

Craftsbury Mental Health Resources Group (CMHRG)
January 14, 2021
6pm via Zoom

Minutes

In attendance:

Michelle Warren, Monique Reil, Susie Houston, Deb McKinley

1. Town Report – The group reviewed a draft of the CMHRG submission for the Town Report, drafted by Michelle. After some edits and additions, the report was approved. Michelle will submit it.

Craftsbury Mental Health Resource Group Report

This past year mental wellness has been a struggle for so many, not just in Craftsbury, but Vermont and even the nation with the isolation and anxiety associated COVID-19. The divide with politics and racial equality in our nation has increased anxiety even further.

Partnering with the Craftsbury Neighbor to Neighbor committee, we offered daily walks on the Common and also Covid Coffee Break to help combat isolation from Covid-19.

For the first time, we hosted an AFSP (American Foundation of Suicide Prevention) Out of the Darkness Walk in Craftsbury in September with approximately 30 walkers and raised \$3,800! We were the top fundraisers for the Newport area. Thank you to all those who supported this important cause.

Deb McKinley, Monique Reil and Michelle Warren also participated on a panel for the Vermont Suicide Prevention Symposium 2020, partnering with Lamoille Mental Health. We explained how proud we are of our Grass Roots creation yet saddened, to be the only Town in Vermont that has a community driven mental health resource group. We continue to advocate for mental wellness statewide and offer any support we can. Several people have reached out to members of our group to gain support and help. We also have written an article about mental health for one of the local papers and FPF. Please visit our website www.nevtsuicide.com which offers resources and helpful tips for mental wellness. We continue to work collaboratively with the school and the SLA.

Please know you are not alone, we are here for you and care, as fellow community members.

2. MH Advocacy Day – February 1

The NAMI Mental Health Advocacy Day is February 1. Here's a [link to the webpage](#) for registering and further information. There are separate legislative advocacy trainings planned:

- [NAMI Vermont Legislative Advocacy Training](#): Saturday, 1/23/21, 9am – 12noon.
- [Vermont Care Partners Legislative Advocacy Training](#): Wednesday, 1/27/21, 12-1pm.
- [Mental Health Advocacy Day Legislative Training](#): Wednesday, 1/27/21, 4-5:30pm.

The group agreed it's time for us to be more active in advocacy work.

The group talked about recent events with Northeast Kingdom Human Services.

Monique will reach out to a contact she has there and offer our group's support.

3. Screening of "Ernie and Joe" – Sponsored by NAMI Vermont, there will be several screenings of this documentary around the state. The documentary is about two police officers from the San Antonio Police Department's 20-person Mental Health Unit who are helping change the way police respond to Mental Health calls. Monique will find out where/when the screening will be in the Northeast Kingdom.

4. MH resources for these days.

- a. Norm Hanson noted in an email to Deb that the staff, residents and volunteers at Craftsbury Community Care Center are experiencing high levels of stress. Norm and others are working on a program to help them cope. Deb offered the group's help.
- b. Monique reported that her office has put together a packet of information for families that have experienced suicide loss. Michelle pointed the group to a booklet that she, personally, pays for and sends out. It was suggested that the group put together a small packet, similar to the one Monique has, for families in our area.

The meeting adjourned just before 7pm.

The next meeting will be February 11, 6pm, via Zoom.