

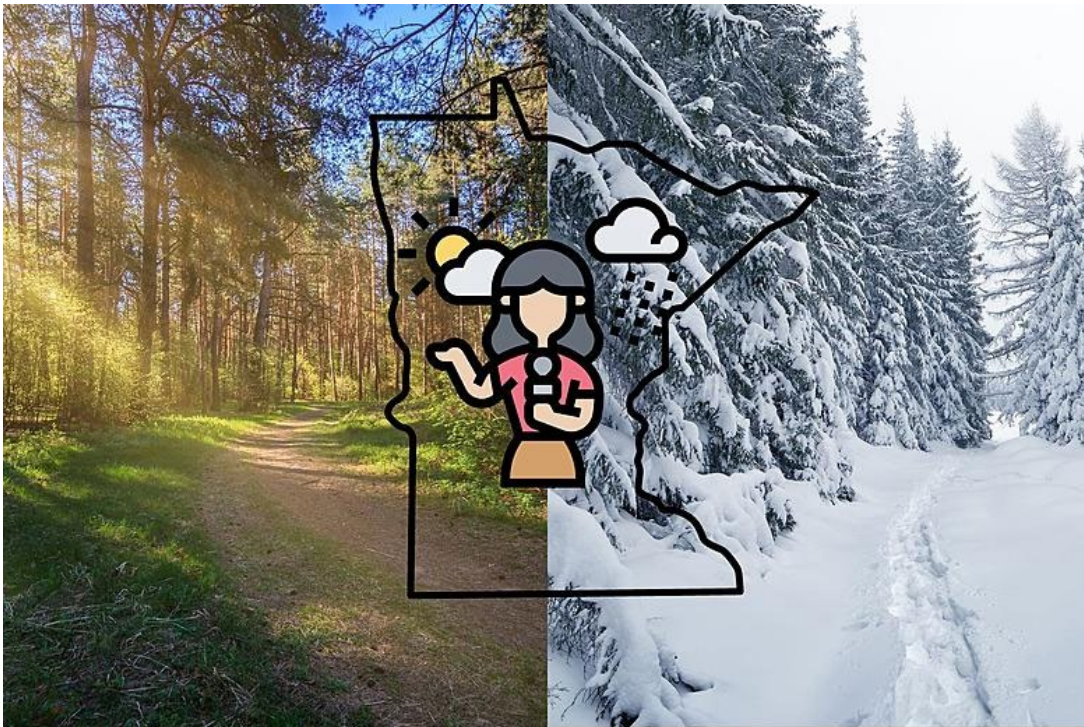


Veteran Community Based Services

Monday, February 24, 2025

Rachel Johnson, MBA | Director of Veteran Community Based Services

Agenda



Veteran Community Based Services

Mapping

MN Veteran Suicide Data

Veteran Health Navigator Program

Work in Progress

Veteran Community Based Services



Rachel Johnson, MBA

Director of Veteran Community Based Services

- Spouse to a currently serving MNNG Member and Veteran

My Why...to use my lived experiences, connections, and relationships to build a strong community to support those who have and continue to serve our country. I do this work to ensure our service members, Veterans and their families receive the best health and well-being care available to where they live, work, worship, and play.



Kristi Stites

Veteran Suicide Prevention Program
Development Coordinator

- Sister and caregiver to disabled Veteran and daughter of a Veteran

My Why... to equip communities to support the whole health of Veterans. By expanding awareness and knowledge on how to better care for our Veterans and navigate access to many available resource, we can increase the quality of health and life.



