



## **Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series**

### **2026 FEB CCSS: Operational Medicine: Preparing the Force for Mission Readiness**

#### **2026 FEB CCSS S03: Increasing the Reach and Accessibility of Suicide Prevention Treatment**

##### **Resource List**

The [Suicide Prevention Resource for Action](#) (2022) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) outlines a comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention. It details seven key strategies with the best available evidence to help states and communities reduce suicide, which include strengthening economic supports, creating protective environments, and improving access to suicide care. The resource emphasizes that suicide is a preventable public health issue and that a multi-faceted approach involving various sectors is necessary for a significant impact. The strategies aim to address risk factors and enhance protective factors across individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. This includes preventing risk before it occurs and lessening the immediate and long-term harms of suicidal behavior.

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#) (2018) for 2018-2028 establishes a comprehensive public health approach to address the high suicide rate among veterans. It moves beyond individual clinical treatment to include community-based prevention, aiming to support all veterans, regardless of their engagement with the VA. The strategy is built on four main pillars: ensuring healthy and empowered veterans and families, providing clinical and community preventive services, offering robust treatment and support, and improving surveillance and research. It outlines 14 goals and numerous objectives, emphasizing collaboration between federal, state, and local partners to create a multi-faceted support network.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides [resources and support for Service Members, Veterans, and their Families](#) (SMVF) (n.d.) who are facing behavioral health challenges. This includes the Governor's and Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide, which promotes a public health approach to suicide prevention for this population. These initiatives bring together military and civilian leaders to develop and implement state- and community-wide suicide prevention plans. SAMHSA's SMVF Technical Assistance Center offers ongoing support to these teams, helping them to implement evidence-based practices and build sustainable systems of care.

The VA has made suicide prevention its top clinical priority, implementing a [public health model](#) (n.d.) that combines clinical and community-based strategies to support all veterans. This includes the Veterans Crisis Line, which offers 24/7 confidential support, and various research and outreach programs. The VA's approach is detailed in its National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, which emphasizes a comprehensive framework to identify at-risk veterans and provide timely care. The Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention oversees these efforts, integrating mental health services with suicide prevention initiatives to create a robust network of support for veterans and their families. Recognizing that suicide is a complex issue, the VA collaborates with community partners, researchers, and other stakeholders to enhance prevention efforts and save lives.



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### References

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