

## Program Overview

Together With Veterans (TWV) is a community-based suicide prevention program for rural Veterans where Local Veterans and their communities implement best practices in public health suicide prevention. The program is designed to be consistent with the goals of the National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide. TWV activities align with Priority Focus Areas and six strategies:



## Mission

The Together With Veterans Program (TWV) enlists rural Veterans and their local partners to join forces to reduce Veteran suicide in their community through the activities of our local Steering Committee and the TWV Salem County Community Partners.

## Guiding Principles

### *Veteran-Driven*

- Veterans provide permission and work together to implement TWV in their community
- Veterans provide leadership to guide the TWV process
- We currently have 8 Veterans on the Steering Committee and in other key roles

### *Collaborative*

- Community partners play a key role in successfully supporting Veterans and their families
- Informed and educated community partners are better equipped to address the needs of Veterans
- Collaboration and education will strengthen the suicide prevention network for Veterans, their families, and friends

### *Evidence-Informed*

- TWV strategies are drawn from well-researched models that have been shown to effectively reduce suicide

### *Community-Centered*

- TWV partnerships develop a unique suicide prevention action plan based on community strengths and addressing community needs
- TWV action plans are reviewed and revised as needed to promote success

### **TWV Communities**

A community interested in implementing TWV will need the capacity to establish the following:

- A Veteran-led steering committee with decision-making authority to provide leadership for the program
- A community team of local agencies and organizations who serve or encounter Veterans and are interested in Veteran suicide prevention
- A coordinator (Christine Morby) who provides logistical administration of program meetings and activities
- A facilitator who leads the planning process
- An organization that can receive funding to support implementation

TWV teams conduct a public health action planning process to address rural Veteran suicide prevention. This process will require regularly scheduled meetings for an estimated 10-12 months. Implementation of the plan is ongoing and is intended to create long-term relationships between Veterans and community service providers, deepen community awareness about Veteran needs, and improve services and support for Veterans and their families.

TWV teams receive training, program materials and limited funding. Additionally, TWV coaches provide consultation about the TWV process and assist with addressing issues related to meeting facilitation, coordination, organizational development and other aspects of program implementation as needed.

Our Salem County TWV team is facilitated by Pat Hassler, Retired Naval Officer with 22 years of Active Duty experience and an additional 22 years of active veteran program experience. We look forward to working with our community leaders on this important program.

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