



525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.dph.illinois.gov

MEETING NOTICE
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (IDPH)

Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance

August 25, 2025

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

****Recording****

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Roll Call
3. Review & approval of February Meeting Minutes
4. Acknowledgement of Jill's Leave and Teresa Glaze's Retirement
5. Update on 988 Implementation
6. Guest Speaker – Katie Endress
7. ICAAP Update – Nabil Abou Baker & Stephanie Atella
8. Guest Speaker – Mai Tuyet Pho, Mary Ellen Mackesy-Amiti, Martha Tillson
9. Guest Speaker – Kathleen Conlon Wasik
10. IDPH Updates
11. Staff Updates
12. Division & Board Updates
13. Governor's Challenge Update
14. Annual Report Update
 - a. *All - Please share information about your agency's suicide prevention activities*
15. Legislation Update
16. Partner Sharing
17. Public Comment & Closing
18. Upcoming Meeting Dates
19. Adjournment

x	1	Jenna Farmer Brackett	Representative from a suicide prevention program serving rural communities (Centerstone)
x	2	Chuck Johnson	Representing Illinois Hospital Association
x	3	Amber Clark	Representing veterans' services
x	4	Eric Davidson	Representing Higher Education
x	5	Angie Thinnes	Representing Attempt Survivors
	6	Kim Godden	Representing First Responder Professions
	7	Beth Morrison	Representing Suicide Prevention
	8	Christopher Balthazar	Representing LGBTQ+
x	9	Deb Martin	Representing Survivors of Suicide Loss
	10	Rafiah Maxie-Cole	Representing Survivors of Suicide Loss
	11	Sarah Horrell	Representing Survivors of Suicide Loss
x	12	Cynthia Paidipati	Researcher in Suicidology
	13	Dr. Jack Rein	Organization Representing Suicide Prevention
X	14	Randyl Wilkins	Organization Representing Suicide Prevention
	15	Megan Tyler	Organization Promoting the Improvement of Mental Health
x	16	Tracy Levin	Organization Promoting the Improvement of Mental Health
	17	Brandi Young	Organization Promoting the Improvement of Mental Health
x	18	Dawn Steward	Inpatient behavioral health care organization
x	19	Bonnie Hassan	Outpatient behavioral health organization
x	20	Janet Barba	Community Health Organization
x	21	Donna Nahlik	Healthcare System
x	22	Dr. Nabil Abou Baker	State association representing primary medical providers
x	23	Tandra Rutledge	A faith-based organization
x	24	Katie Wilson	Organization Providing a frontline grassroots perspective
	25	Sarina Thate Otyhunwahe DiMaso	An American Indian health care system

Ex-Officio Members**Agency**

	26	Brian Kieninger	IDPH /Division of Emergency Preparedness and Highway Safety
x	27	Dr. Melvin Hinton	Illinois Department of Corrections
x	28	Dr. Erin Alexander	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
x	29	Dr. Alda Leavy-Skinner	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
x	30	Margo Watson	Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs
x	31	Samantha Alonis	Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Substance Use Prevention & Recovery
x	34	Sarah Littrell	Illinois State Board of Education
x	35	Dr. Monique Anawis	Office of the Attorney General
x	36	Jill McCamant	IDPH Injury & Violence Prev. Prog.

Stakeholders

Aaron Lenaghan
Amit
Amy Hall, IDPH
Andrew Lerch, IDPH
Claire Farnsworth, Prevention First
Daniel Johnson, University of Chicago
Fran Reyes, Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Jackie Mathias, McLean County Jail
Janet Barba
Jennifer Martin, IDPH
Jessica Gall-Adediran, IEMA
Jessica Gimeno, Access Living
Jonathan Singer, PhD, Loyola
Kaitlyn Wilson
Katie
Kellie Henrichs, Prevention First
Kira Berkoff, Hope for the Day
Kristen Smith, Rush University
Kyra VanDoren, AllianceChicago
Lori Sea, Washington County Public Health Dept.
Neva Wright, NAMI McHenry County
Nicole Webb, Memorial Behavioral Health
Olapeju Pej Lawal, IDPh
Pedro Medina, IDPH
Shelly Sital, AllianceChicago
Topaz Lavi, Prevention First
Valerie Wyant, Elyssa's Mission
Yolanda Moreno, Chicago Public Schools

