

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



Governor's Challenge to
Prevent Suicide Among SMVF

Michigan

2021 MI Governor's Challenge Initiative

Suicide Prevention Commission

July 16, 2021

Introductions



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Director of Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency
Chair of MI Governor's Challenge Initiative
Michigan Suicide Prevention Commission Member



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Co-Lead of MI Governor's Challenge Initiative

Agenda

- ❑ Overview of the Michigan Governor's Challenge
- ❑ Review of the Michigan Veteran Connector Initiative
- ❑ Transitions of Care & Collaboration Initiatives
- ❑ Michigan Psych Armor Portal Overview
- ❑ Open Forum/Questions

- ❑ Michigan has partnered with SAMHSA and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the ***Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families*** to our communities across Michigan.
- ❑ The Governor's Challenge is an intensive process that takes each state team through the stages of both a Policy Academy model and an Implementation Academy model.
- ❑ TA is provided by SAMHSA's SMVF TA Center throughout this process.

Key Efforts and Focus

- Reducing suicide among service members, veterans, and their families;
- Increasing access to services and support;
- Expanding state-wide capacity to engage SMVF in public and private services;
- Enhancing provider and SMVF peer practices;
 - ✓ Implementing innovative best practices (e.g., Screening and *Asking the Question – **have you or a member of your household ever served in the military?***)

Michigan's 2021 Targeted Efforts

Group #	Priority Workgroup	Selected Strategy
Group 1	Health providers and other community partners will identify SMVF and be provided information on how to make referrals to appropriate care.	Launch (Ask the Question) initiative/'MI Veteran Connector' to medical community and EMS throughout MI.
Group 2	Increase access to existing VA and other resources, community partnerships, and peer systems.	Develop a 'MI Veterans Justice Outreach Program' with the Michigan Department of Corrections that includes a peer support component.
Group 3	Develop a culturally competent multi-prong approach to lethal means safety, education, and resources.	Develop and distribute tip sheet and wallet card for resources on lethal means safety that uses the Governor's Challenge logo to state parks, campgrounds, and gun ranges. Create gun store map for Michigan.

Proactive approaches

- Proactive approaches to suicide prevention includes an element of screening for military-connectivity.
- Earlier identification of service members, veterans and their families allows for referrals to be made proactively prior to a crisis.

Proactive approaches (continued)

- The more connected veterans are to services (federal, state and local) the lower their risk for suicide.
- Ask “Have you or a member of your household served in the military?”
- To encourage organizations to “Ask the Question” the MI Governor’s Challenge team developed the **MI Veteran Connector** designation.

Michigan Veteran Connector

- ❑ Symbolizes an organization's ongoing efforts to proactively support and connect service members, veterans, and their families to earned benefits.

- ❑ The Governor's Challenge is currently engaging many sectors to implement innovative and proactive approaches to screening and identifying (e.g., ***Asking the Question – have you or a member of your household ever served in the military?***). This includes but not limited to:
 - ✓ Community Integrated Paramedics
 - ✓ Medical Control Authorities
 - ✓ State Court Administrative Office
 - ✓ MI Department of Corrections
 - ✓ Secretary of State
 - ✓ Financial Sector
 - ✓ Health Care Association of Michigan
 - ✓ Michigan Osteopathic Association
 - ✓ Michigan Medical Group Management Association



Benefits of Becoming a MI Veteran Connector

- “Michigan Veteran Connector” badge to display on website and/or email signature block.
- Logo displayed on MVAA website as a “Michigan Veteran Connector”.
- Free veteran centric materials including but not limited to printed materials, business cards, and resource guides.
- Access to the Michigan Governor’s Challenge Psych Armor Portal which contains free veteran centric training and resources. ***This has free CME for physicians and other licensed practitioners.***
- Introductions to the local MVAA Veteran Service Officer and DHHS Veteran Navigator. Creation of a referral process and as needed on-site consultations for SMVF that present to the Emergency Room or your office and are in immediate need of assistance. Michigan has a robust Veteran Navigator Program that services the entire state.

