

**COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES**  
**MINUTES**  
**July 21, 2017**  
**9:00 a.m.**

Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH)  
Bureau of Child, Family and Community Wellness  
(BCFCW)  
Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP)  
9670 Gateway Drive, Suite 200  
Reno, Nevada 89521

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

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN RENO**

Marlyn Scholl, LCSW, Veterans Health  
Administration, Sierra Nevada Health Care System,  
Reno, Co-Chair  
Mike Bernstein, M. Ed., representative of injury  
prevention, Nevada Coalition for Suicide  
Prevention  
Carolyn DeTierra, MFT, Director, Washoe Tribal  
Healing Center  
Lesley Dickson, MD, Nevada Psychiatric Association  
Kathy Ingelse, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC,  
FNP-BC, representative of providers of health care  
Sheila Leslie, MA, Behavioral Health Program  
Coordinator, Washoe County Social Services  
David Mills, Coroner Investigative Forensic  
Supervisor on behalf of John Fudenberg, Clark  
County Coroner

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY PHONE**

Gregory Cowper, Director of Business  
Development, Montevista Hospital  
Sergeant John Harney, Las Vegas Metropolitan  
Police Department

**BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

**DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (DPBH) STAFF PRESENT IN RENO**

Misty Vaughan Allen, State Suicide Prevention Coordinator, DPBH-BCFCW-OSP  
Richard Egan, Suicide Prevention Training and Outreach Facilitator, DPBH-BCFCW-OSP  
Angela Friedman, Administrative Assistant, DPBH-BCFCW-OSP

**DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (DPBH) STAFF PRESENT BY PHONE**

Beth Handler, MPH, Bureau Chief, DPBH-BCFCW

**OTHERS PRESENT IN RENO**

Sharon Benson, Senior Deputy Attorney General, Attorney General's Office  
Laura D. Knight, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Washoe County Medical Examiner/Coroner's Office

**OTHERS PRESENT BY PHONE**

Amber Emerson, Intern, Washoe County Health District

Marlyn Scholl called the meeting of the Committee to Review Suicide Fatalities (CRSF) to order at 9:05 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**

Marlyn Scholl introduced herself. Ms. Scholl asked those on the phone to introduce themselves. The members and attendees at the meeting introduced themselves.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2017 OPEN MEETING**

Marlyn Scholl asked for corrections or additions to the May 5, 2017 open meeting minutes. No changes were suggested.

**MARLYN SCHOLL ENTERTAINED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2017 MEETING AS PRESENTED. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY MIKE BERNSTEIN. KATHY INGELSE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITHOUT PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Ms. Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

**3. MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPOINT A CO-CHAIR TO FILL THE VACANT CO-CHAIR POSITION**

Laura Knight entered and introduced herself. Sharon Benson clarified the Co-Chair needs to be a representative of Clark County. The members discussed the possibility of Mike Bernstein and Coroner John Fudenberg volunteering for the position. The agenda item will be tabled until the next meeting.

Marlyn Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

**4. UPDATE ON AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION AND THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES**

Marlyn Scholl explained the new highly respected Privacy Officer planned to speak to legal counsel and research the agreement but was unable to do so. Ms. Scholl is still optimistic. Mike Bernstein expressed disappointment in the slow process. Ms. Scholl expressed the importance of the Veterans Administration (VA) data including the behavioral autopsy reports and understands the value the VA data could be to the committee. The agenda item will be tabled until the next meeting.

Ms. Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

**5. REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING LEGISLATION HEARD DURING THE 79<sup>TH</sup> (2017) SESSION OF THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE**

Lesley Dickson noted the efficiency of the Governor. Assembly Bill 105 passed, although Dr. Dickson noted the legislation was not clear. Misty Allen believes the board will decide the frequency of the training. Dr. Dickson will wait until September to release an article in the State Board of Medical Examiners newsletter on opioid dependence and suicide prevention training. She noted upcoming trainings available online and in person through the Board of Psychological Examiners. Ms. Allen can provide information on other online trainings available. She discussed the October 12-14, 2017 Suicide Prevention Statewide Conference's presenters and opportunity for training.