1. Welcome and Meeting Protocols

- **Facilitator:** Deb Martin
- Deb welcomed attendees and provided a reminder that the ISPA represents diverse members from state agencies, nonprofit sectors, education, public health, and legislative representatives. Due to this diversity, some members may not take public positions on policies.
- It was emphasized that while the Alliance may take collective positions, these do not necessarily represent every member's stance.
- Attendees were informed that the meeting would be recorded solely for note-taking purposes.

2. Roll Call and Quorum Confirmation

- **Conducted by:** Jill McCamant
- A roll call was taken to confirm attendance.
- A quorum was established.
- Participants included representatives from state agencies, public health institutions, mental health organizations, schools, and community outreach programs.
- Notable attendees included Amber Clark, Eric Davidson, Kimberly Godden, Cynthia Paidipati, Jack Rein, Randyl Wilkins, Kaitlyn Wilson, Brian Kieninger, Margo Watson, Samantha Alonis, Sarah Littrell, Monique Anawis, among others.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the **February 2025** meeting were reviewed.
- **Motion to approve:** Donna Nahlik
- **Seconded by:** Deb Martin
- No objections were raised; the minutes were **unanimously approved**.

4. Acknowledgement of Jill's Leave and Teresa Glaze's Retirement

- Deb Martin acknowledged that Jill is leaving to a different department.
- Appreciation of the work that Jill has contributed to the alliance.
- Acknowledgement that Teresa Glaze has retired.

5. Update on 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Implementation

- **Speaker Introduced:** Lucy Craycroft
- **Bio Shared by:** Deb Martin

- Lucy serves as the Social Service Program Planner of policy, planning, and innovation for the Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health.
 - She oversees the 988 implementation and has nearly two decades of experience in mental health, developmental disability services, and crisis response.
- Lucy presented
 - Current statewide call answer rate is 90%
 - Illinois currently has seven centers online effective January
 - Rolled out a statewide communications plan at the end of December
 - Website has been updated

6. Questions & Feedback

- Deb followed up with questions on if the text and chat lines will be answered 24/7 and if it would be by a human.
 - Centerstone and Path will be answering 24/7; Dupage on availability.
 - Human will be answering all calls.
- No following questions, but if any more direct them to Deb who will direct them to Lucy.

7. Katie Endress Introduction

- Katie Endress introduces herself as the new Violence and Injury Prevention section chief.
- Any questions that would be for Jill can now be directed to Katie.

8. Presentation: Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance: ICAAP Update

Reporting: Deb Martin

Presenter:

Nabil Abou Baker, MD, FAAP is the Illinois Suicide Prevention Ambassador to the National American Academy of Pediatrics and a member of the Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance. He is an associate professor at the University of Chicago specializing in internal medicine and pediatrics. He is an interim program director for the med PEDs residency program and focuses on improving care transitions for young adults with chronic conditions.

Stephanie Atella, MPH, CHES is the chief program officer at the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, where she leads statewide programs to improve child health, health equity, and public health systems. She has experience in school based health, violence prevention, and health education.

Overview:

Dr. Abou Baker and Ms. Atella shared updates on ICAAP's suicide prevention and pediatric mental health initiatives, highlighting statewide training, awareness campaigns, family resources, and system-level improvements.

Key Points:

- ICAAP provided statewide suicide prevention training through the AAP Annual Conference and ECHO sessions, with more scheduled for Fall 2025.
- A Black Youth Suicide Prevention Project is collecting data on youth ages 10–21 to guide interventions.
- The new Peer Advisors Program supports clinics with suicide prevention implementation and prescribing guidance.
- Family-friendly resources were developed to help recognize warning signs and strengthen protective factors.
- Firearm violence prevention and Pediatric ED Readiness Survey projects are addressing lethal means safety and system gaps in pediatric mental health care.