Benefits Continued

- ❑ Introductions to the MVAA manager for the **Buddy-to-Buddy Veteran Mentorship & Community Engagement and Regional Engagement Initiative**. This is a personal, one-on-one veteran mentorship to veterans of all eras and discharge types.

- ❑ Introductions to the local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

- ❑ Ongoing support from the MVAA Health & Welfare Analyst and MVAA Partnership Coordinator. Remember, our community can lean on the MVAA to link those who are military connected to their benefits, including:
 - ✓ Health care and mental health resources
 - ✓ Emergency housing
 - ✓ Disability compensation
 - ✓ Education and employment assistance, including connection to our Veteran-Friendly Employers
 - ✓ Food programs
 - ✓ Emergency financial assistance
 - ✓ Retrieval of DD-214s

Call to Action: “Become a Veteran Connector”

- The Governor’s Challenge Initiative is encouraging our medical communities, hospitals, judicial system, financial sectors, and businesses to become a Veteran Connector.
- Everyone can help to better serve our veterans and their families by asking “have you served?”



Transitions of Care & Collaboration Initiatives



MILITARY SERVICE?

There may be benefits and resources available to help you through your current situation.

Have you or a member of your household served in the military?

The **Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency** can connect you to benefits and resources in all areas of life, including help with overcoming substance use disorders, employment and health care. Let us review what options are available.

All services are free and confidential. It starts by calling **1-800-MICH-VET** (1-800-642-4838) or by scanning your smartphone camera on our QR code to visit our website, Michigan.gov/MVAA.



Updated on 5/20/2021

Lean on us to connect you to benefits, including:

- Emergency financial assistance
- Housing and rental assistance
- Legal aid
- Food programs
- Employment, including connection to our Veteran-Friendly Employers
- Disability compensation
- Retrieval of DD214s
- Health care and mental health resources
- Education assistance

Collaboration with Naloxone Leave Behind Program

- ❑ The Governor’s Challenge collaborated with the Department of Health and Human Services to include information and training on how to access free resources for Service Members, Veterans, and their Families in every kit within their EMS Naloxone Leave Behind Program.
- ❑ Each kit comes with the medication to reverse opioid overdoses, and instructions for use. Within this kit, the Governor’s Challenge has included a postcard with instructions on how to access additional free resources for veterans.
- ❑ Trainings have started with Community Integrated Paramedics and a September 9th training will be held to highlight how and why to screen for military connectivity.

SUCCESSFUL SMVF REENTRY

As part of the **Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families**, the **Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA)** has developed this resource guide, outlining steps for service members, veterans and their families (SMVF) to create a smoother transition when entering back into the community.



GIVE YOURSELF GRACE

This reentry will be a change for yourself, your family and friends. Have patience and persistence and do not suffer in silence or let anything prevent you from seeking help when necessary. Everyone needs assistance at some point. We want you to be successful with this next chapter of your life.



CONTACT THE MVAA

The **Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA)** can connect you to benefits and resources in all areas of life, including education, employment and health care. Let us review what options are available.

All services are free and confidential. It starts by calling **1-800-MICH-VET** (1-800-642-4838) or by visiting our website, Michigan.gov/MVAA.

GUIDANCE FOR A SUCCESSFUL REENTRY

for Service Members, Veterans & their Families (SMVF)



Call **1-800-MICH-VET** (1-800-642-4838)

Visit Michigan.gov/MVAA

Email us at MVAAResourceCenter@michigan.gov

Write to us at
Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency
3423 N Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Bldg. 32
Lansing, MI 48906



Updated on 5/20/2021

MDOC Collaborations

- Brochure and referral process developed to ensure re-entry is smooth and those who are incarcerated are setup to succeed.
- Engagement with MDOC EPIC Team to start telehealth VA and MVAA visits within pilot location.
- Utilization of VRSS and Asking the Question to identify veteran status.
- Encouragement of veterans to place “veteran status” on driver’s license or state ID prior to release.

Engagement with Gun Ranges and Shops

FACTS

- Firearms are the deadliest and most common method of suicide in the United States.
- 90% of people who survive a suicide attempt do not go on to die by suicide later in life.
- Many suicide attempts are made with little planning and during a short-term crisis.
- When access to a highly lethal suicide method is reduced, the overall suicide rate drops.
- Firearms used in youth suicide usually belong to a parent.
- Acute suicidal feelings often pass over time or with changes in life circumstances, treatment or support.

SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN MICHIGAN

The State of Michigan is participating in the **Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families**, a nationwide initiative to combat suicide.

Visit Michigan.gov/SuicidePrevention for Michigan specific suicide prevention resources and information.



WHEN A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER IS AT RISK FOR VIOLENCE, SUICIDE, OR ACCIDENTAL INJURY

- Discuss safe gun storage or disposal with your friend or family member.
- If mental health or substance abuse is a concern, recommend counseling or treatment. Bring them to a primary care physician, mental health center or emergency department to be evaluated for potential harm & treatment options.
- Call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255** (Veterans Press 1) for support and resources.
- If you believe they are violent, suicidal or could cause accidental injury, call the local police department. The police department may reevaluate the person for gun licensing requirements and capacity to own a gun and revoke the gun license if requirements are unmet.
- Keep limited amounts of medication accessible to the friend or family member. Doctors can help determine a safe quantity to have and change prescription quantities. Controlled substances should be locked.
- Alcohol can increase chances of unwise decisions and the chances of an unintentional attempt.

LETHAL MEANS SAFETY



Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families



- Working on development of a Michigan Gun Storage map.
- Collaboration with SAMHSA and Hold My Guns.
- Development of lethal means safety brochure and wallet card.
- Encouragement for gun ranges and shops to hand out free VA gun locks with each purchase.
- Encouragement for gun ranges and shops to become a "MI Veteran Connector".

Engagement and collaboration with State Court Administrative Office



MILITARY SERVICE? | There may be benefits and resources available to help you through your current situation.

Call 1-800-MICH-VET or visit Michigan.gov/MVAA

The banner features a photograph of a smiling man in a dark hoodie with a "VETERAN" patch, standing in front of American and Michigan state flags. To his right is the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency logo, which includes a star and the text "MICHIGAN VETERANS AFFAIRS AGENCY".

- Utilization of website banners within courts.
- Memo from Chief Justice encouraging courts to become “MI Veteran Connectors”.
- Engagement with MI Legal Help on how to assist veterans with expungements.

Anyone can request a benefits consultation for military-connected individuals by visiting <https://www.michigan.gov/mvaa> and clicking the **Check on MIVet** link at the top of the site.

Check 
on MIVet

In addition, MVAA also has a 24/7 call center that connects veterans to state programs, federal benefits, and local resources.

1-800-MICH-VET

(800-642-4838)

