

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

DMHDDSUS Advisory Committee - Strengthening the Crisis Systems (Conducted Virtually)

January 8th, 2025, 9:00-10:00 am

Crisis Advisory Committee Attendees: Ali Ali, Alicia, Mary Ambrosino, Anette Gibbs, Ashley Sparks, Avery Scales, Richard Basteri, Benita Hathaway, Benjamin Millsap, Beth Gifford, Paula Bird, Brandon Look, Venkata Chivukula, Renee Clark, Corye Dunn, Debra Mack, Lisa DeCiantis, Denise Foreman, Doug Gallion, Zenobia Edwards, Eileen Bennett, Emily Fulgham, Emma Paris, Eric Johnson, Erin Hardenburg, Gayle Rose, Christyn Grant, Amber Graves, Iris Greenspun, Hannah Harms, Holly Doggett, Crystal Jackson, Jill Hinton, Jacob Rains, Joel Maynard, John Eller, Jokena Islam, Brittany Jones, Joy Brunson Nsubug, Joyce Harper, Joyce Hyde, Jynasys Lewis, Kamilah McKissick, Keri Christensen, Kerri Erb, Teresa Koonce, Jessica Kornegay, LaKisha King, Laurie Whitson, Leonard Shinhoster, Lesley Jones, Lisa Goins, Lisa Jackman, Maria, Keith McCoy, Mellisa Hall, Melissa Payne, Michelle Chassner, Michelle Ivey, Rosa Miranda, Naglaa Rashwan, Nathasha Holley, Nicholle Karim, Nicole Krapil, Nicole Sigmon, Nikeya Cole, Rebecca Peacock, Phillip Boyce, Garrick Prokos, Rebecca Taylor, Dina Reynolds, Candice Sanford, Shagun Guar, Glenn Simpson, Tammy Howard, Tammy Margeson, Tara Conrad, Teri Herrmann, Tanya Thacker, Vincent Cella, Whitney Sukonick, Stephanie Wilson, Ashley Wurth, Zondra Moss.

NC DHHS Staff and Speakers Name	Title
Lisa DeCiantis	Crisis Services Lead
Hannah Harms	Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Agenda

- Welcome and DMH/DD/SUS community collaboration model
- Crisis services announcements
- Suicide prevention overview
- NC suicide action plan discussion

Crisis Services Announcements

- Non-Law Enforcement Transportation Request for Funding Proposals (RFP):
 - DHHS provided an overview of the RFP of its [\\$20 million investment to provide trauma-informed transportation for people in mental health crisis](#) who need to be transported from emergency rooms to residential treatment.
- NC Mental Health Crisis Services Campaign
 - DHHS shared an updated on the [new landing page for crisis services](#). This landing page includes a searchable map of crisis services and new google search ads to promote crisis services.
- Expansion of Hope for NC:
 - In response to Hurricane Helene DHHS received a grant to [deploy crisis community workers in Western North Carolina](#) beginning in November 2024. DHHS expects to continue to provide crisis outreach and support for this program over the next ten months.
- Opening of The Retreat at Fernwood:

- NCDHHS Secretary Kody Kinsley and DMHDDSUS Director Kelly Crosbie participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Promise Resource Network's new peer-run respite center in Wake County earlier this month.
- SOMETHINGS End of Year Data:
 - SOMETHINGS is a mental health platform that connects teens and young adults with Certified Peer Support Specialist mentors and can provide referrals to licensed therapists.
 - As of the end of 2024 SOMETHINGS was serving 49 teens, an average of 11 teens are engaged through the app on a daily basis.

Suicide Action Plan Presentation and Discussion

- DHHS provided an overview of data on suicide in North Carolina:
 - North Carolina has seen a 23% rise in suicide deaths since the start of the pandemic.
 - Suicide death rates over the past decade were highest among males, Non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic American Indian residents, and adults ages 45-64.
 - Veterans and rural residents have higher suicide rates than the general population of North Carolina.
 - Data on suicide in North Carolina is available via the NC DHHS Suicide Prevention Landing Page - ncdhhs.gov/stopncsuicide.
- DHHS also presented an overview of the 2022-2025 Suicide Prevention Action Plan and accompanying accomplishments:
 - Since 2022 DHHS has held regular webinars to inform and collaborate with community partners around suicide prevention.
 - The Department supports several mental health and suicide prevention trainings including Mental Health First Aid, LivingWorks ASIST and START, and Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM).
 - DHHS has also made investments to increase Medicaid reimbursement for behavioral health providers, expand and improve the crisis system, Systems of Care, and School Behavioral Health services.
- The next NC Suicide Prevention Action Plan (2026-2030) in development
 - DHHS will publish a draft for May 2025 for public feedback
 - The final plan will be published in September 2026
- Several Committee members asked about how to access suicide data broken down by County.
 - DHHS directed members to the Division of Public Health (DPH) webpage for details on data sources (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/about/department-initiatives/suicide-prevention-resources>).
- One Committee member expressed interest in how to access suicide prevention training for the organizations they work with.
 - DHHS encouraged organizations interested in accessing training to email Hannah Harms, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services, Hannah.Harms@dhhs.nc.gov.
- One Committee member inquired about future plans to support initiatives related to safe storage of firearms.
 - DHHS noted that the [Department of Public Safety \(DPS\) Office of Violence Prevention](#) will continue to lead state-level safe storage efforts.