9. Questions & Feedback

- No questions were raised during the session.
- Findings from the ED Readiness Survey will be shared when finalized.

**10. Presentation: Safer through Peer-Led Action (“Safer-PLAN”) Study
Reporting: Deb Martin**

• **Presenter:**

Mai Tuyet Pho, MD MPH is an Associate Professor with the Section of Infectious Diseases & Global Health At University of Chicago Medicine

Mary Ellen Mackesy-Amiti, PHD is a Research Professor with Community Health Sciences at University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health

Martha Tillson, PHD is an Assistant Research Professor with Department of Behavioral Science at University of Kentucky College of Medicine

Overview:

- Dr. Pho presented a research proposal in development with colleagues Dr. Mary Ellen Mackesy-Amiti (UIC School of Public Health) and Dr. Martha Tillson (University of Kentucky).
- Their work focuses on substance use, infectious disease, and public health, with an emphasis on marginalized populations and grassroots harm reduction providers.

Key Points:

- Rural Illinois and Kentucky communities face high rates of suicide and overdose; stigma often prevents people from accessing emergency care.
- Peer-led harm reduction organizations are trusted by people who use drugs but often lack formal suicide prevention training and tools.
- The team proposes adapting the Stanley Brown Safety Planning Intervention—currently used in clinics and emergency rooms—for community-based harm reduction settings.

- Peer support specialists would be trained and supported to deliver the intervention, helping individuals identify coping strategies, remove lethal means, and create personalized safety plans with links to mental health care.
- The project aims to reduce suicide risk related to overdose, strengthen protective factors, and increase the capacity of grassroots organizations serving high-risk populations.

Discussion Considerations:

- How best to select, train, and support peer providers, given the emotional intensity of the work and the potential impact on their own recovery.
- Ensuring a “warm handoff” to behavioral health services in rural areas, where resources exist but remain limited.
- Long-term sustainability of the intervention beyond the initial research funding.

Next Steps:

- NIH grant application submission planned for October.
- Community advisory boards of people who use drugs have provided early input.
- The project team is seeking stakeholder feedback to strengthen the proposal and ensure alignment with state priorities.

11. Questions & Feedback

- Samantha Alonis (IDHS) asked how peers would be selected, trained, and supported given the intensity of the work and potential impact on their own recovery. She emphasized the importance of trauma-informed approaches and ongoing professional and emotional support for peer providers. She also highlighted federal funding limitations on harm reduction (syringe services vs. naloxone distribution) and shared anecdotal concerns about first responders misusing naloxone (excessive doses causing severe withdrawal), which can retraumatize individuals and deter them from seeking emergency services.
- Emily Inman (Illinois Public Health Association) recommended involving outreach workers and community health workers in data collection to reach populations not accessing traditional healthcare. She suggested collecting minimal, non-identifiable data to protect privacy and improve participation.
- Nabil Abou Baker explained that naloxone has a strong receptor affinity, displacing opioids rapidly and causing sudden, severe withdrawal if overdosed. He emphasized that naloxone’s primary goal is to reverse respiratory depression, not induce withdrawal, and noted the need for careful administration to preserve trust in life-saving interventions.
- Melvin Hinton asked about available literature or data documenting naloxone overuse and its effects, noting that most evidence shared was anecdotal. Nabil and

Samantha explained that while evidence on frequency is limited, it is well-recognized that excessive dosing can precipitate severe withdrawal.

- Dr. Mai Pho acknowledged all points, noting long-term collaboration with peer-led harm reduction organizations in rural Illinois. She emphasized that the proposed NIH grant aims to address implementation challenges, support peer providers, and ensure interventions are trauma-informed, safe, and effective.