Governor's Challenge Training Portal Overview

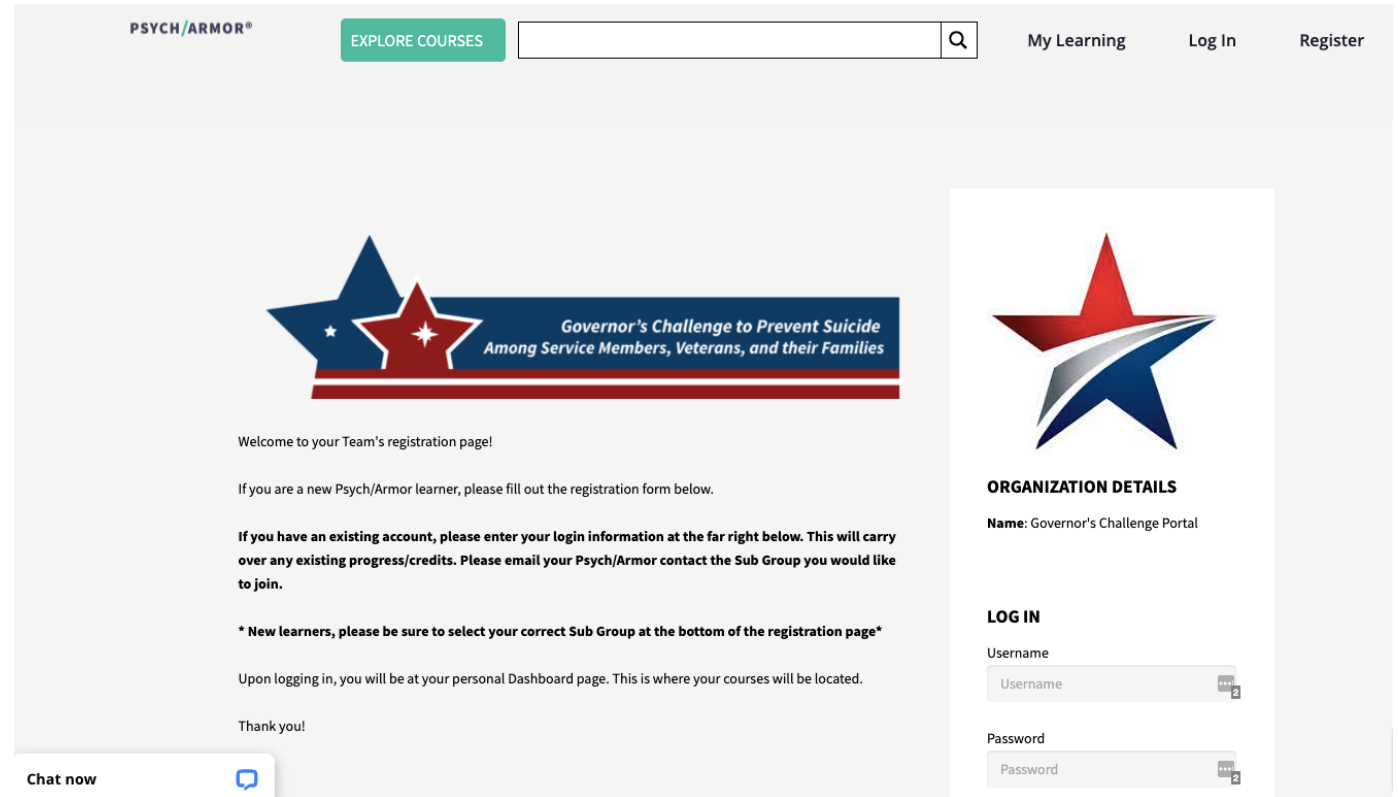
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Governor's Challenge Online Training Portal

- ❑ Michigan now has a PsychArmor Institute **Governor's Challenge Training Portal.**
- ❑ Web-based, single point of entry with access to a set menu of **PsychArmor online trainings** and links to **offsite trainings.**
- ❑ Michigan now can **promote online trainings to communities and providers** to support strategies related to our suicide prevention strategic action plans.



The screenshot displays the PsychArmor website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the PsychArmor logo, an "EXPLORE COURSES" button, a search bar, and links for "My Learning", "Log In", and "Register". The main content area features a large graphic with the text "Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families". Below this, the page is titled "Welcome to your Team's registration page!". It provides instructions for new learners to fill out a registration form and for existing users to enter their login information. A note states: "* New learners, please be sure to select your correct Sub Group at the bottom of the registration page*". A "Chat now" button is visible in the bottom left corner. On the right side, there is a sidebar with the organization's logo and a "LOG IN" section containing fields for "Username" and "Password".

GC Portal - Trainings Menu

10 Trainings Available*	
VA S.A.V.E	Crisis Response Plan for Health Care Providers – Introduction and Assessment
Connecting with the VA	Crisis Response Plan for Health Care Providers – Intervention
15 Things Veterans Want You to Know for Health Care Providers	Postvention
Suicide in Military Members and Veterans	Women Who Serve
Inner Conflict and Survivor’s Guilt	Substance Use Disorder in Military and Veteran Populations

*Michigan is current working with SAMHSA, the VHA, the Michigan Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation to incorporate additional trainings for Firearms and Suicide Prevention.

MI Governor's Challenge Training Portal - FACTS

- Available to all 40 current MI Governor's Challenge participants.
- Currently ~1000 learner seats available. Trainings are free and have ***CME for licensed providers.***
- Portal will be accessible through August 31, 2022.
- Quarterly metric reports will be available.



Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay connected.
Veteran resources and support are available to you.

Open Forum/Questions

Thank You!



Michigan

