

NW PA Veteran Suicide Prevention Program

Monthly Report: February 2022

Program Overview

The **Northwest Pennsylvania Veteran Suicide Prevention Program (NWPASPP)** is a collaborative effort between federal and state-level entities, community-level service providers, and organizational experts in **suicide prevention** to create significant and lasting change in the **15-county NW PA region**. The program aims to **reduce Veteran suicide attempts and death** by an average of 10% over five years (2020-2025). Other program goals include increasing awareness of suicide risk, promoting community connection and resilience, and improving delivery of suicide care.

Report Summary



Key Updates

- Held a total of **26** meetings with external stakeholders
- Secured recruitment of **1** regional primary care site
- Began development of military cultural competency **training curriculum**
- Finalized communication and evaluation materials for **gatekeeper trainings**

Key Next Steps

- Increase **meeting evaluation** response rate
- Initiate **onboarding activities and technical assistance efforts** for recruited primary care site
- Pilot the **suicide awareness and attitudes survey** with a community stakeholder group
- **Secure a partnership or venue** to host a community greening event within a Region 1 county

Outcomes

Key Points:

- The February **Advisory Group** meeting focused on implementation and evaluation activities, Pennsylvania Governor’s Challenge updates, and a presentation of a demographic profile of the NW PA region.
- The **Communication & Dissemination Work Group** and **Data & Evaluation Work Group** met in February and updated the program website and finalized the suicide awareness and attitudes survey, respectively.
- The February **Journal Club** discussion focused on military sexual trauma (MST) and its implications for Veteran suicide and suicide prevention efforts.

Meeting	Partner Attendance
Advisory Group Meeting	19
Communication & Dissemination Work Group	5
Evaluation Work Group	6
Journal Club	6

Meeting Evaluations

Summary:

- Responses continue to show **strong approval** of the meetings. All respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with all statements.
- Open-ended comments offered thanks to the PERU team for their effort and support.

Next Steps:

- **Response rates remained low in February** despite multiple in-person and email reminders to complete evaluations following each meeting.
- The project team will embed time within meeting agendas, **beginning in April**, for stakeholders to complete a brief, real-time evaluation poll.

Meeting	Responses
Advisory Group	5
Communication & Dissemination Work Group	2
Data & Evaluation Work Group	1

Key Informant Interviews

- Key informant interviews (KIIs) will be **conducted quarterly** to gather stakeholder feedback on the following areas: PERU’s project management and leadership, quality and strength of partnerships, and communication and data reporting.
- The **first round of KIIs** was completed with five Advisory Group partners in September 2021. Responses were analyzed and reported in October 2021.
- Results from the first round of interviews identified a lack of **awareness of project activities**. Since this feedback was received, the project team has implemented a **monthly newsletter** and **structured project updates** at every stakeholder meeting.
- The next round of KIIs is **currently in progress** and two interviews were conducted in February. The remaining interviews and analyses of the responses are expected to be completed **by the end of March**. The results of these interviews will be shared with the Advisory Group for discussion.

Region 1

February 2022

PERU is working to enhance local suicide prevention, intervention, and response efforts and work to address gaps in efforts or services. Implementation is being phased across **three geographic regions** that were selected based on resource availability and existing healthcare and community partnerships. Currently, implementation efforts are focused in **Region 1: Erie, Crawford, Venango, Warren, McKean**.



Partner Engagement

The goal of the program's outreach and engagement strategy is to build and maintain positive relationships with community partners in each county to support implementation efforts. The table below represents the **number and types of meetings** held in February. Only **meeting encounters** are included in this report, but future reports will include data from PERU's **technical assistance encounter log** to represent the full scope of the implementation team's efforts in partner recruitment and engagement.

Entity Type	Meeting Purpose	# Meetings
		Feb 2022
Coroners/Funeral Directors	Psychological Autopsy Planning	1
County Coalition/Task Force	Continued Engagement	6
Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs (DMVA)	Continued Engagement	2
Healthcare	Site Recruitment	1
Healthcare	Data Reporting	1
Hold My Guns & National Shooting Sports Foundation	Safe Storage Planning	1
Other Community Stakeholders	Continued Engagement	3
State-Level Agencies	Continued Engagement	1
UPMC Western Behavioral at Safe Harbor	Recruitment & Training Planning	4
VA VISN4	Continued Engagement	2
Advisory Group and Workgroups	Project Planning	4
	Totals	26

Resource & Material Development

The program team continues to create **resources and materials** to ensure all stakeholders are informed about the program goals and activities and are afforded the opportunity to provide program implementation input to enhance their engagement with the program. Over the past month, the following materials have been developed:

- 3 website [blog posts](#)
- 1 [monthly newsletter](#)
- 1 marketing flyer for gatekeeper trainings
- 1 draft of military cultural competency training

Process Evaluation & Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Efforts

To support implementation efforts, the **program's evaluation team** finalized the following materials over the past month.

- Gatekeeper training evaluation survey
- NW PA regional profile using data from national surveys
- Suicide awareness and attitudes survey