12. Presentation: Illinois Violent Death Reporting System (IVDRS) & Statewide Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting (SUDORS)

Reporting: Katie Endress

- **Presenter: Kathleen Conlon Wasik**

Kathleen is an outreach coordinator with the Viewer Center for health Policy and Economics within Northwestern University Feinburg School of Medicine. Her team collects records from the Office of vital statistics Illinois related to preventable violent deaths such as homicides, suicides, unintentional firearm, and overdose deaths for the Illinois violent death reporting system, as well as the state statewide unintentional drug overdose reporting system or pseudoors on behalf of the Center for Disease control. Kathleen works with state agencies, non-governmental organizations, local health departments, fatality review teams, and community action groups.

Overview:

Kathleen presented on IVDRS and SUDORS, Illinois' public health surveillance systems for tracking suicides, homicides, legal interventions, and unintentional deaths. The systems aggregate data from vital records, toxicology and autopsy reports, police and hospital records, and news sources. The goal is to analyze trends and contributing factors to inform community interventions and prevent future deaths. Data is used at statewide, regional, county, and zip-code levels to tailor community outreach and support decision-making.

Key Points:

- Data includes demographics, circumstantial details, and over 2,400 variables, with abstractor narrative reports enabling deep analysis.
- AI-assisted tools help identify patterns and extract information for specific inquiries, such as infant homicides or domestic violence cases.
- Data can be connected to hospital and emergency department records to understand broader health system touchpoints.
- Community engagement is central: small-group data review helps stakeholders create meaning and apply findings to local interventions.
- Data coverage is ~97% of Illinois, with some gaps, but sufficient for informing targeted prevention strategies.

13. Questions & Feedback

- Samantha Alonis: Asked whether the sample variables include adverse childhood experiences and social determinants of health. Kathleen explained that availability depends on the information provided to them (e.g., funeral directors, vital stats), noting that adult data may be limited while some analyses, like infant mortality, have richer data.
- Samantha Alonis: Asked about intimate partner violence and suicide data, specifically regarding higher counts of males and whether this reflects perpetrators versus victims. Kathleen noted it varies and referenced ongoing work with Lurie Children's Hospital to better understand support for people causing harm and timing of suicides in relation to custody or court events.
- Feedback: Kathleen emphasized that statewide numbers can mask county-level fluctuations. She encouraged reaching out for tailored reports, guidance on variable selection, and collaboration to interpret and use the data.
- General observation: Trends show slow upward movement in suicide rates, particularly among white males in rural areas and older age groups, with firearms and hanging/strangulation as leading methods. Known mental health problems remain high among younger males.
- Access & resources: Kathleen highlighted dashboards, reports, data dictionaries, newsletters, and LinkedIn as ways to access IVDRS and SUDORS data, noting flexibility in providing data support to communities and researchers.

14. Updates & Announcements:

Delivered by: Jill McCamant

Grant Updates:

- Project ECHO with the University of Chicago and the Suicide Prevention Summit with Prevention 1st are in the process of being amended.
- CDC grant for the expansion of comprehensive suicide prevention and the SAMHSA GLS grant are on hold pending notice of award. Federal grants are generally delayed.

Gun Lock Distribution:

- As of August 25, 232,000 gun locks have been distributed through the partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
 - To order gun locks, email DPH.safety@Illinois.gov for the Smartsheet link.

Board Updates:

- Six applications currently under review.
- Nine open board positions
 - Interested individuals should submit resumes via Smartsheet.

Youth Mental Health Resources:

- The Adolescent Suicide Postvention Resource Page (“Navigating Towards Healing”) continues to offer eight free mental health treatment sessions for youth in Illinois. Link provided in chat.

Upcoming Events:

- Webinars for Suicide Prevention Month will be scheduled and announced via email.
- Prevention 1st is hosting the 2nd Annual Suicide Prevention Symposium in Naperville on August 28–29
 - link provided in chat.

15. Staff Updates:**Katie Endress:**

- Joined the Violence and Injury Prevention Section in May as the new section chief.
- Background: Nursing and Public Health (Master’s degrees from University of Illinois at Chicago).
- Currently pursuing a DrPH at Johns Hopkins University with a research focus on community-based firearm injury prevention.