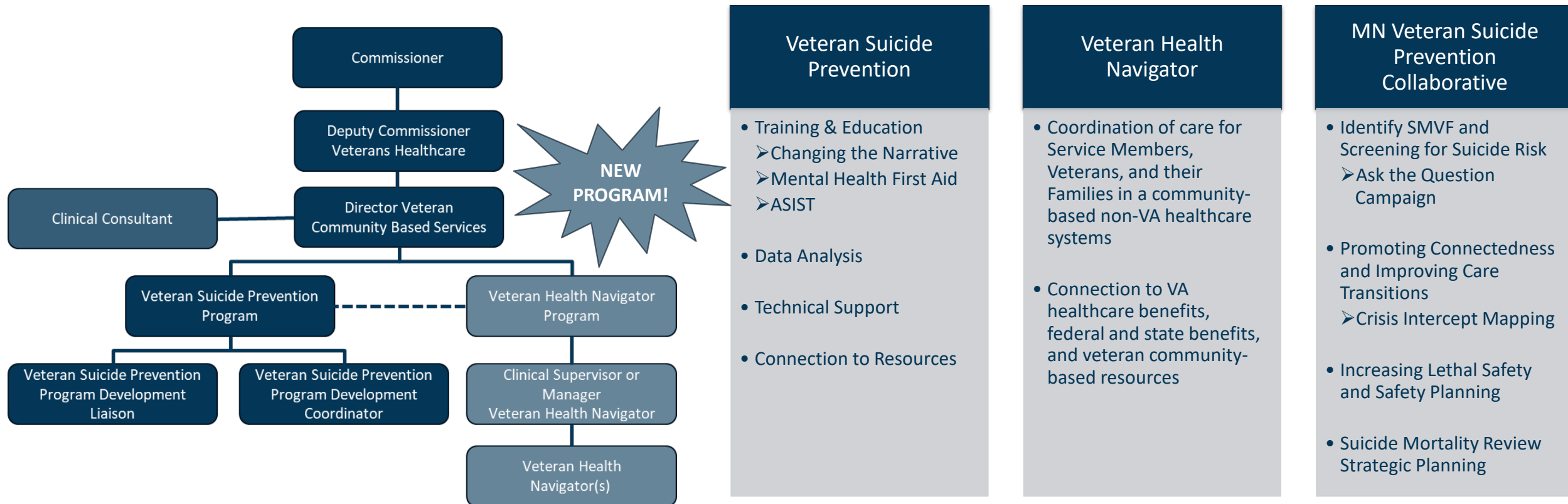
Krysta Stanenas , MA

Veteran Suicide Prevention Program
Development Liaison

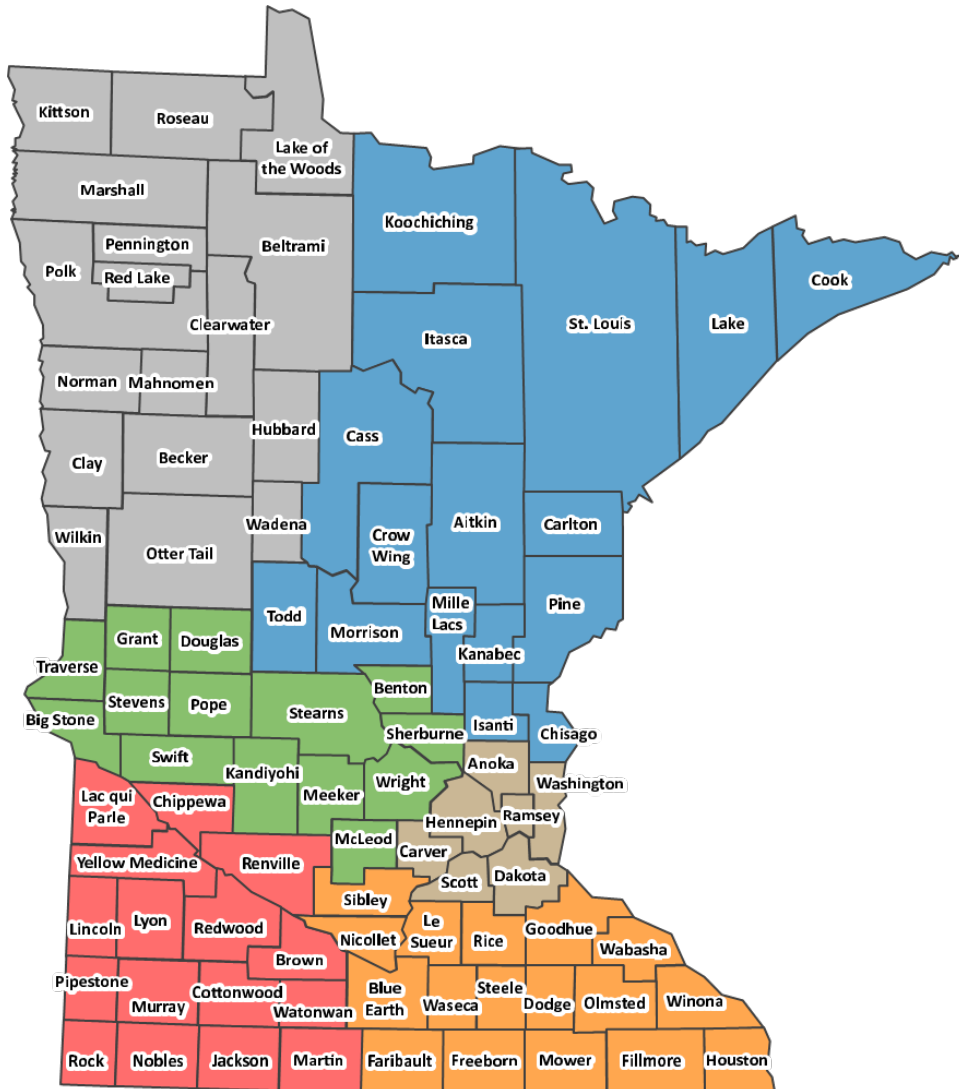
- Active Duty Air Force Veteran, served in Iraq during OIF

My Why...to connect Veterans to available resources and information that they need to live a healthy and informed life; I do this Suicide Prevention work for those that I have lost that I served with. For their families and loved ones that this great loss has affected.

MDVA Veteran Community Based Services Overview

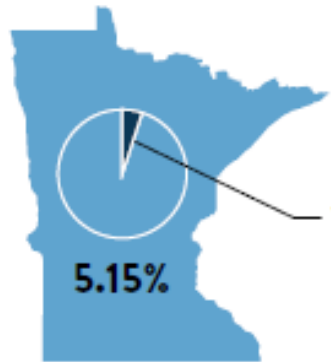


Veteran Community Based Services Regional Map & Veteran Suicides

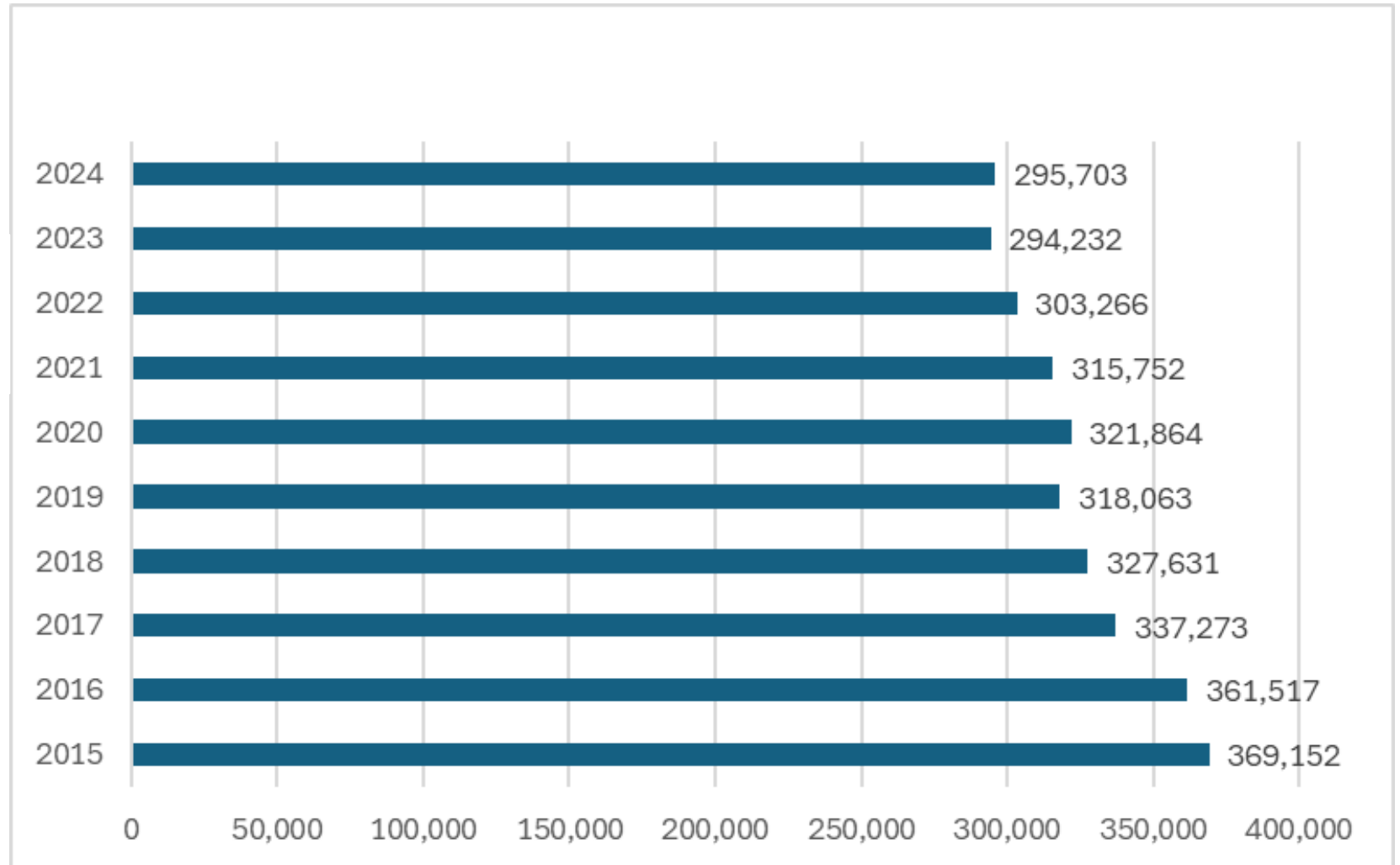


Region	# Veterans 2024	# Veterans 2023	# Suicides 2023	% Suicides
Northwest	22,543	22,488	2	0.0089%
Northeast	47,599	47,426	22	0.0464%
Central	36,936	36,561	14	0.0383%
Metro	137,692	136,826	47	0.0344%
Southwest	12,496	12,605	7	0.0555%
Southeast	38,437	38,326	9	0.02335%
Total	295,703	294,232	101	0.0343%

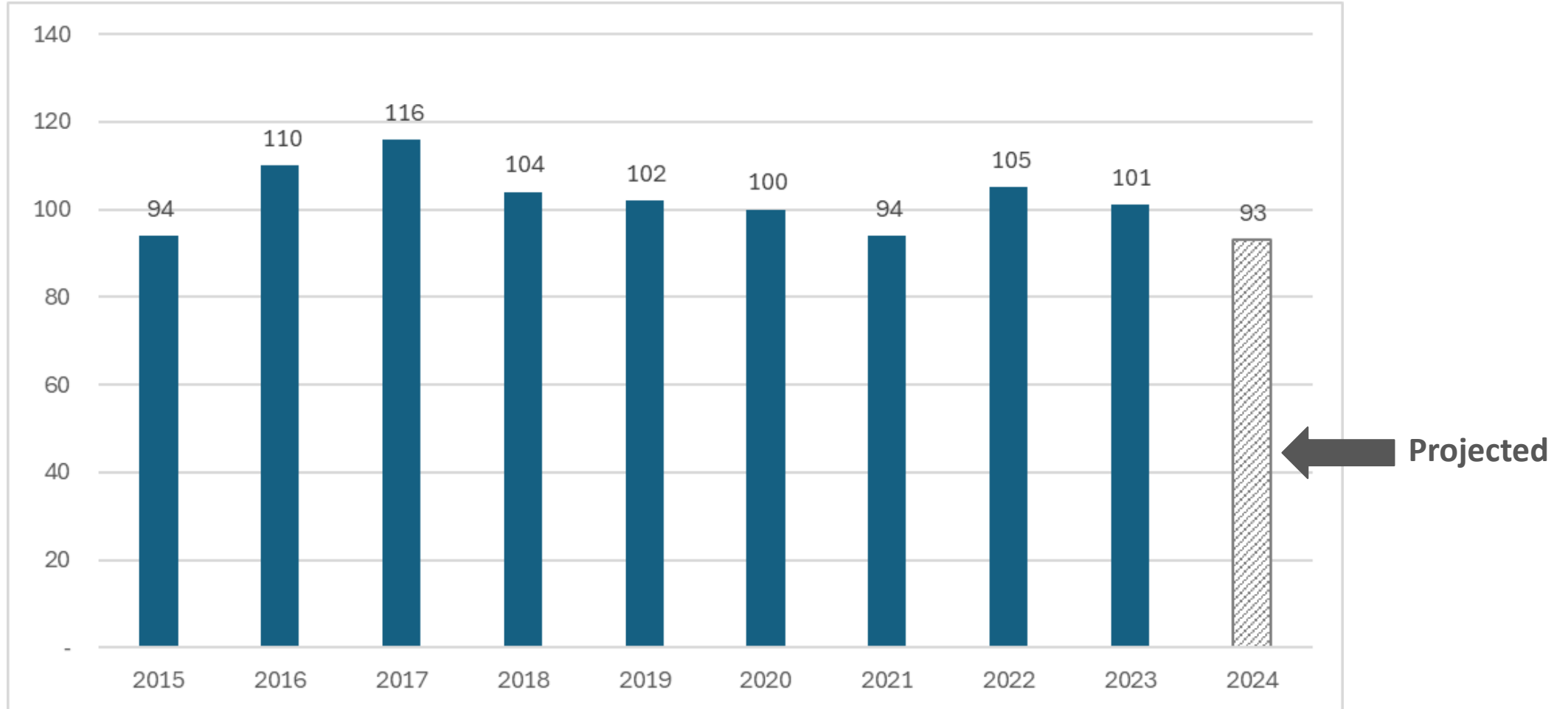
Minnesota Veteran Population



VETERANS MAKE UP
5.15% OF THE POPULATION
IN MINNESOTA



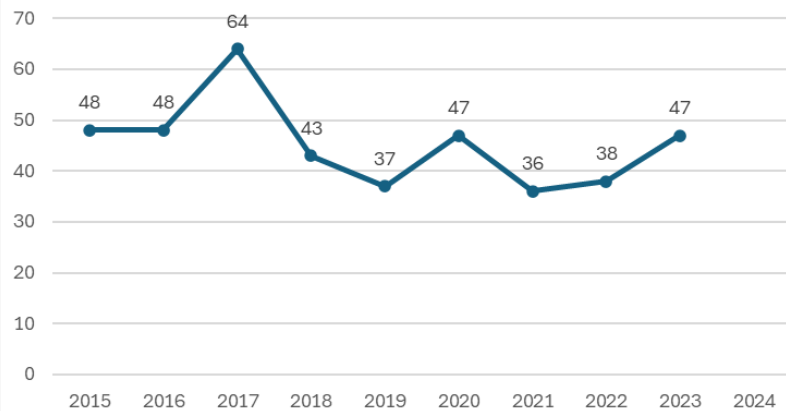
Minnesota Veteran Suicide



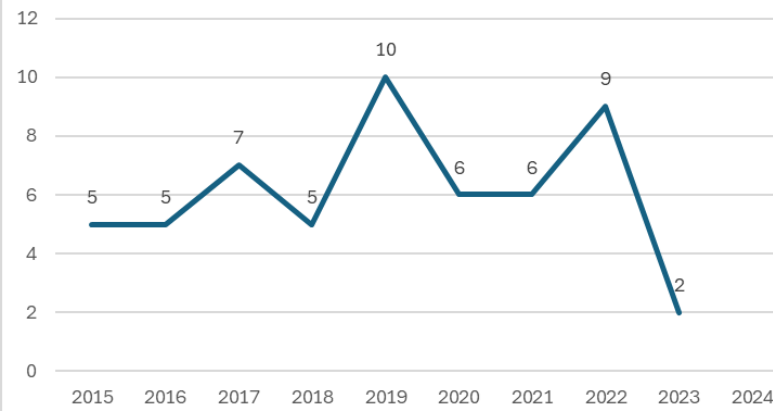
*All data is from 2015-2023
2023 data is preliminary | 2024 data is projected*

Minnesota Veteran Suicide by Region

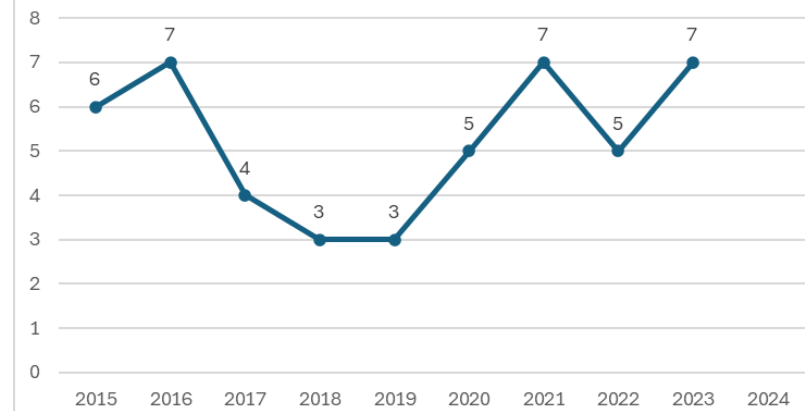
Metro



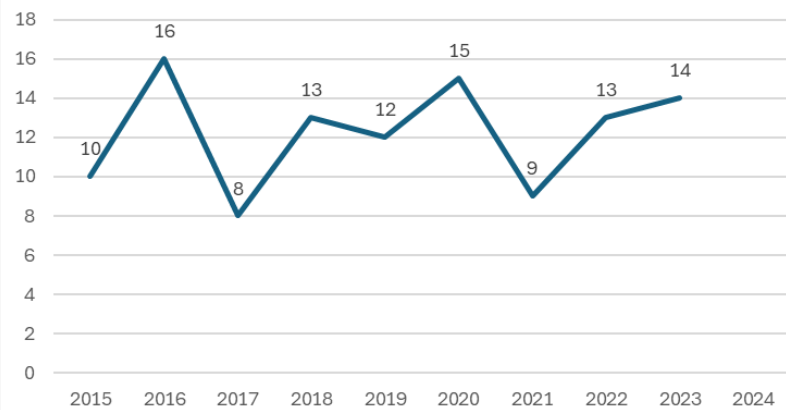
Northwest



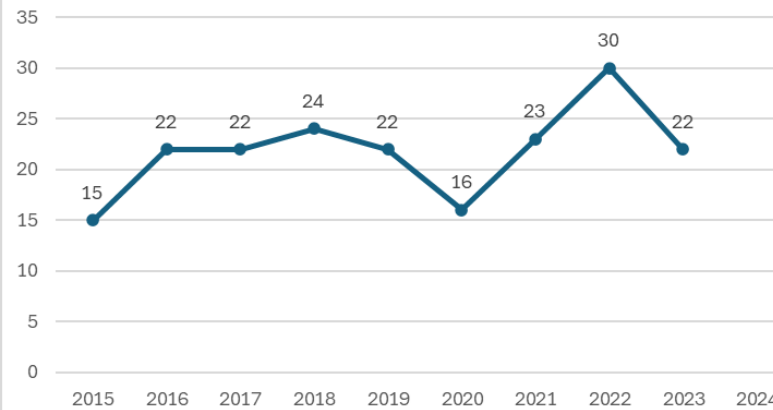
Southwest



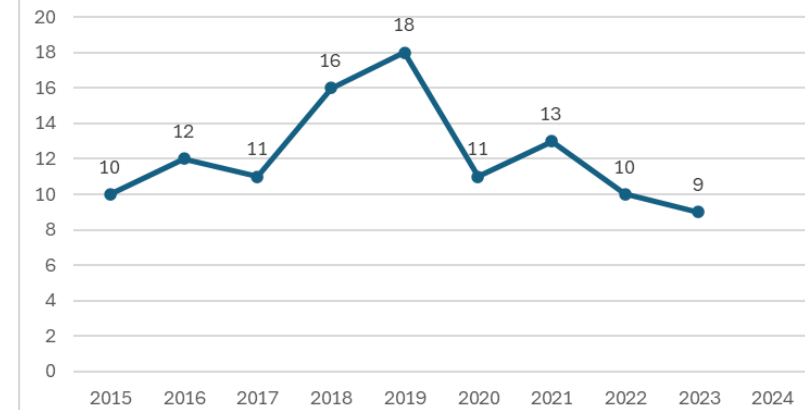
Central



Northeast



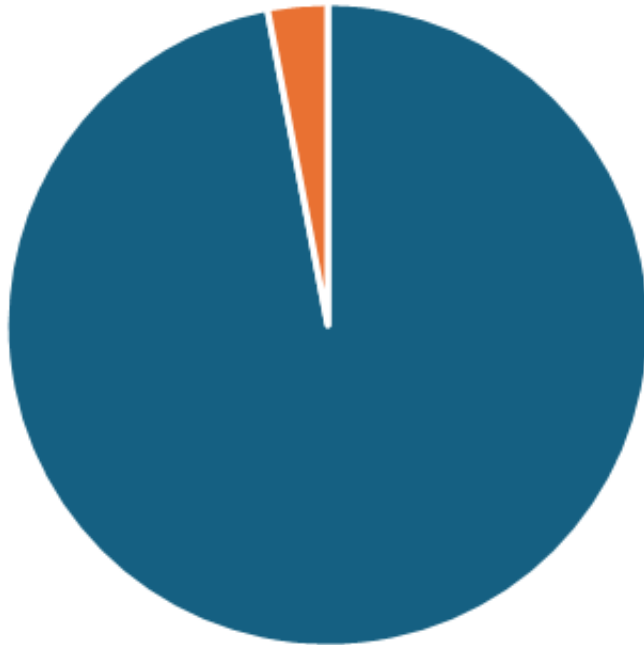
Southeast



All data is from 2015-2023 | 2023 data is preliminary

Age & Sex Demographics

By Sex



■ Male ■ Female

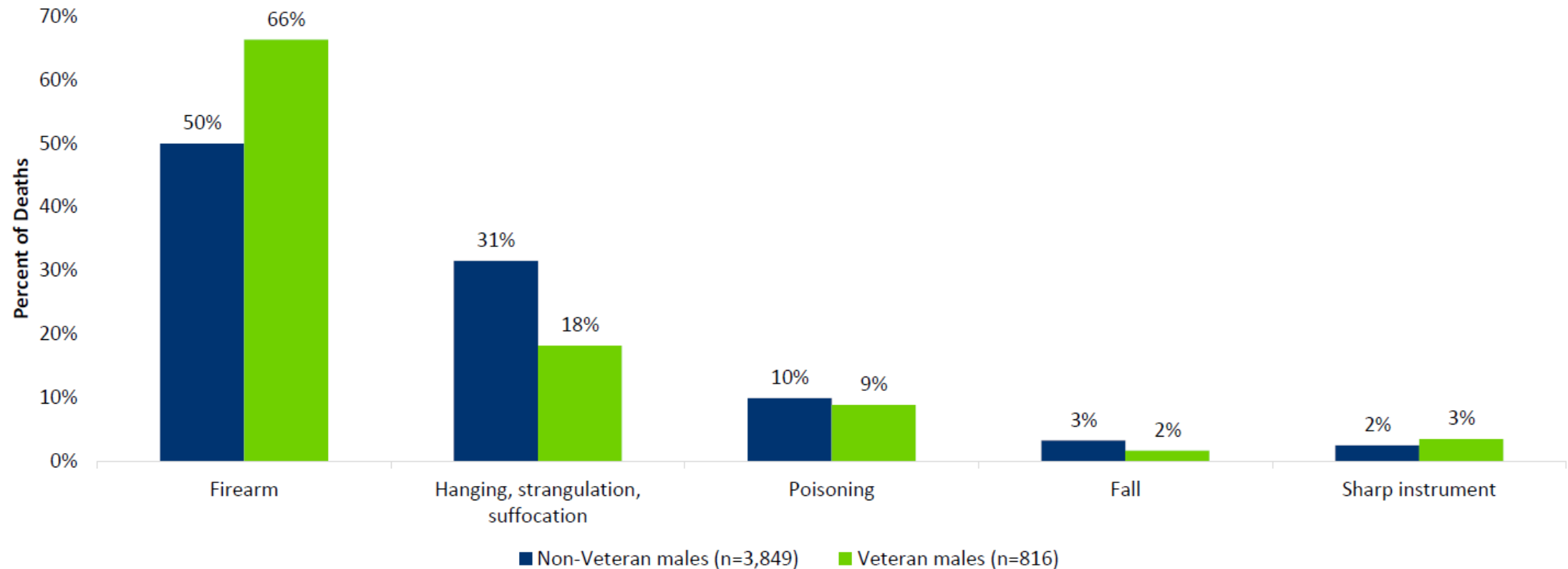
By Age



■ <55 ■ >55

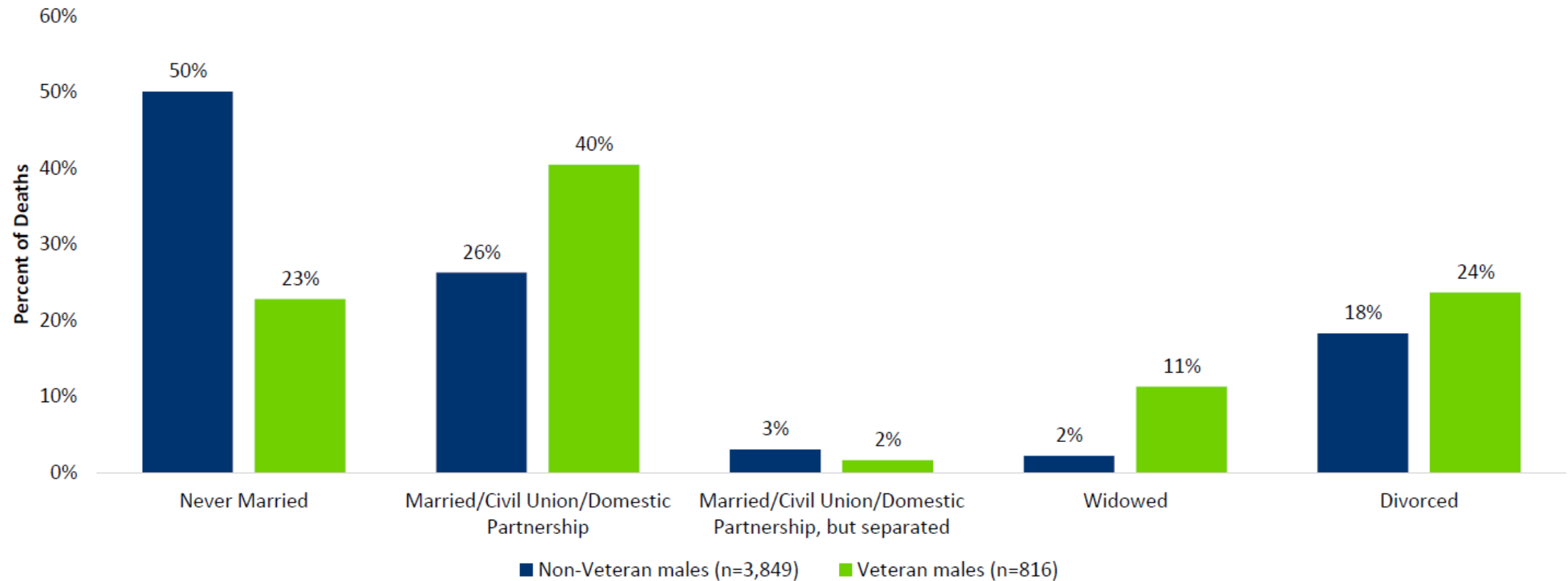
Mechanism of Injury Veterans vs. Non-Veterans

Mechanism of Injury in Suicide Deaths, 2015-2022



Martial Status Veterans vs. Non-Veterans

Marital Status of Suicide Decedents by Veteran Status, MN 2015-2022



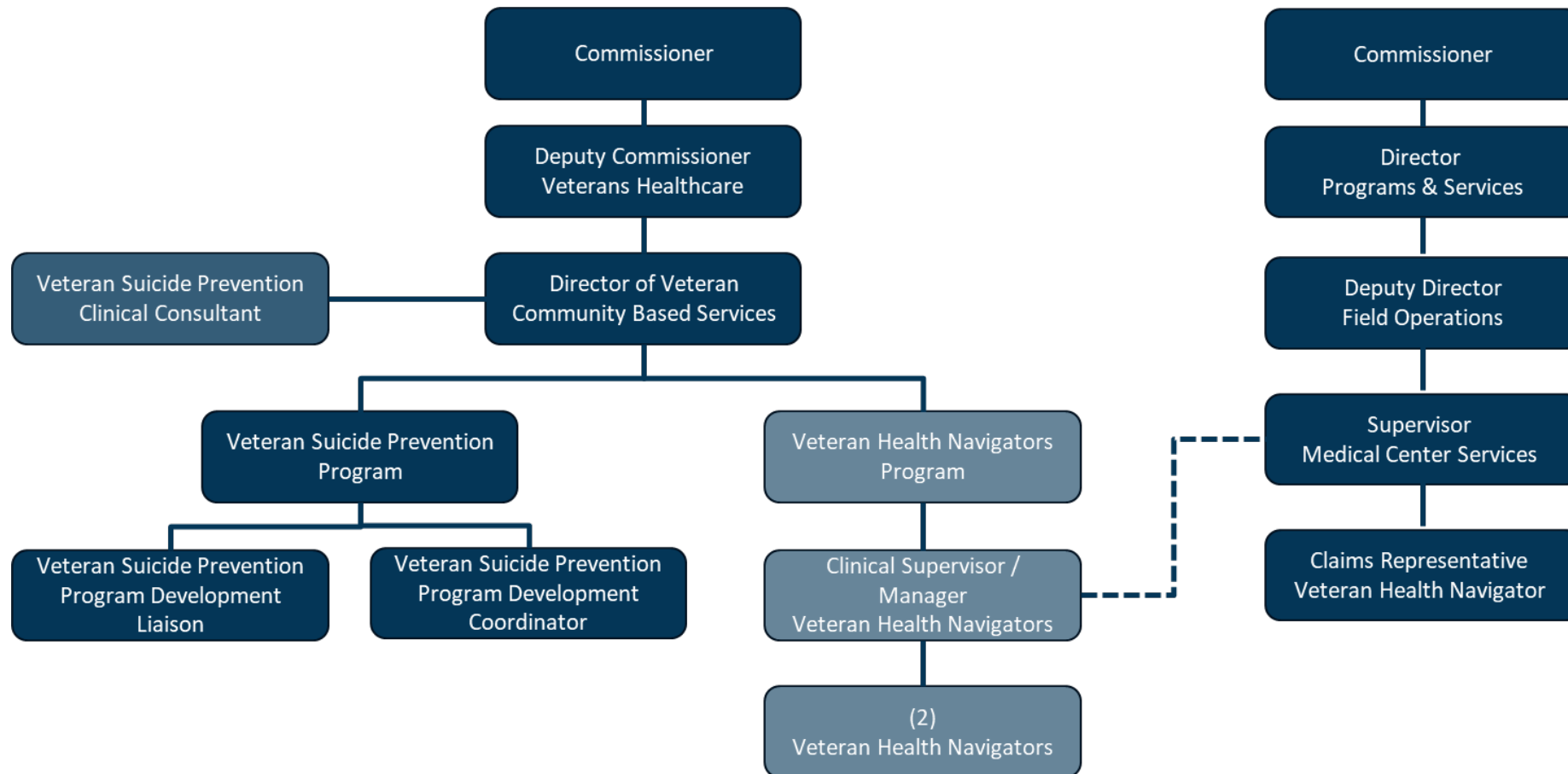
Regions Hospital Lee & Penny Anderson HeroCare Program

Mission

To honor and advocate for the unique needs of Veterans, military member and their families. Ensuring our country's finest are treated with respect, dignity and pride.

- Connecting patients to a wide variety of Veteran and military benefits based on eligibility and specific to patient need.
- Educating patients and their families on current community, state and federal benefits.
- Identifying appropriate military-related community resources.
- Thanking each Veteran, military member and/or family member for their service and sacrifice by presenting them with a HeroCare Challenge Coin.

MDVA Veteran Health Navigator Organization



MDVA Programs and Services Overview

Claims Offices

- Represents Veterans and their dependents who seek federal Veteran benefits
 - compensation, non-service-connected pension, survivor benefits, vocational rehabilitation or educational benefits
 - Supports appeals process with the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs before the Board of Veterans Appeals
- Offices located out of the St Paul VA Regional Office and Fargo VA Regional Office
- Work closely with the 87 County Veteran Service Officers

Field Operations

- Outreach
 - Mobile Unit of the MDVA Claims Division with flexibility to travel to those in need
 - Assist Veterans and their dependents with mobility issues and other barriers to accessing their benefits and services
- Medical Center Services
 - Assist Veterans at St Cloud & Minneapolis VA Centers with benefits and services
 - Supporting Veterans at MDVA Veteran Homes with benefits and services
- Tribal Veteran Service Officers
 - Community outreach to locate and advocate for Native American Veterans

Programs

- Dental & Optical
- Disaster Relief
- Financial Assistance
- Homeless Veteran Registry
- SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)
- Gold Star Families
- Veterans Homes
 - Bemidji, Fergus Falls, Hastings, Laverne, Minneapolis, Montevideo, Preston, Silver Bay
- Cemeteries
 - Memorial & Burial Assistance
 - Duluth, Little Falls, Preston, Redwood Falls

Veteran Health Navigator Overview



Ask the Question(s)

- Have you or someone in your family served in the military ?
- Are you enrolled in VA Health Benefits?
- Are you connected to your County Veteran Service Officer or a VA health claim representative?



Health Screenings

- Military Time, Service, or Exposure
- CMS or Healthcare Organization SDoH Screening
- Mental or Behavioral Health Screening(s) (PHQ9, Columbia, ACES)
- Screenings provided at VA Health (i.e. Mammogram, colonoscopy, behavioral, health, etc.)



Resource Connection

- MDVA Veteran Health Navigator
- MDVA Claims Representatives
- County Veteran Service Officers
- VA Claim Representatives
- Soldier & Family Readiness Specialists
- Airman & Family Readiness Program Manager
- Veteran Community-Based Organizations



Partners

- Regions Hospital: Lee & Penny Anderson HeroCare for Veterans
- MDH Office of Rural Health & Primary Care
- MDH Health Care Homes
- MN Hospital Association
- VA St. Cloud | Mpls. (Fargo | Sioux Falls)

Work in Progress

Veteran Suicide Prevention

- Assessing areas with higher rates of Veteran death by suicide to guide resources and support needs
- Implementing standards of work with training and education
- Developing an education strategy to reach internal staff and community members
- Developing and implementing upstream approaches to identify Veterans to support their social determinants of health needs to assist before a crisis

Veteran Health Navigator

- Job descriptions have been developed and submitted to HR for review – anticipating to post April and have staff in place by June
- Have identified rural healthcare systems once staff are in place a solicitation will be posted for healthcare systems to apply
- Collaborated with MDH Office of Rural Health and Primary Care on submitting HRSA Rural Veteran Health Assess Program grant

MN Veteran Suicide Prevention Collaborative

- Working with MDH Suicide Prevention Plan & Taskforce to bring the collaborative under the umbrella to share resources and align work with state initiatives
- Developing goals and objectives with partners across the state
- Developing a strategy with Mpls. VA Community & Engagement Partnership Coordinator for Ask the Question Campaign to identify Veterans
- Collaborating efforts with the American Legion Be the One Campaign and the Columbia Lighthouse Project with training to community members on talking with Veterans who may be at risk for suicide





MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Thank You!

Rachel Johnson, MBA

Director of Veteran Community Based Services

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