Dr. Dickson noted Senate Bill 201, regarding conversion therapy passed. The Death with Dignity bill passed the Senate, but was not voted on in the Assembly. She discussed the Nevada Psychology

Association suggested adding depression assessment to the bill was turned down by the bill sponsors. Dr. Dickson discussed the bill allowing psychologists to create corporations with doctors and nurse practitioners.

Dr. Dickson and Sheila Leslie are working to coordinate the requirements of Assembly Bill 366 to form four mental health regional boards with 13 members to each board. Ms. Leslie asked the bill be distributed to the members. Ms. Leslie discussed the member structure of the non-funded boards and a few persons who were interested in membership. She strongly invited those at the meeting to consider if they or others the members can recommend may be qualified members for the boards, and to seek appointment. She discussed the possible overlap but differences between the Children's Mental Health Consortiums and the new boards.

Ms. Leslie discussed Senate Bill 192 funding mobile crisis team expansion and expanded resources and hours. She noted a special acknowledgement made by a sergeant of the Reno Police Department for the work of a crisis team staff.

Amber Emerson entered the meeting and introduced herself.

Dr. Dickson discussed the services saved by changes in the mental health budget and how the budget is effecting the services.

Laura Knight noted the changes in the bill regarding prescription drug monitoring which gives coroners and medical examiners access to prescription data. Dr. Dickson questioned whether this was part of the Governor's 85 page opioid bill. She noted prescription drug availability on the street is lessening. The bill will require prescriptions include ICD-10 codes and patient's date of birth.

Marlyn Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

## **6. DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMERGENCY ROOM FOLLOW UP AFTER PATIENT ADMISSION FOR SUICIDE EVENTS**

Misty Allen discussed how the Office of Suicide Prevention with multiple partners submitted a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant with four awards, and a Zero Initiative Suicide grant with 13 awards. She gave an update on the intern, Cordelia Leeder-Alexander's research compiled from 172 suicide deaths from 2016. Ms. Allen remarked on the intern's finding between emergency room visits for anxiety or chest pain and suicide. Ms. Leeder-Alexander is preparing to present the report at conferences. Laura Knight noted usefulness of the hard data to support the recognition of missed opportunities. Sheila Leslie stated the need to compare the data to the national strategy and cautioned the need to prepare for hospital reaction to this data. Ms. Allen said this data bolsters the rationale for Assembly Bill 105. Ms. Allen discussed exploring adding new data points to data collection worksheets. She noted an increased interest in Public Health Internship applications. Marlyn Scholl and Dr. Knight discussed the treatment provided at emergency rooms for anxiety and chest pain. Carolyn DeTierra discussed using Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) assessments at emergency rooms and her experience witnessing missed opportunities. Ms. Allen will distribute Ms. Alexander-Leeder's report to the members when it is available. Ms. Allen gave information on the International Conference on Suicide Research occurring in Las Vegas. She noted Dr. Jacqueline Pistorello will present on Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT) and Collaborative Assessment Management Suicidality

(CAMS). Ms. Allen noted 70% of suicide deaths occur within a month of seeing a medical provider. Members discussed physicians' concerns and challenges working with those at risk for suicide and behavioral health matters. Ms. Scholl noted her personal physician is using the PHQ-9 with patients, and may implement the CAGE (cut-down, annoyed, guilty, eye-opener) alcohol assessment. Ms. Allen discussed the train-the-trainer safeTALK training for nurses and hopes the nurses will train those in the medical field. Lesley Dickson noted her interview with the Las Vegas Sun and the public's focus on gun control. Ms. Scholl discussed the research of closing a bridge to people at risk for jumping did not cause those people to go to another bridge. She said delaying the impulse by limiting access to firearms could save a life. Richard Egan talked about a study on Golden Gate Bridge jumper attempts and six percent who later died by suicide did so at the bridge. Dr. Dickson noted the low percentage who actually die by suicide after an attempt.

Ms. Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

#### **7. DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO REVISE THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES BYLAWS TO REFLECT PROXY APPOINTMENTS BY THE DIRECTOR**

Sharon Benson explained the bylaws cannot be changed without legislation. As of 2015, committees may not have proxies unless noted in the statute establishing the committee. This committee's statute only allows the coroner or medical examiner to have a proxy. Some committees are looking to change the legislation. She reminded the members to call in whenever possible to ensure a quorum for voting and to allow movement on important matters. The members discussed how opening up the statute could draw scrutiny. Misty Allen commended the members on their attendance, commitment and flexibility. Ms. Benson and Ms. Allen encouraged members to invite others to the meeting to offer information when a member cannot attend.

Members discussed the difficulty of opening secure emails and encrypted files containing fatality case information. Ms. Benson reminded the group to careful sharing confidential information. Richard Egan stated redacting obviously identifying information is not enough as the unique situations can be traced to particular persons. Members discussed hard copies being distributed prior to the meeting for review and for time to invite persons who can contribute to the case discussion.

Lesley Dickson expressed concern the Las Vegas Review Journal (LVRJ) wants access to autopsies. David Mills spoke of laws and policies within coroner systems strengthening limitations of disseminating autopsy information. He clarified what LVRJ is asking for is not the norm and they are suing Clark County. Laura Knight noted other Nevada state open records laws are in conflict with the Attorney General's 1982 Opinion which is causing the issue. Dr. Dickson stated in the past, therapists were protected from having to provide therapy notes or session tapes after a suicide.

Marlyn Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

#### **8. DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT TELECONFERENCED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW SUICIDE FATALITIES**

Misty Allen would like to schedule the next three meetings to allow participants ample time to schedule the meetings on their calendar. Two teleconferenced meetings were chosen: Friday, October 6, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. and Friday, December 1, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. The next face to face meeting will be on Monday, January 8, 2018 in Las Vegas.

Marlyn Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

**9. DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS OF SUICIDE FATALITY CASES**

Richard Egan explained he and Louis Haynie, a Las Vegas Metropolitan Police officer attended the American Association for Suicidology (AAS) conference and a training on psychological examinations and autopsies. Mr. Egan asked if the members would allow him and Mr. Haynie to perform psychological autopsies on two of the fatalities cases. Mr. Egan has chosen a case for himself, and a case would need to be chosen for Mr. Haynie. Mr. Egan noted the closed cases in the past have been destroyed except for the tool. Marlyn Scholl hoped the members could learn some of the processes to incorporate in their own review of the cases. Mr. Egan stated the reports generated from the autopsies would be submitted to AAS toward certification for both Mr. Egan and Mr. Haynie.

**MARLYN SCHOLL ENTERTAINED A MOTION TO APPROVE RICHARD EGAN AND LOUIS HAYNIE PERFORM PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTOPSY EXAMINATIONS USING TWO FATALITY CASES BEING REVIEWED BY THE COMMITTEE, AND PROVIDE REPORTS TO THE COMMITTEE AND TO THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY LESLEY DICKSON. DAVID MILLS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITHOUT PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Ms. Scholl asked for public comment. None was heard.

**10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Marlyn Scholl confirmed only Gregory Cowper remained on the phone. Ms. Scholl asked for public comment.

Misty Allen explained the Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP) Action Plan for 2017-2019 has been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services Director and posted on the OSP website.

Lesley Dickson asked about member reappointments and Ms. Allen confirmed some are upcoming. Ms. Allen reached out to Heather Shoop's recommendation, Leo Magrdichian, to fill the vacant member position to represent an expert in treatment of substance abuse and prevention. Ms. Allen has not heard back. Ms. Allen suggested the members move forward to find another recommendation. Dr. Dickson recommended Jamie Ross of the Prevention, Advocacy, Choices, Teamwork (PACT) Coalition. Ms. Allen will reach out to Ms. Ross.

Ms. Scholl asked for public comment. No further comments were heard.

**11. CLOSED WORKGROUP SESSION PER NRS 439.5108 TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION DURING THE SUICIDE FATALITY CASE REVIEW PROCESS**

Marlyn Scholl adjourned the open meeting at 10:28 a.m. to begin the closed session of the meeting.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.