Graham Briggs:

- New Division Chief.
- Over 20 years of experience in state and local public health agencies.
- Education: Bachelor’s in Microbiology (University of Minnesota), Master’s in Biotechnology (Johns Hopkins University).

Jill McCamant:

- Moving from Violence and Injury Prevention Section to the Office of Disease Control, HIV Section, starting next week.
- Leaving the team in capable hands with Katie Endress leading, along with Naomi Taylor (provisioned educator) and Jennifer Martin continuing their support.
- Jessica detailed the mission of **Safe2Help IL**, which is a student-focused reporting system aimed at preventing school violence and youth suicide through early intervention.

16. Division & Board Updates:

IDHS Consolidation:

- Illinois Department of Human Services merged two divisions: Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery, and Division of Mental Health.
- New division name: Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery.
- Board will vote in November to eliminate the two old positions and maintain one seat for the consolidated division.
- Samantha Alonis confirmed her appointment will not be eliminated; she will be on maternity leave October–December and provided a contact to attend in her place temporarily.

Public Awareness Committee:

- Consolidated with other ISPA subcommittees.
- Focus: updating public-facing materials on the IDPH website, working with the Youth Advisory Board for feedback and vetting.
- Two meetings held so far; next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 3.

Note: Consolidation is temporary; may separate subcommittees again in the future if needed.

17. Governor’s Challenge Update:

- Dr. Glaze retired in July; a replacement has not yet been identified.
- Weekly meetings are continuing, coordinated by Veronica.
- Next update expected at the November meeting when a new leader is in place.
- A new phase of the Governor’s Challenge is being implemented; details will be shared once available.

18. Annual Report Update:

- The annual report was sent out last Thursday.

- If anything is missing, email DPH.safety@Illinois.gov to have it added.
- The report will be voted on at the November meeting (November 18).
- Data compilation is still in progress (Megan is finalizing), and the completed report will be distributed with ample time for review.
- Reminder to submit feedback early to avoid last-minute workload.

19. Legislation Update:

- Recent legislation requires all students (approximately age 10 and up) to receive certain screeners.
- There has been public concern and misinformation about the law. Members are encouraged to read the legislation and help clarify facts.
- ISB is overseeing implementation; members can provide feedback or suggestions to ISB as rollout progresses.

20. Partner Sharing:

- Annual Gala, The Healing Plate, will be held September 13 at the Firefighters Lake Club in Springfield.
- Chef Alex Bellu (Winner, Season 21 Hell's Kitchen) will prepare dinner.
- Country music star Daryl Worley will perform.
- Mental Health Hero awards will be presented; nominations are open through tomorrow.

21. Public Comment & Closing:

Deb Martin expressed appreciation to all presenters and participants for their time and contributions.

Partner & agency updates shared during public comment:

- Deb Martin / Healing Plate Gala – September 13, Springfield: Dinner prepared by Chef Alex Bellu (winner of Season 21 Hell's Kitchen), concert by country music star Daryl Worley, and mental health hero awards. Nominations open through the end of the next day.
- Amber Clark / Operation Obstacle – September 20, Decatur at Richland Community College: 2-mile obstacle course to raise awareness for veteran suicide prevention. Registration available online.

- Claire Farnsworth / Prevention 1st – Soliciting feedback via survey for upcoming virtual suicide prevention summit and related resources/webinars. Survey link shared with members.
- Tracy Levine / NRCI – Free QPR training offered during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month; six-module asynchronous clinician training series available online.
- Samantha Dickens / ILCADV – Domestic Violence & Healthcare Summit on October 21, Bloomington-Normal, in collaboration with SIU School of Medicine.

Slides from presenters will be made available after the meeting minutes are approved. Attendees can also contact presenters directly for earlier access.

22. Upcoming Meeting Dates

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Thursday, May 14, 2026

22. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Chuck Johnson

Seconded by: Eric S. Davidson

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned.