

WICHE



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

Together With Veterans Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention Program

WICHE Behavioral Health Program

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Grant Drawve

**Presentation to National Dialogues on Behavioral Health
October 30, 2018**

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OREGON • SOUTH DAKOTA • UTAH • WASHINGTON • WYOMING • U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES & FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

What is WICHE?

- Created by Western Regional Education Compact in 1950 for resource sharing among higher education systems
- Includes 15 Western states, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
- Behavioral Health Program “***dedicated to improving behavioral health systems of care in the West and beyond***”
 - Offers technical assistance, education, and consulting
 - Prepares qualified behavioral health workforce

Suicide is a notable public health problem

Suicide is the **10th leading** cause of death

Suicide is the **second** leading cause of death among **15-29** year-olds



US Veteran Suicide

20 per day

that's one veteran every **72** minutes



An American dies by suicide every **12.95 minutes**

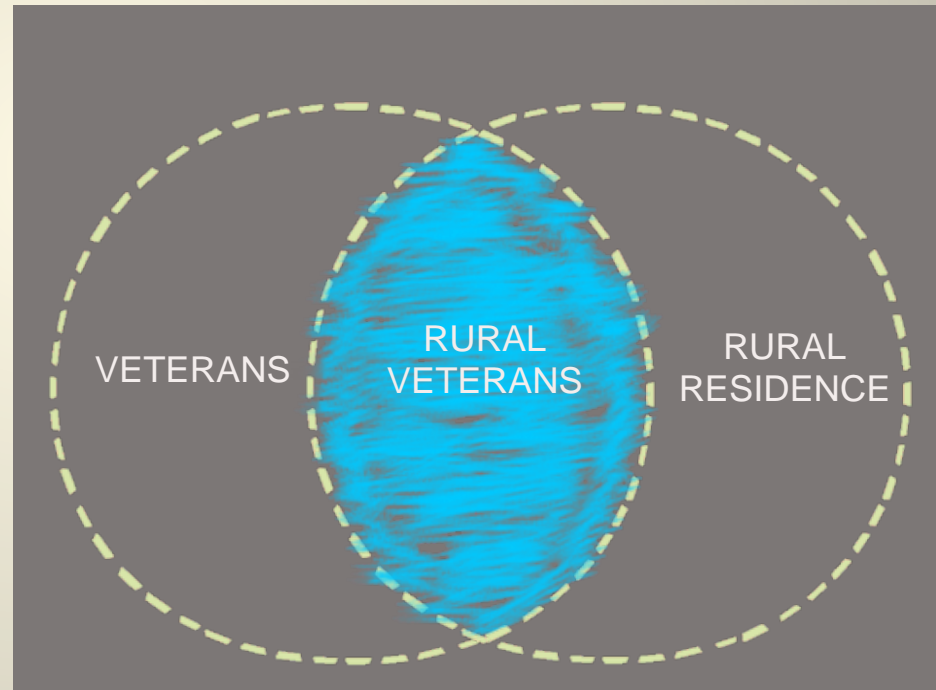


Despite making up only about 10% of the population, veterans account for roughly 20% of all suicides in the U.S.



