

**COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES
MINUTES
February 6, 2015
9:30 a.m.**

Division of Child and Family Services
No. Nevada Child and Adolescent Services
2655 Enterprise Road
Reno, NV 89512

Toll-Free Dial Number
(866) 434-5269
Conference Code
7501044

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN RENO

Mike Bernstein, M. Ed. (Southern Nevada Health District)
Dr. Melissa Piasecki, University of Nevada, School of Medicine
Coroner Michael Murphy (Clark County Coroner's Office)
Dr. Lesley Dickson (Nevada Psychiatric Association)
Joanne Libertelli (Spring Mountain Treatment Center)
Heather Shoop (WestCare)

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Capt. Leslie Mays, Co-Chair (Nevada Air National Guard)
Senator Debbie Smith (District 13 – Sparks)
Sgt. Annette Mullin, Co-Chair (Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department)

DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STAFF PRESENT IN RENO

Misty Allen, State Suicide Prevention Coordinator, DPBH-CFCW-OSP
Richard Egan, Suicide Prevention Training and Outreach Facilitator, DPBH-CFCW-OSP
Angela Friedman, Program Assistant, DPBH-CFCW-OSP

OTHERS PRESENT IN RENO

Sharon Benson, Senior Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Marlyn Scholl, LCSW, Veterans Administration Sierra Nevada Health Care System, Reno

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Luana Ritch, DPBH

Heather Shoop called the meeting of the Committee to Review Suicide Fatalities (CRSF) to order at 9:32 a.m. The meeting was properly posted at the locations listed on the agenda in accordance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law (OML).

1. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roll call was taken by Heather Shoop. It was determined a quorum of the Committee to Review Suicide Fatalities was present.

2. VOTE TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 16, 2015 MEETING

Corrections were noted that "Pokuko" needs to be "Tokuko."

HEATHER SHOOP ENTERTAINED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2015 MEETING WITH THE CORRECTION AS NOTED. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY LESLEY DICKSON. MIKE BERNSTEIN SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITHOUT PUBLIC COMMENT.

3. DISCUSSION AND ELECTION OF A NEW CO-CHAIR TO REPLACE SGT. ANNETTE MULLIN AS CO-CHAIR

HEATHER SHOOP ENTERTAINED A MOTION TO NOMINATE THE NEW CO-CHAIR TO REPLACE SGT. MULLINS' VACANCY. A MOTION TO NOMINATE HEATHER SHOOP AS THE NEW CO-CHAIR WAS MADE BY MIKE BERNSTEIN. MICHAEL MURPHY SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITHOUT PUBLIC COMMENT.

4. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCRIPT FOR CORONER INVESTIGATORS

The committee discussed the need for the script was to ensure consistency of care in working with the families. Mr. Murphy noted that the 17 counties in Nevada interview families and include both Sheriff's deputies and Coroner's investigators. The members discussed the most accurate information collected is told at the onset of the death, although family members may recall helpful information at a later date. Consistency in data collected among the interviewers, extreme care in the wording of the questions to provide sensitivity to the families, and accuracy of the data collected using the tool and script are necessary. Mr. Murphy suggested approaching the Nevada Sherriff's and Chief's Association to request collaboration in collecting data with the committee and introducing the tool as a benefit to the Sheriffs and Chiefs. Ms. Allen suggested that the use of the script and training different law enforcement agencies is part of the prevention effort. Mr. Murphy offered that case reviews may benefit law enforcement in helping families who are looking for more disclosure of a case, while working toward suicide prevention.

The members discussed religious, ethnic, and cultural issues, mental health stigma, and relationships that can cause family members to deny a death by suicide, and how insurance companies denying claims and lawyers may support families' fears and denials.

The members discussed presenting a checklist similar to that used with the Child Death Review Committee (CDR). A careful approach to interviewing families may include asking if the family members would participate in a follow up call and suggesting that their contribution to the committee's data collection may help to prevent future suicides. Marlyn Scholl suggested an important part of the script is to ask open ended questions and show interest in the person, provide direct contact information, offer resources, and then following up with a letter.

Ms. Allen and Ms. Benson discussed having consistency at the initial interview across the state and developing a script for the second interview. Ms. Allen would like to consider training and working with all the County Coroners. Ms. Allen will continue to work with the Clark County Coroner's Office and their database as needed and the CDR committee's checklist to develop the script.

Mr. Murphy was chosen to participate in the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Suicide Prevention Panel in March 2015. He will seek information from those on the panel. Ms. Allen believes only three or four states have suicide fatality review committees.

The members discussed the need for time frames related to contacting the families, the method to request and pull cases, requests for reports, and current or pending litigation regarding the cases. They discussed pulling a larger pool of recent random cases fairly quickly and that as the reviews go forward it will become apparent what areas or cases need more review, and how often to pull cases.

5. **UPDATE ON THE MOU BETWEEN THE VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION AND THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES (CRSF)**

Ms. Scholl, Ms. Benson and Ms. Allen continue to work on the MOU. Luana Ritch noted she shared documents with Ms. Benson. Ms. Ritch noted a large enough pool exists to perform a statistical sample of a certain number of cases per month per jurisdiction, and then go back to pull up particular populations to fill the gap.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was heard.

7. **CLOSED WORKGROUP SESSION PER NRS 439.5108 TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION DURING FATALITY REVIEW PROCESS**

Heather Shoop adjourned the open meeting at 10:20 AM to begin the closed session of the meeting. Heather Shoop called the meeting back on the record at 4:13 PM. Separate minutes of the closed meeting have been prepared.

8. **DISCUSS AND RECOMMEND CHANGES TO THE DATA COLLECTION TOOL AFTER REVIEW OF CASES**

Suggestions and changes to the tool were made during the closed meeting session.

The members discussed whether the cases left open from the closed session would be discussed at the next Face to Face meeting alone or if new cases were to be discussed, and how many cases would be reviewed. The next Face to Face meeting will be June 19, 2015 in Las Vegas.

9. **DISCUSS AND RECOMMEND NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS AND DATE**

The next teleconference meeting will be May 1, 2015 in the afternoon for two hours. Agenda items for the meeting will be the MOU with the VA, and the script.

Ms. Allen voiced that Dr. Piasecki, who was not present, will look for a social psychologist intern to develop a journal article to legitimize the suicide fatality review process. General articles regarding the work being done toward suicide prevention will be included as an agenda item.

Ms. Allen thanked her staff for the logistics and behind the scenes work. She thanked the members for their commitment. She reminded the members that the committee still needs a Native American representative and she will connect with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM.