

NEWS RELEASE

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ND Department of Health Responds to CDC Report on Suicide Rates

BISMARCK, N.D. – A recent report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated that suicide death rates have increased across the nation from 1999 to 2016. North Dakota has experienced the largest suicide rate increase within that time frame, with rates increasing 58 percent. Across the nation and North Dakota, suicide cuts across all ages, demographics and socioeconomic groups, with working-age white men, American Indians and veterans at highest risk. In 2016, 134 North Dakota residents died by suicide.

“It is important to remember that most North Dakotans who suffer from thoughts of suicide seek help and get better. There are effective programs and treatments for suicide,” said Kora Dockter, North Dakota Suicide Prevention Coalition chair and mother to a Bismarck man who died by suicide in 2014. “That is why the North Dakota Suicide Prevention Coalition is working with the North Dakota Department of Health and FirstLink, North Dakota’s Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline service provider, to make sure everyone who struggles with thoughts of suicide in North Dakota knows that help is only a phone call away.”

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) recently awarded \$300,000 to suicide prevention programs throughout the state. The grants are part of a \$1.2 million appropriation approved by the 2017 North Dakota Legislative Assembly and Gov. Doug Burgum.

The NDDoH Suicide Prevention Program and a subcommittee of the North Dakota Suicide Prevention Coalition worked together to select best practice suicide prevention projects to fund through a competitive application process.

The following organizations received support to provide statewide suicide prevention training and services:

- **FirstLink** – North Dakota’s statewide National Suicide Prevention Lifeline crisis service provider and evidence-based “Follow-up” callback program provider, offering 24/7 telephone support through the 211 Helpline, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, as

well as statewide training in evidence-based suicide prevention and mental health trainings.

- **Connect Suicide Prevention** – a best practice training in suicide prevention and intervention for behavioral health professionals.
- **Sources of Strength** – an evidence-based youth suicide, substance use and bullying prevention program that helps kids develop coping skills. Sources of Strength has been implemented in 50 schools across North Dakota.

The following tribal and community-based projects received support for suicide prevention and intervention efforts:

- Mayor’s Community Crisis Coalition
- Mid-Dakota Education Cooperative
- Minot State University, North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities
- Missouri River Education Cooperative
- Native American Development Center
- North Central Education Cooperative
- Northeast Education Services Cooperative
- Northern Plains Chaplaincy
- Roughrider Education Services Program
- Southwestern District Health Unit
- Spirit Lake Nation
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

For more information on the suicide prevention fund and free training opportunities, contact Alison Traynor, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.4580. Visit <http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention/> for information about suicide and suicide prevention.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide, call the hotline to break the silence and to receive confidential help from local professionals anytime, day or night. Call **1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)**. The National Suicide Lifeline is answered locally by FirstLink.

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