

## **Rhode Island Higher Education Suicide Prevention Advisory Group**

### **Meeting Noes**

Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019

9:30 to 11:00 AM

New England Institute of Technology

#### Welcome/ Introductions

- Welcome from Pamela Moffat-Limoges, Director of Public Safety for New England Institute of Technology
  - o Pamela welcomed all of the attendees to the New England Institute of Technology and shared a personal story about how suicide has affected her own life and helped her focus her public safety career on the idea of helping others, especially those in a mental health crisis
- All attendees introduced themselves and their respective institutions:
  - o Cheryl Granai, Providence College
  - o Rob Richards, Bryant University
  - o Kyle Gamache, Community College of Rhode Island
  - o Kristen Buglione, Johnston and Wales University
  - o Lee Peebles, New England Institute of Technology
  - o Danielley Jamous, New England Institute of Technology
  - o Morgan Rayner, New England Institute of Technology
  - o Pamela Moffat-Limoges, New England Institute of Technology
  - o Liz R., New England Institute of Technology
  - o Brandee Crowley, New England Institute of Technology/Thrive Behavioral Health
  - o Rosemary Mugan, Providence College
  - o Robert Samuels, University of Rhode Island
  - o Jim Campbell, Providence College
  - o Bess Wilbur, RI Nursing Education Center/Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
  - o Nancy Murray, RI Council on Problem Gambling
  - o John Cipolla, RI Council on Problem Gambling
  - o Margaret Paccione, Bradley Hospital/Bradley Learning Exchange
  - o Erika Cannon, Thrive Behavioral Health/Healthy Transitions Program
  - o Travis Vendetti, Rhode Island Department of Health

#### Outside Resource Presentations

- The Healthy Transitions Program at Thrive Behavioral Health and Watershed Event at CCRI
  - o Erika Cannon, LMHC, who serves as the Clinical Director of the Healthy Transitions Program, gave attendees an overview of the Program and how it can serve college-age youth
    - Healthy Transitions is a federal grant funded program currently in its 4<sup>th</sup> and final year of funding, although it will continue onwards as it has recently become a Medicaid reimbursable service.
      - In the process of working private insurers to secure reimbursement, however, there has been issues when it comes to being reimbursed for case management services, despite those services being integral to treatment

- The program currently serves youth ages 16-25 (with some slight flexibility depending on specific cases) who have experienced 1<sup>st</sup> episode psychosis or chronic/severe mental health issues
  - Erika described the Healthy Transitions team, how it includes 5 full-time clinical therapists (one specializing in family support/therapy, one working with the younger participants and the remaining three working with the general population) full time nurse, psychiatrist, vocation/educational support specialist and a wrap around case manager
  - The Program currently has 64 participants, which is its maximum capacity, however, Erika did state that they do attempt to accommodate anyone who is seeking services that they cannot access elsewhere.
    - Several of the participants attend different RI colleges, and the Program has served students from many of the RI colleges in the past.
    - Anyone is able to seek mental health services through Thrive BH and they will be referred to the appropriate program including HT and the youth & family programs
  - Healthy Transitions is also creating monitoring program, which provides monthly check ins for clients enrolled in the youth & family program and can supplement other treatment modalities.
    - Eligibility for this program would be dependent on the results of initial screeners performed by Thrive staff as well as referral information (especially if coming from a college/university counseling center)
  - Erika also reviewed the upcoming “Watershed Event” taking place at the Community College of Rhode Island’s Knight Campus on April 15<sup>th</sup> from 12 to 4 PM
    - The event will include a screening of “Suicide: The Ripple Effect”, a documentary created by a suicide attempt survivor (Kevin Hines) who has devoted his life to suicide prevention activities since surviving his own attempt
    - The event will also include a resource fair with representation from community mental health providers, health insurers, student groups, and many more.
- Bradley Hospital Learning Exchange Suicide Prevention and Assessment Training Programs using the C-SSRS
  - Margaret Paccione, PhD. introduced the Bradley Hospital Learning Exchange, a department of Bradley Hospital that provides evidence-based training to both mental health professionals as well as the general population
    - Dr. Paccione overviewed Bradley’s Suicide Prevention training programs, one for behavioral health clinicians and one for the general public. Both of these programs are based on the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) and are 3 hours long
      - The general public training focuses on the screening version of the C-SSRS and involves extensive role-playing and other exercises designed to support participants in gaining comfort in approaching at-risk individuals, asking them about suicidal ideation, and referring them to appropriate behavioral health services.

