

PREVENTS

The President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide



VA

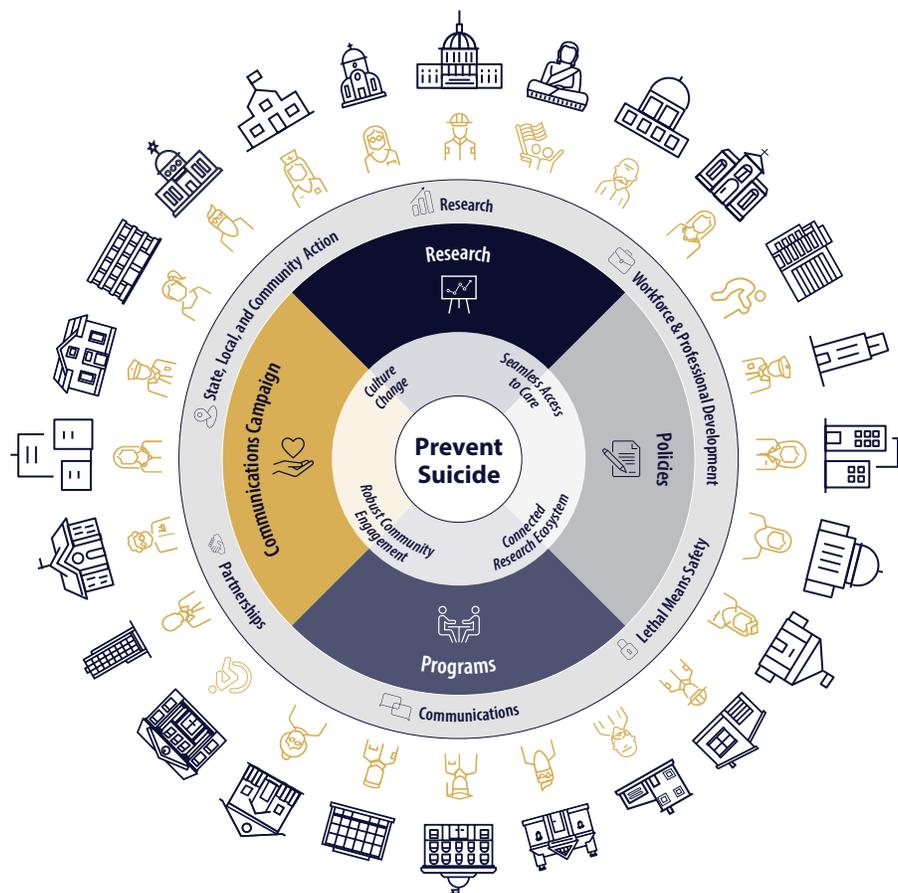


U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Suicide rates are increasing in communities across the Nation – including in the Veteran and service member populations. More than 6,000 Veterans, Guardsmen and Reservists, and service members die by suicide each year – more than have been killed in action in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts combined. The Veteran suicide rate is 1.5 times the general population after adjusting for age and sex, and female Veterans at 2.2 times the general population after adjusting for age.

“Answering this call to action requires an aspirational, innovative, all-hands on-deck approach to public health — not government as usual.

— President Donald J. Trump



PREVENTS Executive Order

On March 5, 2019, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order 13861: President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS), with a call to action to amplify and accelerate the progress in addressing the Veteran suicide in our nation. While there have been other efforts to address suicide prevention, this is a cabinet-level, interagency effort charged with developing the first federally coordinated national public health strategy to address Veteran suicide.

This is a national call to action. *Join us.*

The federal government alone cannot achieve effective or lasting reductions in the Veteran suicide rate. No single organization or entity alone can prevent suicide.

Our work begins with the belief that suicide is preventable and prevention requires more than intervention at the point of crisis.

Empowering Veterans to Lead the Way

It is our honor and responsibility to care for those who have defended our country. While the debt we owe to those who serve — and their families — can never fully be paid, we must equip these men and women to lead healthy, meaningful, and productive lives after they hang up their uniforms. In addition, we must ensure that the wounds service members and Veterans carry — both physical and psychological — are treated compassionately and effectively.

As we turn our attention to suicide — one of the most challenging societal issues of our time, it is appropriate that we draw expertise, strength, and inspiration from our nation's service members, Veterans, their families, and the agencies and organizations that support them.

Why Is the PREVENTS Roadmap Aspirational?

The President's Roadmap calls for us to end suicide. The goal is bold and audacious, but it is not impossible. When NASA told President John F. Kennedy that the space program could reach the moon, he empowered them with the resources they needed to do it and challenged the country to support the effort.

With the launch of the **PREVENTS Roadmap**, we are telling the nation that we can prevent suicide by:

- Changing the culture around mental health and suicide.
- Emphasizing the importance of collaboration.
- Elevating champions and empowering leaders.
- Identifying and amplifying innovative solutions.
- Involving everyone - We Are All Within Reach.

National Call to Action

As a nation, we must ensure that Veterans are cared for and supported — not just at a point of crisis, but throughout their lives. By providing our nation's Veterans with the tools they need to live and thrive, we also empower them to lead the way in facing and responding to the mental health challenges that affect them and those we love — addressing suicide prevention for the broader community.

The PREVENTS Roadmap has been created with one mission in mind: to end a national tragedy of Veteran suicide. We are seeking to reach every corner of our nation, leaving no one behind. We believe that everyone is within reach.

The PREVENTS initiative will elevate the national conversation around mental health and suicide, build on existing best practices, and expand on the impressive research that exists, as well as programs underway in our communities. We will ensure that our nation's Veterans — and all Americans — know that there is help and hope for those who need it. Together, we will end this tragedy of suicide.