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Veteran Suicide Prevention Month 2017: #BeThere
Aleda E. Lutz VA Joins national effort to Prevent Veteran Suicide

Local VA Rallies Community Support for Veterans During Suicide Prevention Month

Veteran suicide isn’t just a national issue, it’s one the Aleda E. Lutz VA and Community Based Outpatient Clinics throughout Michigan continues to focus on with programs and initiatives to make suicide prevention everyone’s business.

The VA’s successful “BeThere” campaign continues to bring attention and support, emphasizing the fact that one small act could save the life of a Veteran or Service Member in crisis.

“We are not only guided by the statistics, but also the Veterans we see each and every day in this medical center,” said Dr. Ginny Creasman, Director of the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center. “It’s up to all of us to learn how we can jump into action if we speak to someone who needs support.”

In August 2016, VA released a national suicide data report, *Suicide Among Veterans and Other Americans, 2001–2014*. The report was the most comprehensive analysis of Veteran suicide rates in the United States, examining more than 55 million records from 1979 to 2014. The startling data indicated:

- An average of 20 Veterans died from suicide each day. 6 of the 20 were users of VA health services in 2013 or 2014.
- Veterans accounted for 18% of all deaths from suicide among U.S. adults, while Veterans constituted 8.5% of the US population.
- Approximately 67% of all Veteran deaths from suicide were the result of firearm injuries.

Important VA resources include the Veteran Crisis Line, 1-800-273-8255, Press 1; online chat at [https://www.veteranscrisisline.net](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net), and texting to 838255.

“One call, one chat, or one text can open the door to hope,” said Dr. Creasman.

The Aleda E. Lutz VA and outpatient clinics offers many services for Veterans in the 35 counties from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge, including a dedicated Suicide Prevention Program coordinator, resources for homeless Veterans, mental health counseling and special programs for women Veterans and Veterans of operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn. We are here to answer each Veteran’s need.
For more on VA’s Suicide Prevention resources, visit these websites: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net, https://maketheconnection.net, www.va.gov.

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center, with an additional 8-bed acute medicine and telemetry wing. It provides care to over 35,400 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at www.saginaw.va.gov.

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