Jessica Gerdes, Illinois State Board of Education, for transporting materials to a couple of the events to save the Department postage. - The trainings provided updates to registered nurses, school administrators, school health personnel and social workers. ISPA provided materials promoting the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, in addition to fact sheets on what teens, teachers and school mental health providers can do to prevent suicide.

#### **Agency Announcements**

- Ms. Ashby announced the LifeSavers Training Corporation hosted two training retreats with 99 high school students. In the summer, she trained schools in Memphis.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25p.m.

*Minutes prepared by Jennifer Martin*