



Stakeholder
Coalition Meeting
August 20, 2024



DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES

Agenda

- Introductions (In the chat)
- Program Overview
- Governor's Challenge Team Partner Updates
 - VA
 - MTNG
 - VNN
 - Peer Coaching
- Q&A

Montana Governor's Challenge Mission

- **Task** – Implement a suicide prevention program for Montana's Servicemembers, Veterans and their Families (SMVF) that addresses the root causes of suicide through identification and screening for risk, building protective factors and facilitating care transitions for those determined to be at risk and by providing safe storage and/or disposal of lethal means for individuals in crisis.
- **Purpose** – To reduce the number of suicides among the SMVF community in Montana and to build a network of protective factors to reduce suicide risk.
- **Endstate** – The suicide rate for SMVF in Montana lowered to below the state rate and a statewide network of providers and protectors established to keep it that way.

Goals of the Stakeholder's Coalition



BUILD A COALITION OF
INDIVIDUALS AND AGENCIES
INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING SMVF
IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.



SOLICIT IDEAS FOR EXPANDING
THE PROGRAM'S REACH AND
IMPACT.



ASSIST PEER COACHES WITH
BUILDING SMVF SUPPORT UNITS
IN UNDERSERVED COUNTIES
AND TRIBAL COMMUNITIES.

Program History

- Montana in initial tranche of Mayor's Challenge in 2018. (Helena and Billings)
- Montana joins Governor's Challenge under Governor Bullock in 2019; MG Quinn (MTNG TAG) leads delegation to initial policy academy.
- Funding for implementation comes from HB696 (Version 2019) and provides \$250K granted to: L&C County Health Department, Riverstone Health (Yellowstone County), Billings Urban Indian Health Center, Yellowstone United Way, Dog Tag Buddies, Veterans Navigation Network.
- Among the programs developed: ATQ and Military Strong(In Yellowstone and Lewis and Clark Counties) and VA-led CPSS/PC program.

Current Project Status

HB696 funding expired on June 30, 2021.

Almost complete turnover of personnel from original GC Stakeholder's group; COVID effect.

New GC 2.0 team began SAMHSA/VA academy process in 2022.

Final action plan validated at implementation academy in February 2024.

Current Montana Governor's Challenge Partners

Montana DPHHS

Montana Veteran's Affairs Division (MVAD)

Montana National Guard

Fort Harrison VA (VISN 19)

Lewis and Clark Public Health (Helena Mayor's Challenge)

Riverstone Health (Billings Mayor's Challenge)

Veteran's Navigation Network

American Legion

Governor's Challenge Planning Team

- John Tabb, DPHHS – [Team Lead](#)
- Jerry Palmer, MTANG - [PA 2 Lead](#)
- Pat Trاملة, MTNG
- Cora Domeier, MTNG
- Shelby Kerr, MTNG
- Douglas Stepina, VA
- Todd Lester, VA
- Bob McCabe, VA
- Roger Hagan, American Legion, MVAD Board
- Mike McManus, Veterans Navigation Network
- Ali Mullen, L&C County PH (Helena Mayor's Challenge, Safer Communities MT) - [PA 3 Lead](#)
- Sarah Sandau, L&C County PH (Helena Mayor's Challenge)
- Sarah Music, Yellowstone County PH (Billings Mayor's Challenge) – [PA 1 Lead](#) ([Transitioning](#))

Governor's Challenge Priority Areas

Priority Area 1 –
Identification and
Screening

Priority Area 2 –
Promote
Connectedness and
Improve Care
Transitions

Priority Area 3 –
Lethal Means Safety
and Safety Planning

GC Activities

- Priority Area 1 – “Ask the Question” Campaign
 - In development.
- Priority Area 2 – GC Stakeholder Group, Protector’s Summit, Peer Coaching Program, SMVF Support Map
 - GC SH Meeting held quarterly
 - First Protector’s Summit scheduled for February 14.
 - Peer Coaching Program operating and materials available.
 - SMVF Support Map in development.
- Priority Area 3 – Safer Communities Montana (SCM) Toolkit (Helena Mayor’s Challenge)
 - SCM Toolkit complete and available to communities that wish to implement their own lethal means safety programs.

The Protector's Summit

SAVE THE DATE

02/14/2025

Billings Hotel & Convention Center
(1223 Mullaney Ln, Billings)



The Protectors' Summit serves as a specialized event aimed at enhancing the support structures for military personnel, veterans, and their families by building a stronger, more informed network of support, emphasizing culturally competent services and enhanced collaboration among organizations assisting the mil/vet community.

THIS SUMMIT WILL INCLUDE guest speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions crucial for fostering a cohesive and informed community of social service providers, enabling them to serve the mil/vet population more effectively and efficiently.

If your organization would like to attend, please contact Mike McManus at 406 435-9308 or Mike@VeteransNavigation.org.



Task

- Bring together organizations and individual peers involved, or desiring to be involved, with building and strengthening protective factors among Montana's SMVF

Purpose

- To build a community of SMVF Protectors in Eastern Montana; network and be inspired by state and national level support opportunities.

Endstate

- A sense of common purpose instilled among SMVF Protectors in Eastern Montana.
- SMVF Protector resources mapped, and gaps identified.

Way Forward

Governor's Challenge Landing Page

(DPHHS Suicide Prevention Site.) **Live this week!**

SMVF Resource mapping

P1 – ATQ Implementation; tie-in with other campaigns

P2 – Protector's Summit (Feb 15, 2025); "pop-up" events, upon request.

P3 – Continued work on legislative support and recruitment of peer storage sites like Safe Place.

What you can do

- Attend coalition meetings and provide feedback from the field.
- Invite other stakeholders in your area to participate. (Please send me their contact information.)
- Connect with 211 to update SMVF serving resources in your area.
- Encourage peers in under-served areas to establish SMVF support units.
- Plan to attend the Protector's Summit in Billings in February, if you cover Eastern Montana, or look forward to future Protector's Summits in your area.