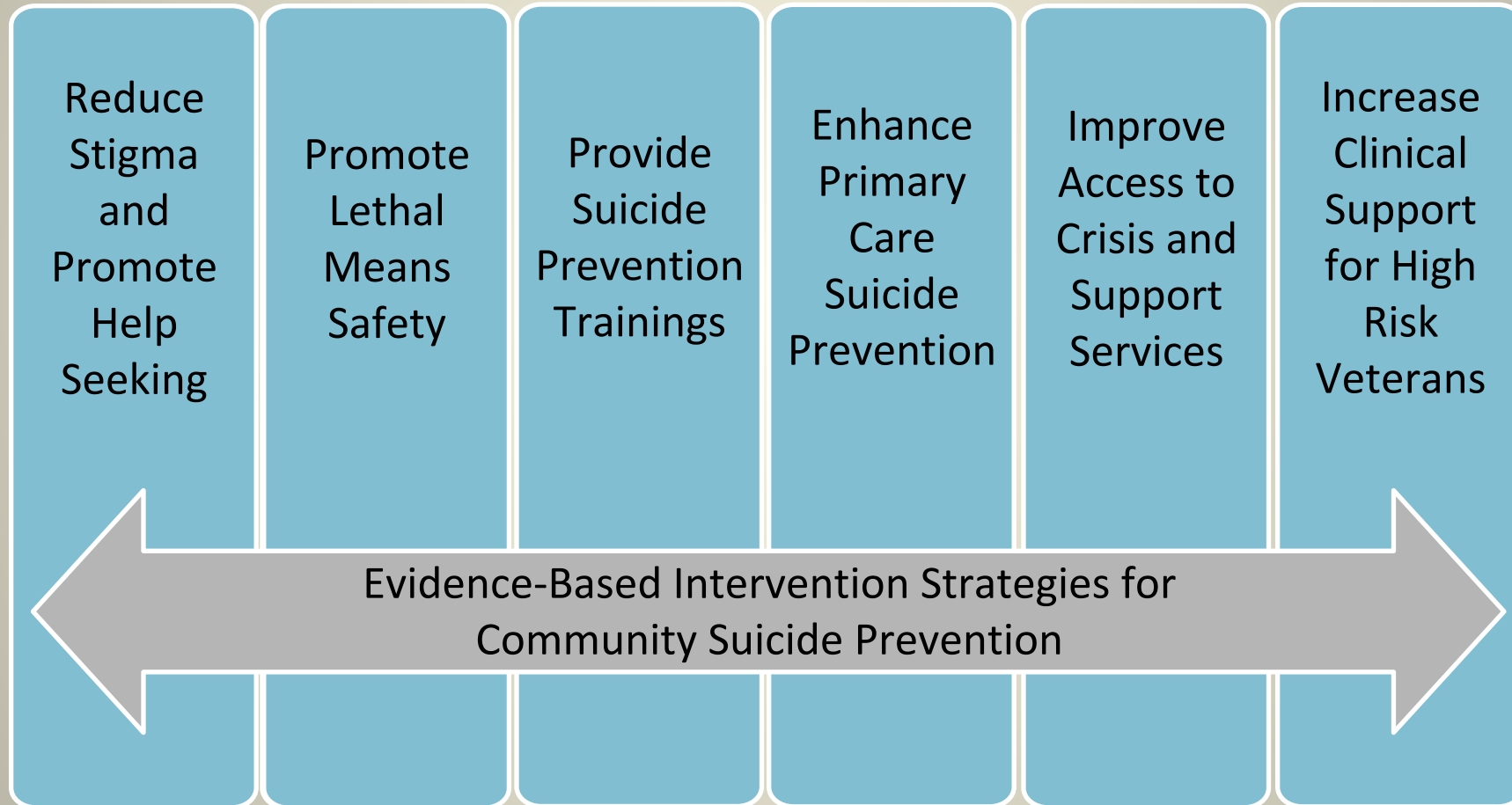
Why Rural Communities?

- Rural Veterans have a 20% increased risk of death by suicide after controlling for
 - access to care
 - demographic factors
 - diagnoses



Together With Veterans Objective

Collaborate with rural communities to assess and improve best practices





U.S. Air Force Suicide Prevention Program

- 33% reduction in relative risk of suicide
- Reductions in suicide, homicide, accidental deaths, and family violence

Evaluation of the Nuremberg Alliance Against Depression

- 24% reduction in suicide deaths over two year
- 26.5% reduction in suicide attempts

White Mountain Apache Tribe Suicide Prevention Program

- 38.3% reduction in suicide rate over six years
- 41 vs 29 deaths comparing 2001-2006 vs 2007-2012

Public Health Suicide Prevention Approaches

Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Collaborative

TWV



TWV Partners

Funded by U.S. Department of
Veterans Affairs and implemented
by

- VA Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center for Suicide Prevention (MIRECC)
- WICHE Behavioral Health Program
- Rural community-based, Veteran-run organizations and community partners

Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Collaborative

TWV



- Project leadership and oversight
- Program evaluation
- Research and technical support

Rocky Mountain MIRECC
Provides

Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Collaborative

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- Community-based program development through
 - Facilitation and consultation
 - Coordination with local Veteran-run organizations

WICHE Provides

Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Collaborative

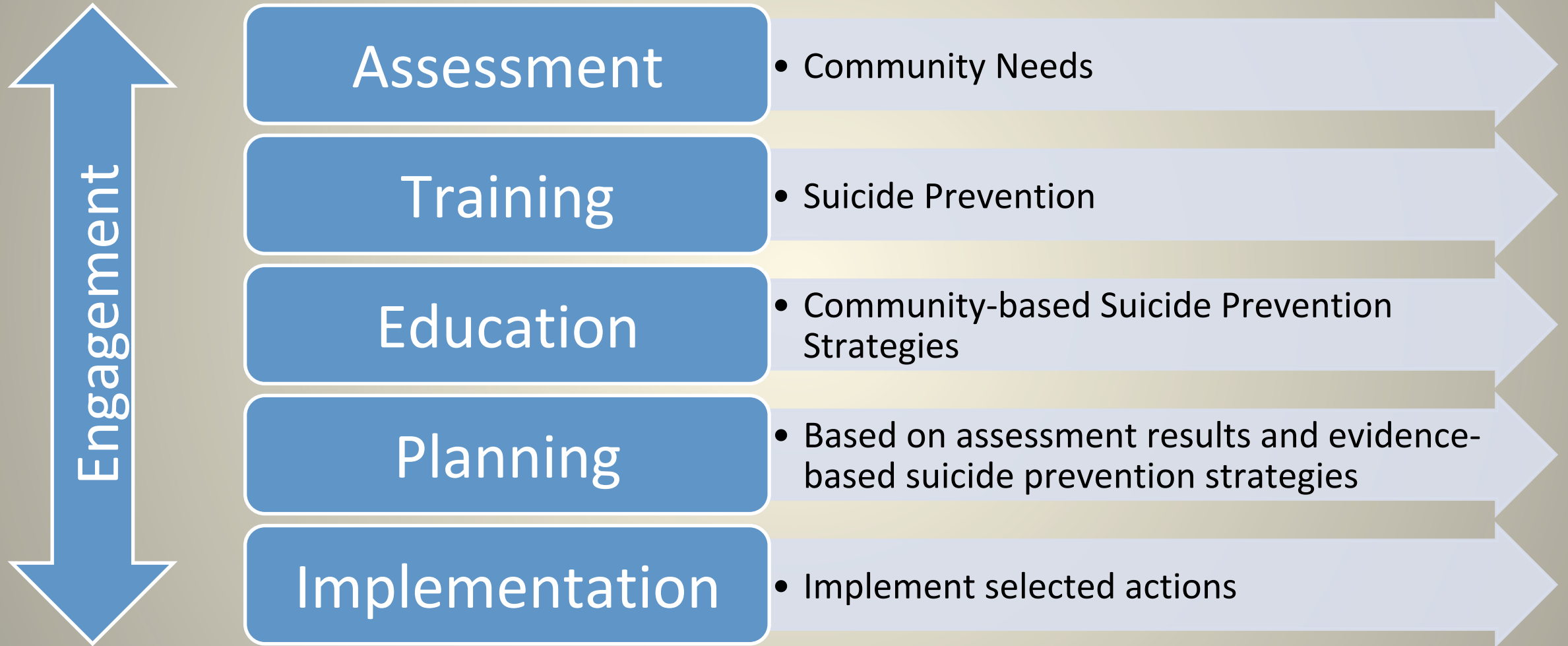
TWV



- Expertise in specific needs and resources for Veterans in their community
- Local coordination of assessment, planning, and implementation activities
- Advocacy and promotion of Veteran suicide prevention efforts

Veteran-run organizations and
community partners provide

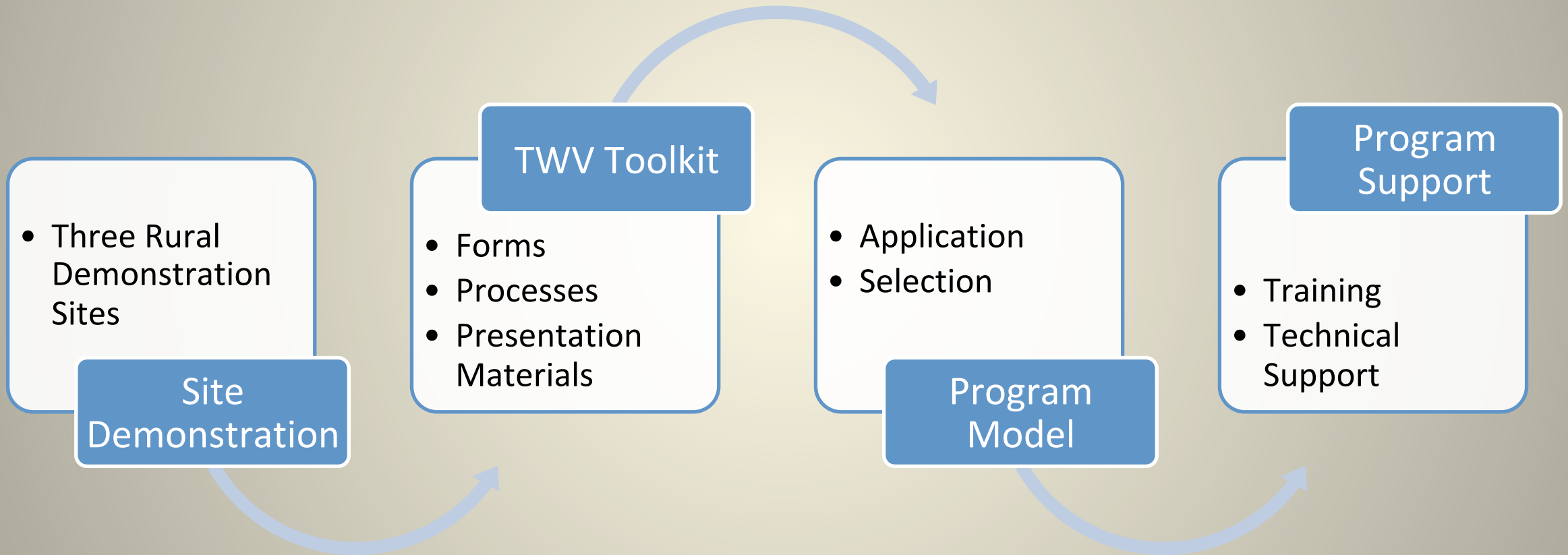
TWV Site-specific Program Development Process



Demonstration Sites

Community	Start	Implementation Status
San Luis Valley, CO	August 2015	Implementation
Flathead Valley, MT	March 2018	Action Planning
Carteret County, NC	May 2018	SWOT Completed

Together With Veterans Goal: National Dissemination

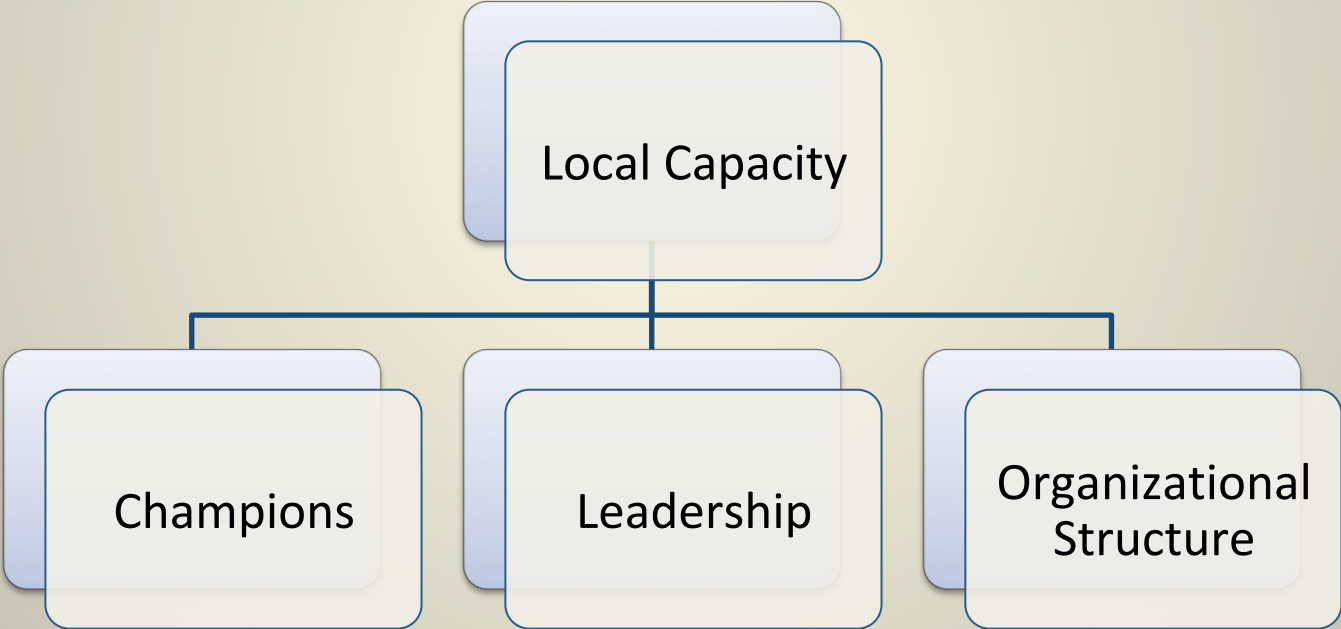


Community- Based Program Development

Community Identification

- Identify high risk regions
- Consult with state and regional partners
- Review existing local suicide prevention efforts

Factors for Success: Community Identification



TWV: WICHE Responsibilities

Community-Based Program Development

- Community identification
- Engagement and consent
- Assessment and education
- Action planning
- Implementation

Veteran-specific Primary Care Suicide Prevention

- Toolkit training
- Develop Veteran-specific quick-reference pamphlet

Web-based and Digital Tools

- Web-based toolkit for community program development
- Digital Veteran-specific suicide prevention application

Initial Engagement

•Veteran Participation

- Veteran decision-making and advocacy
- Veteran Coalitions

•Community Partnerships

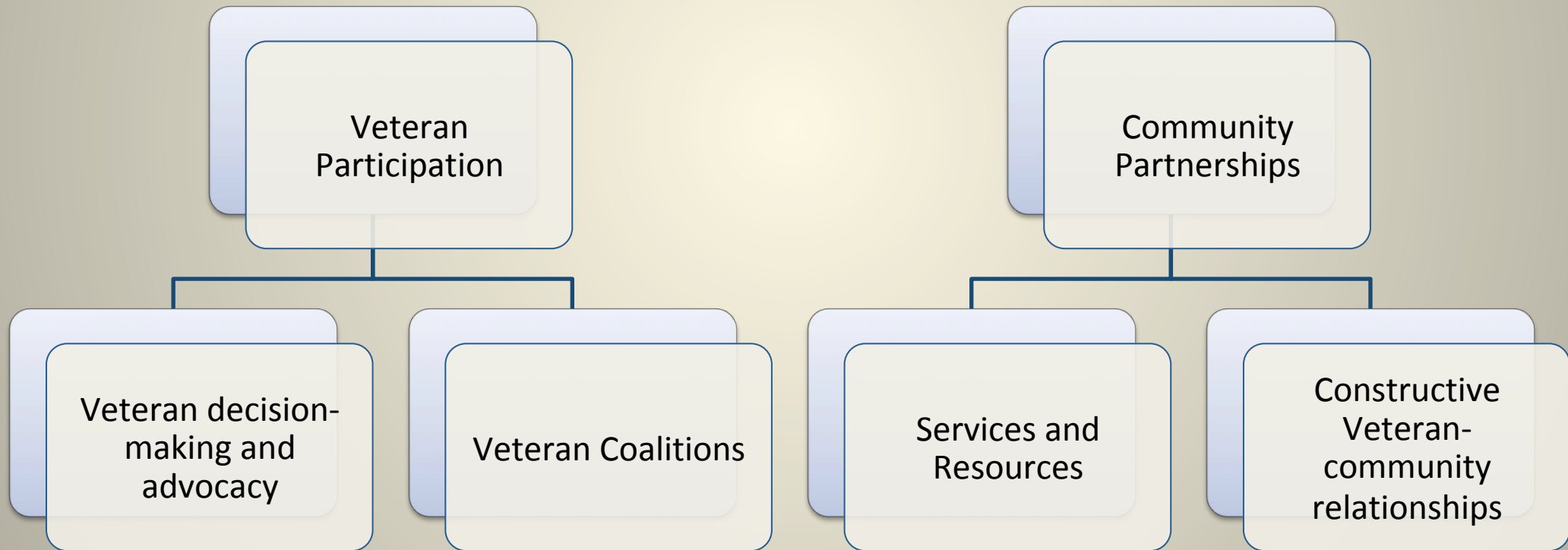
- Services and Resources
- Veteran-community relationships

Community- Based Program Development

Engagement and Consent

- Involve key champions
- Obtain permission to work in partnership with Veterans
- Identify community partners to assist in suicide prevention activities

Factors for Success: Engagement & Consent



Community- Based Program Development

Assessment and Education

- Facilitate SWOT analysis
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
 - Opportunities
 - Threats
- Conduct Readiness Assessment
- Educate about suicide prevention strategies

Community Assessment to Understand

- What is currently happening related to Veteran suicide prevention in the community
- Who is doing what now
- What's working/What's not
- Why
- What strategies have had good results here or elsewhere

How Veterans are supported by the community

How Veterans get connected to social supports
and activities

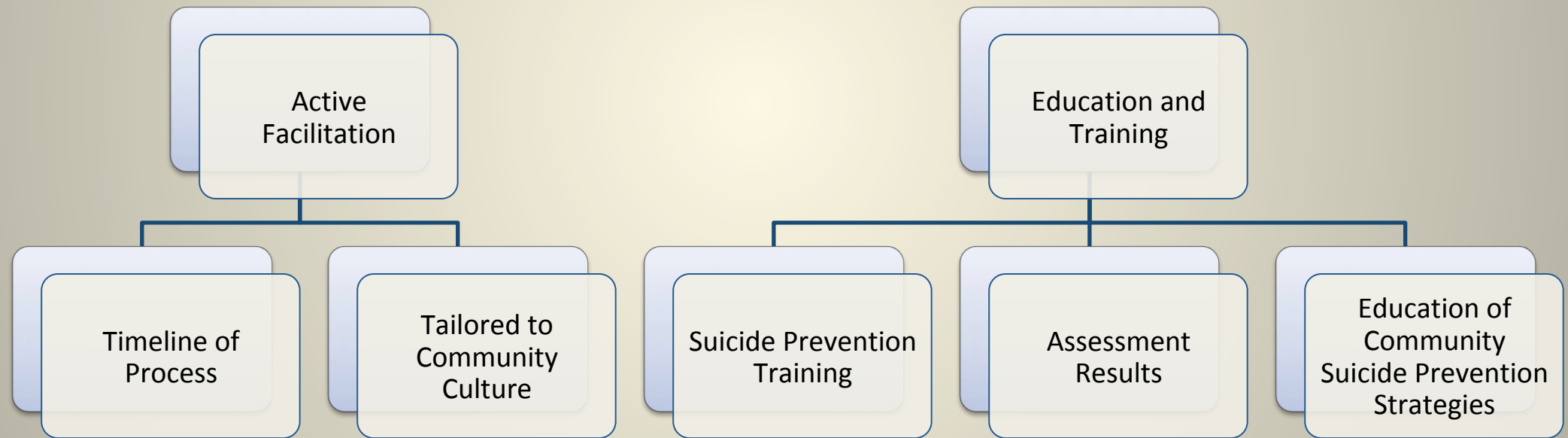
How Veterans know about, access and
receive services

How well informed service providers are about
Veteran/military culture

How equipped Veterans and community partners are
to identify Veterans who are in crisis and get them the
support and help they may need

SWOT Analysis Areas to Consider

Factors for Success: Assessment & Education



Suicide Prevention Training

Provides Basic Knowledge of Suicide Prevention

Enriches Assessment and Planning Processes

Builds Relationships Between Veterans and Community Partners

Community- Based Program Development

Action Planning

- Facilitate process of
 - Vision-setting
 - Prioritizing areas of focus
 - Identifying appropriate scope
 - Setting goals, objectives, tasks
 - Assigning timelines and persons/
groups responsible

Factors for Success: Action Planning

Informed Rather
by Assessment
Results

Defines
Community
Performance
Measures

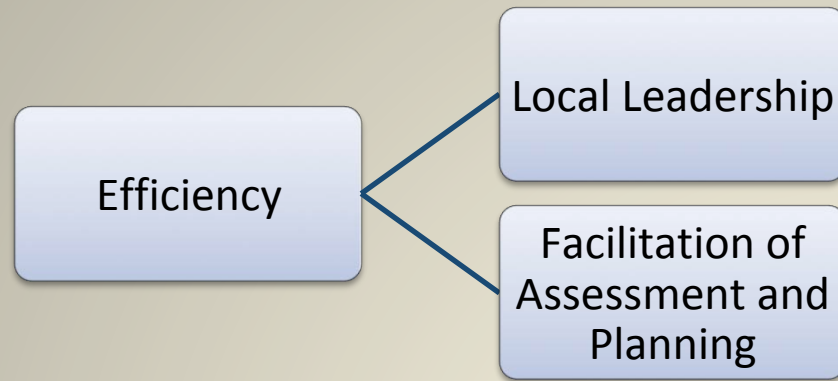
Realistic and
Achievable
Objectives

Lethal Means
Planning

Community- Based Program Development

Implementation

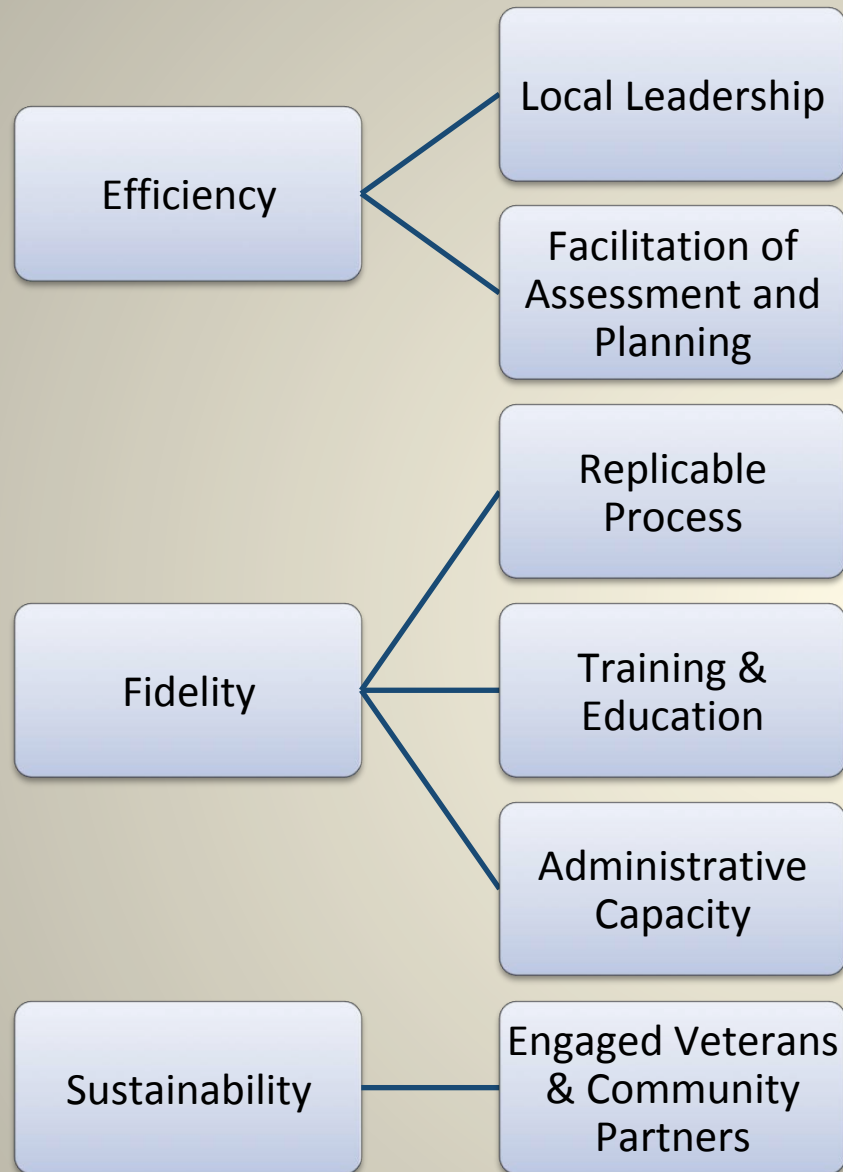
- Provide resources to support implementation
 - Training
 - Consultation
- Monitor completion of tasks
- Revise plan based on resources/
community capacity



Indicators for Feasibility



Indicators for Feasibility



Indicators for Feasibility & Sustainability

TWV Local Coordination Functions

Leadership

Support community decision-making

Provide ongoing oversight of local process



Operational Support

Identify & inform partners

Support assessment process



Logistical Support

Schedule meetings

Keep records of process

TWV Local Coordination Duties

Assessment	Planning and Implementation
Coordinate survey dissemination	Identify and coordinate resources
Support data collection	Coordinate MIRECC and WICHE resources at local level
Assist in interpreting and reporting assessment results	Facilitate community completion of action steps
Throughout Process	
Schedule/coordinate meetings	Provide quarterly reporting

FACE TO FACE

To look deeply into another vet to discover their needs, desires, hopes, and potential.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

To not ever look down on another vet even to pull him up. To stand with him and beside him. We are unbreakable when we stand together.

BACK TO BACK

We look out for each other. Two warriors standing back to back in battle cannot be surprised by the enemy.

VETERANS FOR VETERANS

A vet is best understood by another vet. We are brothers and sisters that served and fought for a cause. That cause is liberty. It is *America!* There has never been a nation like this. As vets we must serve those that served and fight for those that fought. We must stand with military families for they have paid a very dear price. They too must be shown the respect and appreciation they deserve. They earned it many times over.

Only a small percent of mankind is able to call themselves Americans. Only a small portion of Americans have served to protect them. We must, and we will stand with them. This is the land where Old Glory waves and the eagle soars. This is where freedom's bell rings out and Lady Liberty holds her torch so high. Yes, this America is an incredible gift from God. It is protected by those who serve. We will stand with them. That is the mission of the Veterans Coalition of Northwest Montana.



Veterans Coalition of Northwest Montana

P.O. Box 7266
Kalispell, MT 59904
(406) 407-8423
Email: Info@VCNWM.com

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coalition shall be to honor and serve the needs of military veterans and their families by:

- Facilitating timely access to current information, assistance, and resources.
- Identifying emerging issues and offering solutions:
 - Creating and collaborations
 - Completing new programs and projects
 - When barriers exist, requesting administrators, community leaders, and elected officials to intervene

The Coalition will build partnerships in the community:

- To identify services which are veteran specific
- To help bridge gaps between the veteran and community service providers and veteran organizations



