

Statewide Suicide Prevention Council

Quarterly Meeting

January 8, 2014 in Anchorage

Minutes

January 8, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Meghan Crow at 1:00 p.m. (Juneau council members and staff were delayed due to fog.)

Roll call:

Present: Alan Cirocco, Megan Crow, Sen. Anna Fairclough, Sharon Fishel, Barbara Franks, Fred Glenn, Barbara Henjum, Alana Humphrey, William Martin, Sue May, Brenda Moore-Beyers, Lowell Sage

Absent: Teressa Baldwin, Sen. Berta Gardner (excused), Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins (excused), Christine Moses, Rep. Benjamin Nageak (excused)

Staff: Kate Burkhart, executive director; Eric Morrison, council assistant

Introductions and Ethics Disclosures:

Crow said she is a member of SAIPH coalition in Bethel and works for the Lower Kuskokwim School District, which has requested state funding for suicide prevention.

Humphrey said she works for the Boys & Girls Club of Alaska, which receives state grants.

Franks said she works for Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, is on UAA advisory committee for their suicide prevention grant, serves on the Alaska Psychiatric Institute advisory board, and is a member of the National Suicide Prevention Line advisory committee.

Acting director of the Division of Behavioral Health Barbara Henjum introduced herself. She is the former director of the Division of Juvenile Justice and the interim Director of Behavioral Health.

New council member Alan Cirocco introduced himself. He is a clinical social worker from Fairbanks.

Fishel is a program manager for school counseling and related programs at the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). She manages the Division of Behavioral Health and Council funded school suicide prevention grant programs for DEED.

Martin introduced himself as the Alaska Federation of Natives representative.

Sue May is the suicide prevention coordinator for Veterans Affairs in Anchorage and serves as the military representative.

Sen. Fairclough introduced herself as a legislative ex officio member, sharing that she chairs the Council's Higher Education Sub-Committee. Her staff, Erin Shine, was attending by telephone as well.

Glenn is in Kenai, serving as the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse representative to the Council.

Sage is from Kivalina, representing the clergy on the Council.

Natasha Pineda, the new liaison to the Council from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, introduced herself.

Tully McLaughlin, chief of staff for Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins, attended by telephone.

Approval of Agenda:

Vice Chair Crow asked for any amendments to the agenda.

Fishel **moved** for approval of the agenda. Sen. Fairclough **seconded** the motion, which passed without objection.

Approval of Minutes:

Crow asked for approval of the minutes of the October meeting. Fishel noted some typos, that she will share directly with Eric. Humphrey **moved** to approve the minutes as presented, with typographical corrections to be made. Franks **seconded** the motion. The minutes were approved without objection.

Announcements:

None

Division of Behavioral Health Quarterly Report, James Gallanos:

James Gallanos works for the Prevention Section of the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). A written report from DBH has been provided to Council members and is available on StopSuicideAlaska.org.

Comprehensive prevention grantees are in the final third of the 3-year grant period. There are 25 grantees in this program. The focus this cycle has been on performance measures. Gallanos expects that the next grantee reports will show evidence of effectiveness and outcomes. DBH is drafting the Request for Proposals for the next cycle of comprehensive prevention grants, with an expected issuance in late January.

DBH is using federal Garrett Lee Smith funds to revise the [Alaska Gatekeeper](#) model using the [Question Persuade Refer Model](#) and train additional gatekeeper trainers. The [Trust Training Cooperative](#) (TTC) is partnering with DBH to provide the trainings. Some trainers have conducted their own Gatekeeper trainings, some have not. The division plan to conduct an evaluation based on gatekeeper interviews as to whether they have used the skills learned in the trainings. Eric Boyer (TTC) is coordinating the Gatekeeper training project.

Moore-Beyers asked if [Crisis Intervention Team](#) trained officers have been trained in Gatekeeper or other suicide prevention models. Gallanos said he did not know, but thought the [Police Chaplains Ministry](#) might connect with them.