- The behavioral health clinicians focuses on the full clinical assessment version of the C-SSRS and is designed to instruct clinicians on how to incorporate it into their work with at-risk clients.
  - These classes are available periodically at the Bradley Learning Exchange in an open class format, but are also available for closed sessions as well
  - For more information please see the attached flyers from Bradley, “Suicide Assessment for Clinicians” and “Suicide: Screening, Prevention and Response for General Community Members”
- Dr. Paccione also noted that they have a large staff of certified Mental Health First Aid instructors that can provide training as well.
  - Travis Vendetti noted that the RI Department of Health has received a grant to provide **free** Mental Health First Aid Training to EMTs and first responders, including for college emergency medical services (EMS) staff.
    - If you/your college is interested in obtaining this training for your EMS/first responder staff, please contact Travis Vendetti at [travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov](mailto:travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov) for more information and to see if they qualify to receive the training at no cost.
- RI Lottery/RI Council on Problem Gambling
  - Nancy Murray, CAGS, LCDP, ICOGS, and John Cipolla of the Rhode Island Council on Problem Gambling (RICPG) gave a presentation to the group on their services as well as the emerging issues around gambling/gaming addictions in the young adult population
    - The RICPG will be holding its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on April 26<sup>th</sup> and will feature a speaker who first encountered gambling/gaming problems as a college student. Young adults and youth with gambling/gaming issues will be a primary focus of this conference, individuals can register for the conference at: [www.ricpg.com](http://www.ricpg.com)
    - The RICPG also regularly offers a Gambling Addiction Training Academy that provides 30 continuing education credits for behavioral health clinicians while training them on working with clients who are addicted to gambling or gaming.
      - Completion of the Training Academy also makes clinicians eligible to receive an Endorsement from the RICPG, which allows clinicians to bill a fund from the RI Lottery to provide gambling addiction treatment services to those who are uninsured or under-insured.
    - The RICPG also provides access to certified peer counselors, who have recovered from gambling addiction and have been trained to help others.
    - The RICPG provides a 24/7 helpline (1-877-9GAMBLE) that is embedded within the 211 hotline at United Way, but staff can respond within 24 hours and connect the caller with certified peer counselors
  - Nancy and John also introduced the group to the concept of examining online gaming addiction as a form of gambling addiction
    - In both traditional gambling and online gaming, the motivator is winning, financial losses are sustained by both groups in pursuit of winning.

- There have been many cases of youth and/or young adults losing large amounts of money to online games that allow in-game purchases (Examples include: Fortnite, CandyCrush, etc.)
- The RICPG recently opened an office in East Providence for hosting meetings with clients and certified peer counselors.
- Nancy and John also spoke to the risks faced by friends/family of college athletes, who may be approached by unscrupulous gamblers seeking to gain inside knowledge on a athlete that could help inform their bets. (e.g are they feeling sick, did they recently have relationship issues, etc.,)

#### Review of Follow-Up Proposals from College Mental Health Summit and Presentation of the Full Energy No Drugs (FEND) Campaign

- Bess Wilbur, Executive Director of the RI Nursing Education Center and Travis Vendetti, Youth Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator at RIDOH presented three options compiled by a small workgroup that was seeking to build on the success and energy of the RI Colleges Mental Health Summit held in January. The options presented were:
  - Creation of a mental/behavioral health resource sheet for all of RI's higher education institutions
    - Customizable section would have campus-specific information/ resources/ etc.
    - Set content would include information for off-campus resources: community health centers, transportation resources (RIPTA, driving directions, etc.) that are available in state for students who do not want to obtain services on campus.
    - information sheet could be distributed to faculty, staff and administrators across each higher education institution making it readily available for sharing with students when they present with mental health concerns.
  - Individual events during the start of the semester (i.e. 'Welcome Week') geared toward strength building and other preventative measures
    - Ex) Welcome Week Activity - wellness focused activity/education (i.e. meditation, yoga, support animals, arts + crafts, cooking)
    - Potential to create a statewide Mental Health Day (through the Governor's Office) where each higher education institution will host some sort of wellness activity on the same day in RI
  - FEND – Non-profit organization that is engaged with RI State Leadership and looking at different pilot initiatives at levels in K-12 and Postsecondary, designed by the Preventum Initiative, Inc. to apply artificial intelligence, machine learning, and gamification approach techniques to the field of public health (see attached FEND Report for more information)
    - Pilot projects will be at no-cost to the institutions
    - Customizable smartphone app-based program focused on prevention (primarily focused on substance abuse with the current states involved in this project)
    - Smartphone app functions as a game; not purely a survey
    - Option to customize content of the 'game' to include not only data collection, but suggestions for positive behavior
    - Pilot could include a target population such as one institution or a small cohort of institutions and focus on a topic such as suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, other addiction prevention.

- Pilot could include content geared towards what students are requesting/ would like to see implemented on their campus such as a more diverse representation among providers at the Counseling Center; extended hours of services; etc.
- Comments, suggestions, and overall feedback on the presented options was solicited
  - Creation of a mental/behavioral health resource sheet for all of RI's higher education institutions
    - Should have an electronic version made, to increase accessibility/ease of use
    - As this resource would also try to address transportation barriers, several members spoke to the difficulty of getting students to use RIPTA and other public transportation issues and suggested possibly offering some kind of credit system towards ride-share platforms (e.g Uber, Lyft, etc.,)
      - Bryant University currently offers students \$5 towards each ride taken to see a medical provider
      - Uber is currently offering a new service "Uber Health" that is designed to provide transport to healthcare providers
    - Bryant University noted they already have a version of this that has been effective, it's called "Parent Lingo" and provides information on various mental health topics and how to broach them with their children.
      - Encouraged including resources for parents in any kind of informational resource designed for college students in RI
  - Individual events during the start of the semester (i.e. 'Welcome Week') geared toward strength building and other preventative measures
    - URI noted that most of the colleges already have planned their "Welcome Week" and therefore suggested exploring early October (before midterms). The first week of October is mental illness awareness week (NAMI sponsored) so this could prove to be an ideal time for a state-wide mental health activity day.
      - Bryant University noted that most wellbeing/mental health activities are organized through student groups on campus. Suggestion to reach out to student groups if implementing a state-wide day.
    - NEIT suggested creating a sub-workgroup for planning this type of event that includes various departments: counseling center, public safety, student affairs, and student representatives.
      - It was also recommended that this group or anyone who is planning this type of event work with student organization leaders (e.g. Healthy Minds, Psychology Club, etc.,) to create an engaging event, as these groups tend to be a part of the most successful events.
    - Bryant University and others noted that universities also have access to the pre-packaged "Fresh Check Day" program ([www.freshcheckday.com](http://www.freshcheckday.com))
      - "Fresh Check Day aims to create an approachable and hopeful atmosphere where students are encouraged to engage in dialogue about mental health and helps to build a bridge between students and the mental health resources available on campus, in the community, and nationally."
  - FEND Project
    - Most recent iteration of FEND was presented to the group (see attached FEND 2018 Report), which focused on increasing awareness and knowledge of the

risks of opioids, addiction, and overdose among young adults via a smartphone application that uses gamification strategies to engage participants.

- The Governor's Office is supporting the potential pilot of this campaign in K-12 and postsecondary levels. They are currently looking for pilot sites to perform a trial run of the program in RI at the postsecondary level.
- Bess and Travis noted that the smartphone application and its tools are adaptable to other health topics beyond opioids and it could be customized to suit the goal(s) of the institution.
- Those organizations who are interested in participating in a pilot project with FEND should reach out directly to Bess Wilbur ([bwilbur@rinec.org](mailto:bwilbur@rinec.org)) or Travis Vendetti ([travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov](mailto:travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov)) and they will be connected with the appropriate staff at FEND and/or the Governor's office to learn more.

#### Meeting Wrap-up

- Travis Vendetti closed the meeting and asked that any universities who are interested in hosting the next quarterly meeting contact him directly: [travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov](mailto:travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov)