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VA partners with Objective Zero Foundation

Mobile platform connects service members and Veterans to peer support and mental health services

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently partnered with the nonprofit [Objective Zero Foundation](http://www.objectivezero.org) to aid in connecting Veterans with suicide prevention support and resources.

The partnership, formalized on Dec. 3, 2018, provides a shared goal of preventing suicide among service members and Veterans, with a special focus on service members transitioning out of the military.

Objective Zero offers a free mobile app that instantly and anonymously connects Veterans, service members, their families and caregivers to suicide prevention resources and a nationwide community of peer supporters via text, voice, and video chat. The foundation, enhances social connectedness among Veterans and improves access to mental health and wellness resources.

“At VA, we are working to prevent Veteran suicide by using an approach that looks beyond our traditional health care settings,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Our partnership with Objective Zero is an integral part of reaching Veterans where they live, work and thrive, and we are looking forward to working more closely with them.”

Objective Zero Co-founder and Executive Director Betsey Mercado said her foundation was proud to partner with VA to improve the well-being and mental health of Veterans.

“Joining efforts with this community provides better access to resources and highly needed support for the men and women that have served and sacrificed so much for our country,” Mercado said.

VA has a suite of mobile mental health apps that offer information about mental health issues, tools to help develop and practice coping skills, and assessments that allow users to track progress over time. Learn more at www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile. The Objective Zero app can be downloaded at <https://www.objectivezero.org/app>.

Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.

Reporters covering this issue are strongly encouraged to visit www.reportingonsuicide.org for important guidance on how to communicate about suicide.

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