

VHWC DISPATCH

February 2025

FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

CONTACT US

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CORE TEAM UPDATE

We held four brainstorming meetings last month and identified project ideas to implement this year. Our priority areas include Housing Insecurity, Oral Health, Suicide Prevention, and Transition. There are still opportunities to refine these projects, and we welcome participation. Stay tuned for calendar invitations to follow-up meetings. In case you missed the brainstorming, we posted summaries from each session on our website. You will find tabs associated with each priority area and associated materials and resources will be stored here. There is no prerequisite to have been involved with the brainstorming to participate with project refinement and implementation. We anticipate using our network to disseminate opportunities. If you are unable to join the meeting(s) as scheduled, we welcome ideas or suggestions via email to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu.

We remain committed to expanding the network of partners and collaborators. We have gaps and would appreciate help reaching out to individuals and organizations. We are committed to including perspective and insights from those having direct experiences so please share our links and information! Opportunities to stay connected include sharing our newsletters, visiting our website for the latest updates, and subscribing for VHWC news. We share events others are hosting through our website to increase awareness. We encourage you to contact us if you have additional suggestions about how to participate. If you're interested in joining the VHWC Advisory Council or want to explore ways to get involved with specific projects, be sure to reach out and subscribe on our [website](#).

On behalf of the Advisory Council and Administrative Core Team, we honor all who have served and extend our gratitude for your dedication to our country.

PROGRESS REPORT: 2025 PRIORITY AREAS

Several common themes were identified across all four-priority area brainstorming sessions. Specifically, the need for education on issues such as benefits, eligibility, and resources. Educational resources such as toolkits and guides could be tailored for various audiences. Potential audiences include veterans and their care partners, health care providers, and community-based organizations depending on topic. The next series of meetings will be to identify relevant audiences, content, and existing resources for consideration.

Another focal point was a recommendation to support building interpersonal connections and promoting relationships. Stable trusted relationships support suicide prevention efforts and transitions to the civilian setting. Opportunities discussed included sponsorship of recreational activities, gaming events, and facilitating life skills such as financial literacy, employment seeking, and home ownership considerations. Further ideas mentioned evaluating military work and training for equivalencies to civil work and educational competencies.

The activities will emphasize methods to support existing programs being directed by partner organizations rather than investing in new and potentially competing efforts. We encourage people hosting programs to reach out if they would like help. Requests will be shared with our network to connect organizations who can support each other.

Longer term interest in health-related policy and advocacy was identified during the sessions. We welcome contact from those who share expertise and interest in policy analysis and advocacy to reach out. We will convene policy group(s) to participate in ad-hoc initiatives.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Webinars:

The MSU Student Veteran Resource Center hosted a webinar on ***Moral Injury***. The session was presented by Chaplain Sherri Headen from the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. A recording of the seminar is available [here](#).

We continue to seek partnerships with those interested in delivering online content on health and wellness topics of interest for veterans and care partners. You can contact us at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu to be included on the speakers bureau list. Please identify “Speakers Bureau” in the subject line and provide the topic/content that you are interested to present as well as your contact information.

Events:

The **2025 Michigan Suicide Prevention Community Technical Assistance Conference (CTAC)** will take place May 8-9, 2025, at the Treetops Resort in Gaylord, Michigan. This year's conference

focuses on firearm-related suicide prevention in collaboration with the Co-sponsor University of Michigan, Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention (IFIP). Pre-conference workshops on the Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) and Grant Funding Essentials will be held on May 7, 2025. More information and registration is located [here](#). Space is limited so register soon!

We share events being hosted by VHWC stakeholders on the [Resources and Events tab](#) of our website. Organizations looking to advertise an event or obtain assistance with hosting events can send event information and/or requests about the nature of support or help needed to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu and we will share it with our networks.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The VHWC offers various ways to engage in our work:

- Subscribe at our website to make sure you receive the latest updates and information and share this content with your networks.
- Stay informed about the latest developments by participating with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” John F. Kennedy