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TWV Skills & Tools

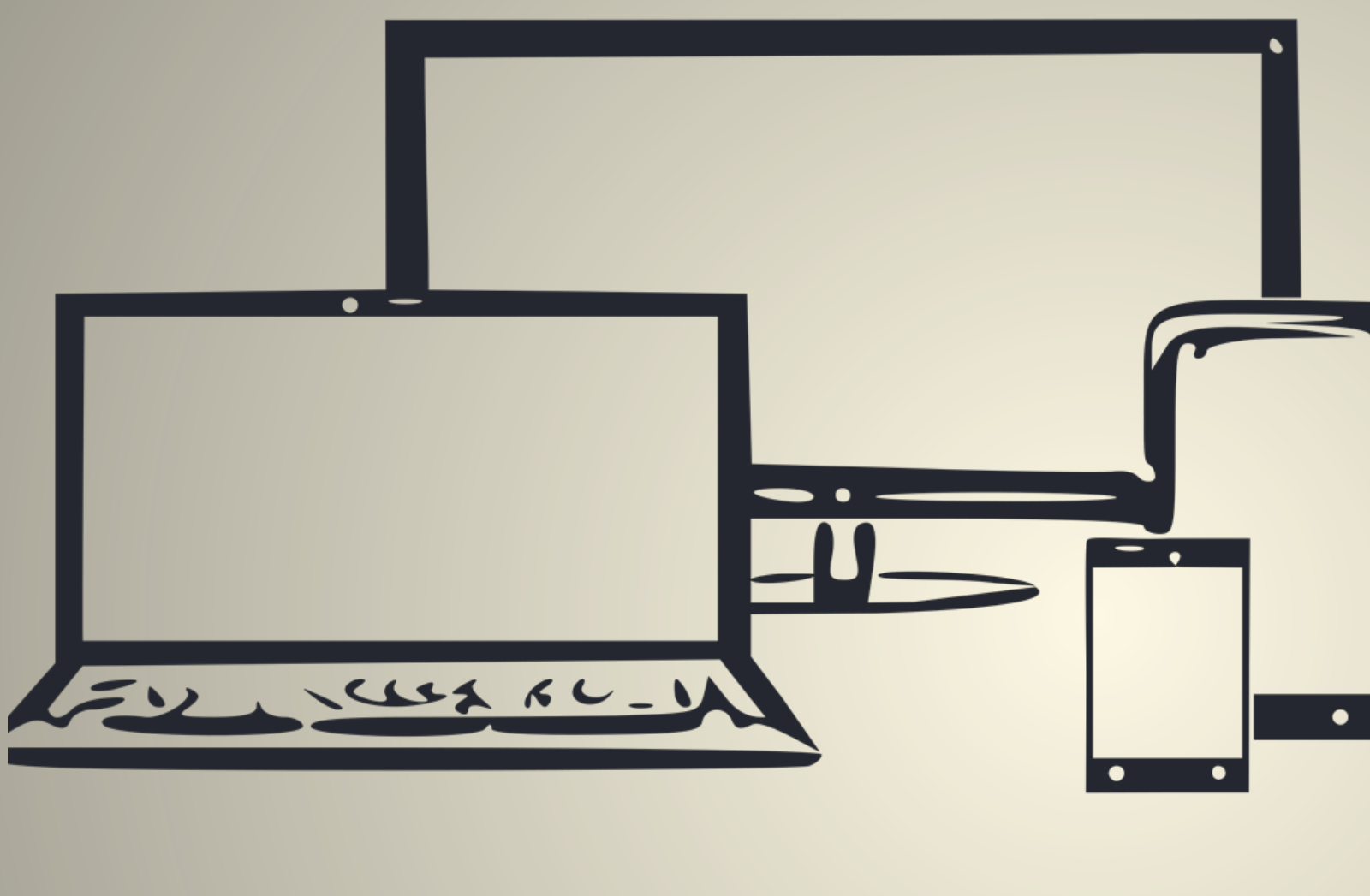


Skill Sets

- Community Development
- Using Data
- Community Coordination
- Program Implementation
- Clinical Support/Consultation

Tools

- Instructions
- Templates and Forms
- Presentation Materials



- Web-based toolkit to support community-based Veteran suicide prevention program development
- Exploring digital application for Veterans to self screen needs and link to appropriate resources

Web-Based and Digital Suicide Prevention Tools

A GUIDE FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS AND MEDICAL PRACTICE MANAGERS

SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLKIT



for
PRIMARY CARE
PRACTICES



Module 1: Prevalence and Comorbidity

Module 2: Epidemiology

Module 3: Effective Prevention Strategies

Module 4: Suicide Risk Assessment

Module 5: Intervention

Primary Care Suicide Prevention Toolkit

- **Veteran and military culture component**
- Explains relevance of military experience
- Defines branches of service and deployment eras
- Describes increased risk regarding Veteran suicide rate and use of lethal means



For More
Information

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