Sage asked if Gatekeeper is available for clergy members. Gallanos answered yes, that the challenge is assembling the group to attend the training. Sage invited Gallanos to offer the training to clergy in his region. Gallanos replied “Absolutely.”

Franks reported the Police Chaplaincy partners with NAMI to train Crisis Intervention Team officers. She will be offering [safeTALK](#) to clergy and other members of the public on January 25 in Anchorage. Moore-Beyers spoke about the challenges to attracting faith leaders to these sorts of training; they don’t see suicide prevention as relevant to their work. Franks reported success in attracting ministers by speaking to them as “first responders.”

Fishel reported that Eric Boyer (TTC) will provide Gatekeeper training at the special education conference this Spring.

Gallanos reports that DBH has contracted with Solstice Advertising to create a postvention DVD, based on stakeholder interviews, to complement the revised postvention toolkit. Gallanos asked Franks to speak about DBH’s recent postvention dialogue with survivors of suicide loss. She reported it was an intense and intimate discussion. The group included an attempt survivor, which reminded her of how we must be careful to consider their unique needs in these sorts of situations. Gallanos will provide the report from the discussion to Council members at the Statewide Summit.

DBH has continued to fund the Doorway to a Sacred Place traditional resource through Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). When Gallanos receives the draft from ANTHC, he will share that with the Council for review.



Crow asked that Council members introduce themselves to Elizabeth Giardina, executive director of Boards and Commissions, Office of the Governor, who had joined the meeting.

Preparation for Statewide Suicide Prevention Summit:

Burkhart explained the format and goals and expectations for the Summit. She asked Council members if they would be comfortable participating with the regional teams from their areas, and serving as reporters for each of the regional teams in the context of acquiring information for the implementation report. Consensus was that council members would work with their local teams, spreading to cover all the regional teams, and would report back information for the implementation report.

Travel for Spring Meeting in Bethel:

The next Council meeting is in Bethel. Council members discussed dates for holding the meeting. Crow proposed April 24-26, 2014 and May 5-7, 2014, and to consult with Bethel suicide prevention stakeholders at the Summit later this week. There was no objection.

Gallanos extended invitations for the Council to send representatives, at DBH expense, to the American Association on Suicidology conference in April and the annual Garrett Lee Smith grantee meeting in June. As the executive committee approves all travel involving formal representation of the Council, interested council members should submit by email their interest to Chairman Martin by February 10, 2014. The executive committee will meet thereafter to determine which members will represent the Council at these events.

Burkhart reviewed the entire travel policy with council members.

2014 Implementation Report:

Burkhart explained that the 2014 *Casting the Net Upstream* state plan implementation report, in which the Council's annual report appears, will be published in late January. Most of the information for the report has been collected, with the work from the Summit to round out the content. The implementation report will be web published, as it has been in the past, with print copies made for legislators. As in the past, Burkhart intends to meet with all 60 legislators (or staff) to provide a tailored update on suicide prevention efforts in their districts. She encouraged Council members interested in assisting with these meetings to let her know.



Humphrey asked that public comment be scheduled in the middle of the meeting, so that Council members are not forced to remain after business is completed. Burkhart suggested having it at the beginning of the meeting. Crow agreed, saying it set a welcoming tone for the meeting. For future meetings, public comment will occur at the start of the Council's meeting.

Break at 2:40 p.m. until 3:45 p.m.

Alaska Community Foundation, Anne Remick:

Council members introduced themselves to Anne Remick from Alaska Community Foundation. She manages grants and scholarships at the foundation and helps the Alaska Children's Trust manage their grant programs. Remick provided a report to council members to review.

Remick spoke about the purpose of the Alaska Community Foundation, which provides \$5-6m in grants and scholarships, funded by the portfolio of funds they manage, each year. Thanks to a one-time capital increment of \$25,000 secured by Sen. Fairclough, matched equally by the Alaska Community Foundation, a teen suicide prevention small project grant program was created in 2012. The small project grant program fills a gap, as there is funding for larger projects but not for small ones.

The grant applications were reviewed in November 2012. Eleven applications were funded, with a balance between urban and rural projects. Remick provided a brief overview of each of the eleven projects. (See written report for detail.)

Sen. Fairclough asked for the written report from Alaska Community Foundation to be emailed to members not in the room. Remick said that she could do that. Sen. Fairclough asked if the foundation match would be available if the legislature again appropriated funds for this project. Remick said that was definitely possible, and thanked Sen. Fairclough for helping secure the funds. Sen. Fairclough asserted that it was a team effort.

Moore-Beyers suggested adding some discussion of the [40 Assets](#) and importance of alternative activities to prevention to the foundation report, as legislators and policymakers are not always familiar with how these sorts of activities promote wellness and resiliency. Sen. Fairclough agreed, and added that it would help to show how the projects connect to the state plan – though she does not intend to pass the foundation's report out to her colleagues.

Crow thanks Remick for her presentation.

Final Comments:

Fishel reported that DEED and the Council provided a capacity building workshop to six school districts that were not funded or didn't seek funding in the last round of suicide prevention grants. The workshop was in December. The next solicitation, coming out next week, is for a 2 year grant. It will fund four districts (for a total of ten grantees under the Council-DEED project).

Franks reported that ANTHC and the Alaska Association of Student Governments continue to partner in presentations of *Railway of Hope*, the student-directed suicide prevention film. This collaboration is expanding the number of communities and venues in which she can provide outreach, and the number of people who can use the film to support conversations about suicide.

Sen. Fairclough thanked council members for their work in the past year. She asked if the Council would consider a resolution for the legislature to invest in suicide prevention. She reported that the sub-committee letters to licensing boards regarding suicide prevention continuing education were sent in mid-November. They continue to seek a licensing body to partner in curriculum development. The sub-committee also seeks to incorporate curricula but suicide, substance abuse, trauma, etc. into college programs.

Sen. Fairclough also raised the issue of council member absences, particularly unexcused absences. She cited the historical problem with attendance that the legislature attempted to resolve several years ago, and the fact that the bylaws provide for Council review of attendance. She asked that the Council members review attendance at Spring meeting according to the bylaws, raising concern at the lack of active youth participation. Crow agreed that the formal review should be added to the next agenda. Burkhart explained that the bylaws provide a formal process which anticipates referral to the Governor's Office for action, so it should be noticed.

May reported that she spoke with the UAA School of Social Work about adding suicide prevention to their curriculum. They indicated that they would work with Bridget Hanson, who coordinates the Garrett Lee Smith grant at the University of Alaska Anchorage, to keep the effort aligned internally. May will follow up with them.

Burkhart reported that, in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services Public Information Office and Sarana Schell, the Council is drafting a Compass/op-ed piece related to responsible reporting and safe messaging. This is in response to a recent article from the *Peninsula Clarion*, picked up by newspapers statewide, which violated all the principles of safe messaging and reporting on suicide. May reported that she is also working on an article with the VA press office.

Henjum expressed gratitude in hearing about the Alaska Community Foundation program, and other groups funding these sorts of projects, as they are key to supporting youth and preventing delinquency and so many social issues. She emphasized the need for little grants, not just major grants.

Moore-Beyers said that the Council has improved coordination of efforts, but there are still a lot of projects being implemented without being sustained. There is a better sense of communication and coordination, and that is one of the most encouraging things. She pointed to the strong collaboration between the Council and DEED. Franks and Humphrey both spoke to how the Summits have helped to build trust and highlight the investments and work of communities in prevention. Humphrey and Moore-Beyers both comments on how these efforts help communities and faith organizations who engage in this work – without funding – to see how they fit in the larger picture and the impact they have.

Crow is excited to having the Council meet in Bethel in the Spring.

Public Comment:

No one appeared for public comment.

Fishel **moved** to adjourn; Henjum **seconded** the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.