



Suicide Prevention in the National Guard:

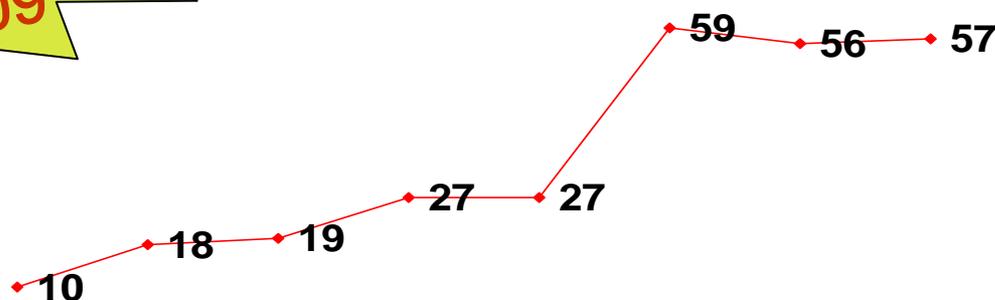
The Role of the New National Guard Psychological Health Program

Presentation at the
Department of Defense/Department of Veteran's Affairs
Suicide Prevention Conference
Washington, D. C.
January 13, 2010



Suicide Trends in the National Guard

As of
22 Oct 09

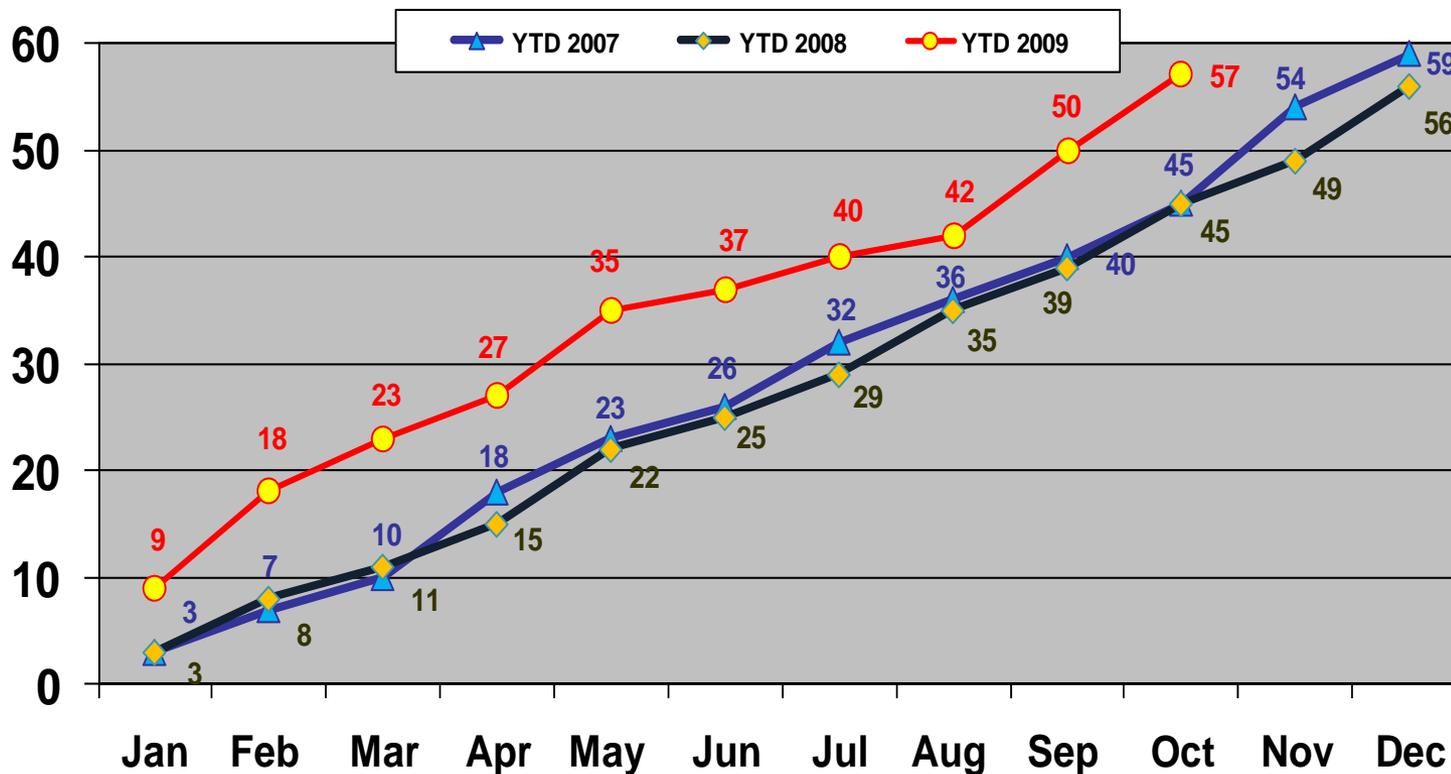


	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
M Day	1	6	10	10	22	40	40	41
Title 32	4	5	5	5	2	9	5	7
Title 10	5	7	4	12	3	10	11	9
◆ Total	10	18	19	27	27	59	56	57

Thanks to MSGT Marshall Bradshaw, National Guard Bureau,
for use of this slide



Suicides Year-to-Date: 2007 vs 2008 vs 2009



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Overview of the National Guard Psychological Health Program

PSYCHOLOGICAL
HEALTH PROGRAM
NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU



- **Initiated by Congress to address growing mental health problems in the National Guard since 2003**
- **National Guard Bureau (NGB) contracted with the Ceridian Corporation, who also oversees Military Onesource**
- **First Directors of Psychological Health (DPH) began in January 2009. Budget limits program to one DPH per state/territory; all have been hired except for one state and one territory**
- **DPH role has focused on both national and local priorities, emphasizing both clinical assessment/referral, and coordination of local mental health resources**



SAMHSA National Strategy for Suicide Prevention



1. Promote awareness that suicide is a public health problem that is preventable
2. Develop broad-based support for suicide prevention
3. Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with being a consumer of mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention services
4. Develop and implement suicide prevention programs
5. Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means and methods of self-harm
6. Implement training for recognition of at-risk behavior and delivery of effective treatment
7. Develop and promote effective clinical and professional practices
8. Improve access to community linkages with mental health and substance abuse services
9. Improve reporting and portrayals of suicidal behavior, mental illness, and substance abuse in the entertainment and news media
10. Promote and support research on suicide and suicide prevention\
11. Improve and expand surveillance systems



NGPHP Survey of Suicide Prevention Practices



- Since DPH's were given the direction to support local priorities while also fulfilling contract deliverables, it was determined that a survey might best reveal how these priorities resulted in actions.
- Since the National Guard is a hybrid between military and community cultures, the criteria chosen was the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention

Suicide Prevention Survey Rating Scale

1 = Not Involved

2 = Involved after others initiated the program

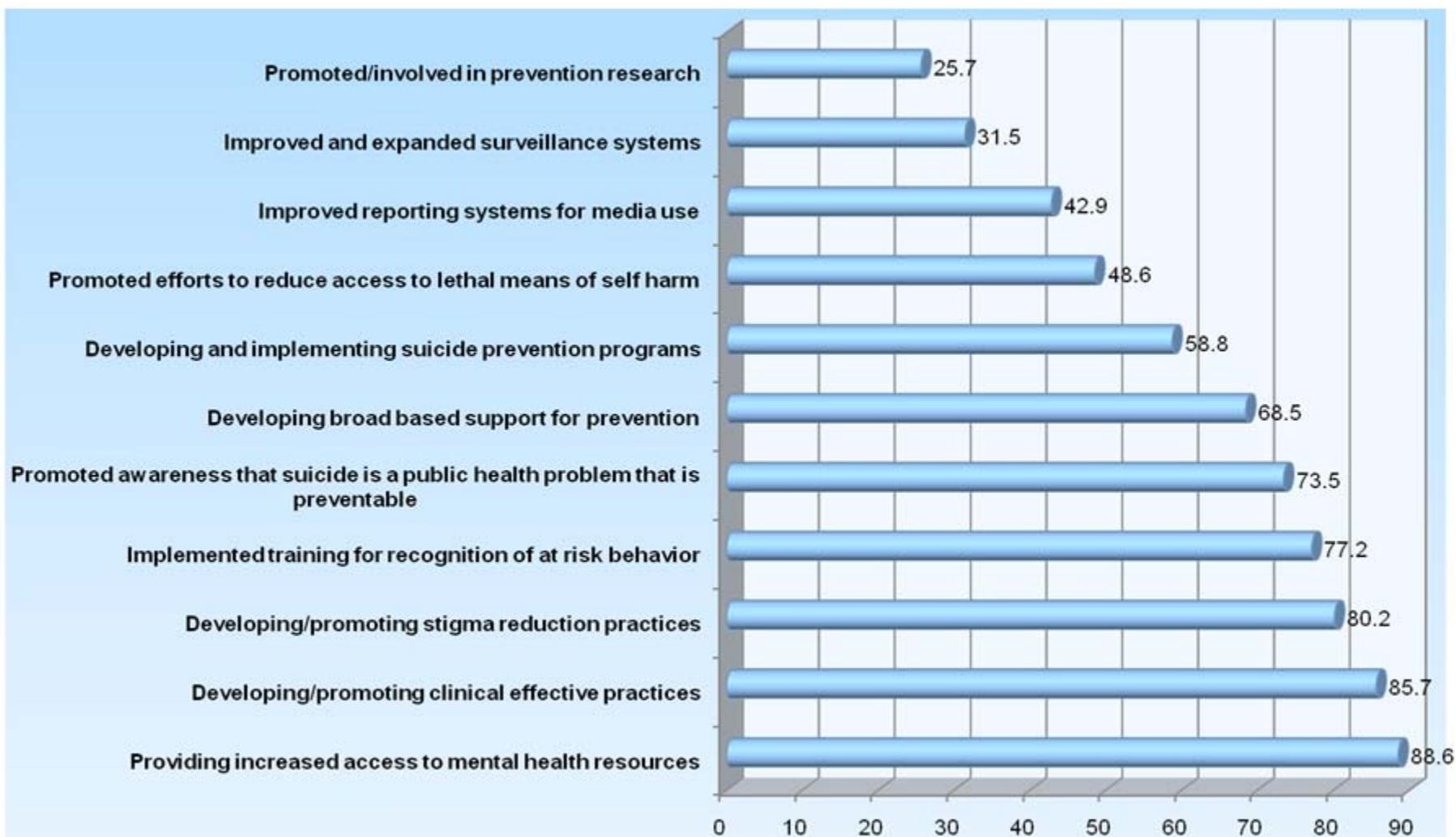
3 = Actively involved

4 = Involved in both planning and implementation

5 = Assumed leadership role in planning and implementation



DPH Proactive Involvement in Suicide Prevention Efforts





Impact of PHP Services



Although without any formal data at this point in program development, we believe DPH efforts have resulted in:

- Significant numbers of Service Members receiving timely clinical services that in the past would have had problems because of the lack of a single point of contact for mental health services;
- The awareness level for risk and prevention with both family members and communities has risen , resulting from a high level of involvement in Yellow Ribbon events and community briefings throughout the nation;
- The awareness level and competence of Service Members has increased through the DPH involvement in Beyond the Front gatekeeper training, and the ASIST suicide first aid intervention program;
- The local military and civilian mental health systems are better prepared to collaborate to provide effective services to Service Members and their families.



Challenges



- Consider developing a suicide prevention strategic plan with NGPHP stakeholders for suicide prevention using the SAMHSA National Strategic Plan as a framework
- Continue to promote a consistent reporting system for known suicide attempts in order to track prevention and intervention practices
- Using the recent NGB Suicide Prevention Workshop as a springboard, consider adopting a national model of suicide prevention that includes the development of coordinated teams addressing prevention, early intervention, emergency response, and post-incident recovery.
- Seek support and funding to link military and civilian mental health resources to more effectively deal with Citizen Soldiers and their families.



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