

[Lifeline Names New Steering Committee Members](#)

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We are pleased to announce the members of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee—at long last! First, we want to thank all of you who allowed your name to be submitted for nomination to one of the Lifeline’s consulting committees. Lifeline’s Executive Leadership Team (Lifeline staff, SAMHSA, NASMHPD, Macro International, MHA of NYC and Columbia University’s Research Foundation for Mental Health) were delighted with the response to our open call for nominations, and it was indeed a challenge to review and select members from the more than 100 highly qualified candidates nominated. In the end, we were able to assemble an extraordinary group of national leaders and advocates in suicide prevention and behavioral healthcare systems management. We sought to maintain 2/3 of our previous Committee membership to ensure stability, while adding new voices that would build on the Committee’s foundation of collective knowledge, integrity and diversity. We believe that we have accomplished this objective.

While the majority of our previous membership remained (10), Lifeline added 12 new members to the Committee. Among this distinguished group includes the Committee’s new Chair, Maryland State Mental Health Commissioner Brian Hepburn, whose state network of hotlines served as the model for developing the Hopeline network. Commissioner Hepburn is joined by two other State Behavioral Health leaders, Commissioner James Reinhard of Virginia and the former Commissioner of New York State’s Office of Mental Health, Sharon Carpinello (acting as the Honorary Chair of the Committee). The Committee is now comprised of representatives from federally-supported health and suicide prevention organizations (Indian Health Service; the Department of Veterans Affairs; the Suicide Prevention Resource Center); national suicide prevention organizations (SAVE & AAS); national behavioral health organizations (NAMI & the National Council of Behavioral Healthcare); model Garret Lee Smith state suicide prevention grantees (Tennessee’s Suicide Prevention Network and NAMI-New Hampshire); and national leaders in suicide prevention and behavioral healthcare advocacy (including the prominent voices of survivors of suicide loss and suicide attempts).

Perhaps most important is the overall expanded representation of network crisis centers on the Steering Committee and Subcommittees. Aside from nearly doubling the number of crisis center directors on the Steering Committee (from 4 to 7 members), we have added three directors to the Standards, Trainings and Practices Subcommittee and, for the first time, included two crisis center directors with extensive consumer/survivor experience on the Consumer-Survivor Subcommittee. By aligning crisis center directors alongside national leaders in consumer advocacy, suicide prevention research/practice, public health and mental health systems on our Lifeline committees, we may move closer to accomplishing one of our project goals: to better integrate crisis center practice in all areas of federal, state and local suicide prevention and behavioral healthcare system planning.

Lifeline’s Steering Committee members are listed below. For each member’s full bio, please visit the Lifeline web site at <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/join/BioSteering.aspx>. Bios for all of Lifeline’s recently re-constituted Subcommittee members may also be found at on the web site at <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/about/committee.aspx>.

Brian Hepburn, M.D., Director for the Maryland State Mental Hygiene Administration. Steering Committee Chair.

David Covington, M.S., M.B.A., Chief Operating Officer of Behavioral Health Link, a Georgia state-wide crisis center and member of the Lifeline network. Steering Committee Vice Chair.

Sharon Carpinello, R.N., Ph.D., former Commissioner of New York State Office of Mental Health, survivor of suicide loss, suicide prevention educator and advocate. Steering Committee Honorary Chair.

Charlotte Anderson, Vice-President, 2-1-1 Trident United Way Call Center, Charleston, South Carolina, Lifeline member center.

John Bateson, Executive Director, Contra Costa Crisis Center, Lifeline member center.

Lanny Berman, Ph.D., A.B.P.P., Executive Director of the American Association of Suicidology, Board member of International Association of Suicide Prevention, researcher and author of suicide prevention publications.

Debra Harris, Director, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Lifeline member center.

Thomas Joiner, Ph.D., Director of Florida State University Psychology Clinic, Bright-Burton Scholar, researcher and author of suicide prevention publications, Lifeline Standards, Training and Practices Subcommittee Chair.

Jan Kemp, R.N., Ph.D., Associate Director for Education and Training, oversees VA Suicide Prevention Hotline service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, VISN-2 Center of Excellence, Canandaigua, N.Y.

David Litts, O.D., F.A.A.O., Director of Science and Policy, Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

Karen Marshall, Program Director for the American Association of Suicidology, survivor of suicide loss, Lifeline Consumer-Survivor Subcommittee Co-Chair.

Patricia Morris, Program Director, Care Crisis Response Services, Volunteers of America Western Washington, Lifeline member center.

Ken Norton, L.I.C.S.W., Director, Center for Community Based Suicide Prevention and Frameworks Suicide Prevention Project, Garret Lee Smith Grantee, NAMI-New Hampshire.

Daniel Reidenberg, Psy.D., F.A.P.A., Executive Director, Suicide Awareness and Voices of Education (SAVE), National Council for Suicide Prevention member.

James Reinhard, M.D., Commissioner of Virginia State Department of Mental Health.

Scott Ridgeway, M.A., Executive Director, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, Garret Lee Smith Grantee.

Linda Rosenberg, M.S.W., C.S.W., President and CEO, National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare.

Eduardo Vega, M.A., Chief, Division of Empowerment and Advocacy, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, attempt survivor.

Rose Weahkee, Ph.D., Public Health Advisor, Division of Behavioral Health Services, Indian Health Services, Office of Clinical and Preventive Services.

Stephanie Weber, M.S., L.C.P.C., Executive Director, Suicide Prevention Services, Batavia, Illinois, Lifeline member center.

Tom Wedekind, A.C.S.W., C.B.H.E., Executive Director, Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services, Pinellas Park, Fla., Lifeline and NCCBH member center.

Terry Wise, J.D., national spokesperson for suicide prevention from the perspective of a suicide attempt survivor, American Program Bureau for public speakers, author, Lifeline Consumer-Survivor Subcommittee Co-Chair.