

**Minutes****CHIP Mental Health Priority Team**

October 7, 2020, 9 am to 11 am

In attendance: 47 participants via GoToMeeting, including:

*Clare Rosser, Dave Kish, Jose Flores, Shakeer Mokerrom, Kim Stutt, Kat Solove, Joanne Gleason, Valerie Leach, Amber Smith, Pamela Mintz, Vicki Montesano, Allisyn Leppla, Tonya Birney, Judy Maldonado, JoAnne Ferritto, Rosemary Miles, Tina Zimmerman, Samantha Blackwell, Arielle Edwards, Catherine Woskobnick, Virginia Beckman, Joyce Starr, Jennifer Bracken, Elizabeth Wolanski, Mark Johnson, Elaine Georgas, Pam Waite, Chad Grude, Inez James, Hope Moon, Gina Escke, Joanne Gleason, Elizabeth Biddulph, Mike Eppley, Neil Hamilton, Nicole Holt, Brooke Sherman, Rick Massatti*

A meeting of the Lorain County Suicide Prevention Coalition (SPC) that was scheduled to be held the same week as this meeting was canceled, with members being invited to participate in this meeting instead. Many of the goals for the CHIP Mental Health Priority have risen out of the work of the SPC, and membership in the groups overlaps. For 2021, the current meeting schedule for both groups alternates on a monthly basis so that work in suicide prevention facilitated by the MHARS Board can be coordinated and consistent.

**A year in review:**

Our October meeting marked the culmination of our first full year of work on the 2020-2022 Lorain County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Mental Health Priority. Work began to define the elements of the plan prior to when it was approved on Nov. 19, 2019, and released on Dec. 11, 2019, and the group started implementing the objectives beginning on January 15, 2020.

As of the October meeting, the CHIP Mental Health Priority met every other month, with subcommittees addressing the three strategies. Because of the pandemic and ensuing changes to health care, schools, etc., and staffing changes at several critical agencies, a few action steps have been slightly delayed or were only partially completed at the October review. However, all are underway.

The year's major data points are available for review by the group at the links below. These are updated frequently, and are for internal, not public, use since some data takes time to be verified through the Ohio Department of Health.

**REVIEW OF 2020 CHIP MH STRATEGIES**

Clear Impact review – **Clare Rosser**, MHARS

## **GENERAL SUICIDE PREVENTION DISCUSSION/INFORMATION SHARING**

### **Suicide Data – Mark Johnson, MHARS**

Mark shared information from the LOSS Team.

This period of time includes the onset of the pandemic, which has increased stressors that can be associated with suicide deaths, but are not a definitive predictor. While there is no conclusive data to indicate that suicide rates have risen as a result of COVID-19, we do know many Americans are experiencing impacts on their mental and emotional well-being, and issues such as job loss, financial strain, and social isolation are all risks factors for suicide.

### **COVID-19 update:**

Suicide anomalies discussion with members of the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction. The team has been meeting with Boards and their constituents in each county in Ohio to discuss suicide rates in the county, explore whether there have been recent increases in suicides, identify needs in the community, better understand procedures when the Board is notified of a suicide death and to problem solve about available opportunities, resources and potential solutions. Attended by:

**Dr. Justin Trevino**, Medical Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)

**Dr. Vicki Montesano**, Bureau Chief of Mental Health Treatment, OhioMHAS

**Dr. Rick Massatti**, Bureau Chief of Addiction Services, OhioMHAS

**Joyce Starr**, Chief of Recovery Services, OhioMHAS

**Valerie Leach**, Prevention Administrator, OhioMHAS

Discussion involved:

How does the MHARS Board or how do providers find out that there has been a suicide death?  
Often:

- Coroner
- LOSS Team
- Funeral home
- Media
- Community partners

### **RESOURCES OFFERED IN THE COUNTY:**

Lorain County has a LOSS Team in place, and the team is notified when there is a suicide. There is a protocol, and the team typically learns about a suicide through law enforcement. They also hear from the coroner and have even been notified by funeral homes. After notification, the team goes on site within 45 minutes. They have an information packet that they share with families as

well as a follow-up protocol. They also have a response team in place when there is a child's death, activating contacts in the schools (Crisis liaison/response team for schools/youth)

Peer support: Let's Get Real, a group of individuals in recovery from substance use, work with local hospitals. Last year they visited 522 times unduplicated (this is for only one hospital). The goal is to get people to treatment.

There is a hotline and warmline at the Nord Center. Also promotes Crisis Text Line.

The county has a strong Suicide Prevention Coalition.

Zero Suicide: Nord Center had staff attend the Zero Suicide training.

The county offers extensive community education: QPR, MHFA, Working Minds, CIT, Stepping Up, ASSIST, SOS, PAX.

#### OVERDOSE:

The Lorain County Opiate Action Team tracks overdoses through the coroner's office. They are also working with DPH to get ODMAPS in place. They have difficulty staying ahead of the data because EMS, hospitals, and police use different tracking systems. They are looking at the available data to get ahead of the curve before an anomaly spike is notified for the state. 90 OD deaths last year, 72 through September 17. It may be delayed because of toxicology analysis. They are on track for approximately 100 deaths which is on track for the last few years. They have QRTs (Quick Response Teams of law enforcement and clinical staff) in most regions within Lorain County. The numbers for these teams dropped down because of COVID but is now active. The county has ready access to Naloxone.

#### IDENTIFIED AREAS OF NEED:

- Real time data on suicide and overdose
- Dr. Vicki Montesano noted that if anyone identifies other areas of need, to contact her to provide that information.

#### IDEAS:

- Connect more with funeral homes.
- Continue to emphasize use of peers, in-person support.
- Note that there is emerging evidence that the isolation of COVID is impacting girls ages 10-18; inform Suicide Prevention Coalition's Children's Subcommittee that this is a rising concern along with the increasing rate of suicide among Black youth nationally.

#### Updates on other suicide prevention efforts:

Strengthening and Sustaining Ohio's Suicide Prevention Coalitions learning project – **Clare Rosser**, MHARS

- Community Readiness Assessment based on CDC strategies: now available at <https://mharslc.org/suicide-prevention-coalition/>
- This group and the Suicide Prevention Coalition provided SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) feedback, which contributed to a draft plan submitted to the state team.
- The state team supported the continuation of the #HowICope social media campaign with the Lorain County Urban League, sharing local voices of mental health care and treatment, and specifically calling people to join the African American Subcommittee that is being developed as part of the Suicide Prevention Coalition (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/624077527682487/353010978854004>).
- The state team may provide additional guidance or financial support; Clare Rosser will attend a special session for project directors at the Midwest Suicide Prevention Conference and inform the group of next steps once they are determined.

Domestic Violence dimension in suicide – **Virginia Beckman**, Lorain County Safe Harbor/Genesis House

- Recent news reports have indicated an increase in murder-suicides, some for households with a known history of family or intimate partner violence
- Virginia Beckman noted the importance of not missing opportunities to intervene, like during a domestic disturbance visit by law enforcement, and noted that she has conducted many trainings for law enforcement about what to look for and how to intervene
- She also noted the True Batterers program, the Men’s Anti-violence Program (MAP) and that resources are available through the Ohio Domestic Violence Network at [odvn.org](http://odvn.org).

United in Glory effort through Mercy Parish Nursing – **Catherine Woskobnick**, Mercy Health

- Catherine Woskobnick noted the need to involve faith communities in health care, including suicide prevention, and described their new “United in Glory” effort. She noted opportunity for collaboration.
- She also noted that Mercy pediatricians can be a pathway for care, along with resource mothers and community health workers.

FEMA Grant – **Elaine Georgas**, MHARS

- MHARS was awarded funding for Ohio’s COVID Care Program, to help connect people whose behavioral health needs are impacted by the pandemic. Para-professional counselors will be deployed through Elyria YWCA and El Centro (but for a countywide effort) to connect people to screening and referral. Increased screening and referral capability was built at Nord Center beginning in May, and this effort aligns with that. This could also be a way to connect with schools and families with children who are struggling.

Governor’s and Mayor’s Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families - **Elizabeth K. Biddulph**, Lorain and Sandusky VA Outpatient Clinics

- A description of the program is available at <https://www.samhsa.gov/smf-ta-center/mayors-governors-challenges>

- Ohio is one of 27 states taking part in the challenge and are working to develop and implement state-wide suicide prevention best practices for SMVF, using a public health approach, to prevent suicide among service members, veterans, and their families.

Ohio State University 2020 Suicide Prevention Conference: Innovations and Special Populations Recap: **Elizabeth Wolanski**, ESC

Transformation Trail, **Jennifer Bracken**, Lorain County Metro Parks

The Transformation Trail project is a collaboration between the Metro Parks, MHARS Board, Rotary Club of Amherst, and the Amherst Steele High School Interact Club, a multi-generational initiative that will allow park-goers to engage in mental health exercises while enjoying the great outdoors.

- In Spring 2021, images and activities will be installed along a trail at Amherst Beaver Creek Reservation.
- The trail has images, messages, and mediation activities meant to interrupt ruminating or negative thoughts for someone who is struggling, and enhance positive thoughts and experiences for all ages.

September's Suicide Prevention Month Recap – **Clare Rosser**, MHARS

- Suicide Prevention Month included a focus on workplaces this year, to educate about mental health needs during COVID. A repository of resources is available for businesses at [mharslc.org/helpwanted](http://mharslc.org/helpwanted), and was distributed through a Chamber of Commerce presentation, mailers, and an e-blast.
- Also, MHARS sponsored the American Suicide Prevention Foundation's virtual event.
- Various forms of outreach have been ongoing for families, including promoting the Family Toolkit at [mharslc.org/familytoolkit](http://mharslc.org/familytoolkit), and the report on the crisis of Black youth suicide at [mharlsc.org/ringthealarm](http://mharlsc.org/ringthealarm).

Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation Advocacy Team Recap – **Clare Rosser**, MHARS

- Clare Rosser noted that this group, too, is looking at messaging about safe firearm storage, as was noted by previous speakers.

Suicide Prevention Coalition planning – **Mark Johnson**, MHARS

- The Suicide Prevention Coalition currently does not have an appointed Chair, due to changes in staffing at the MHARS Board. It was noted that the December 7 SPC meeting at 11 am would proceed, with changes to come then or later. To be added to the SPC mailing list, contact [vreyna@mharslc.org](mailto:vreyna@mharslc.org).

## **2021 MEETING SCHEDULE:**

All from 9 am to 11 am:

January 13, 2021

April 14, 2021

July 14, 2021  
November 17, 2021