



LIFELINK

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New Requirements for DoD Suicide Event Report

The Dept. of Defense Suicide Event Report (DoDSER) is used as a standard data collection tool for suicide events, including deaths by suicide and suicide attempts, across the DoD. Information obtained from the DoDSER is aggregated and analyzed to inform current and future suicide prevention efforts. Incomplete data regarding risk factors and contributing stressors may hinder future programmatic improvements that can ultimately lead to local life-saving action.

In January 2016, the DoDSER process was updated to enhance data quality. These new procedures aim to ensure that DoDSERs are completed to the highest degree possible, enabling timely receipt of information from the most appropriate entities while fostering local leadership involvement. Here are five things all suicide prevention coordinators (and commanding officers) need to know about the new DoDSER process:

- 1. A DoDSER should be initiated within 30 days of receiving notification of a suspected suicide. It's recommended that the SPC initiate the DoDSER.** To get started with the DoDSER, visit dodser.t2.health.mil using a common access card (CAC) and follow the instructions on the screen. Progress can be saved before exiting the system for ongoing input during the data collection process.
- 2. The DoDSER should not be submitted before suicide is confirmed as the manner of death by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES).** After receiving AFMES confirmation, commands have 60 days to complete and submit the DoDSER. The first flag officer in the chain of command can authorize an extension up to an additional 60 days, if necessary. Extensions must be submitted to Navy Suicide Prevention Branch (suicideprevention@navy.mil).
- 3. Upon AFMES confirmation of suicide as the manner of death, commanding officers (COs) are to establish a local Suicide Event Review Board at the command.** The

board will be led by the CO or member of the command triad. The board will be comprised of a member of the decedent's direct chain of command, a medical/mental health representative, a Navy Criminal Investigative Service representative and chaplain. Additional members may be required if the decedent had an impending, open or recently adjudicated Family Advocacy Program or legal case.

- 4. It is recommended that the SPC act as the recorder for the Suicide Event Review Board and submit the DoDSER.** The board should complete a Suicide Event Review Board Charter and utilize the DoDSER Submission Checklist as a guide for potential resources to ensure thorough reporting. These documents will be provided directly by Navy Suicide Prevention Branch. SPCs should submit the charter, summary of local postvention response activities and lessons learned to Navy Suicide Prevention Branch at suicideprevention@navy.mil.
- 5. Additional guidance is available in the Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook and on Navy Suicide Prevention's "Reporting Requirements" webpage.** Visit www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/suicide_prevention/command/Pages/DoDSERStepByStep.aspx.



The DODSER website requires a 15-minute video training before registering to complete a DODSER.



Lifelink Spotlight

Internal Behavioral Health Consultants: Helping You Achieve Your Goals

Navy has a multitude of professionals dedicated to helping you make the most out of military life by promoting overall well-being. Internal behavioral health consultants (IBHCs) are among these resources, dedicated to helping service members and families *proactively* navigate stress-related, behavioral, physical or emotional concerns. IBHCs are clinical social workers or psychologists that are a part of the local Medical Home Port Team and can be seen without a referral. One of their many functions is to promote behavior or lifestyle change, ranging from relationship problems and healthier eating, to trouble sleeping and stress navigation.

This month we spotlight Lt. Glorive Cabino, IBHC at Naval Branch Health Clinic Naval Air Technical Training Center, Naval Hospital Pensacola. Recognizing that many Sailors and families made New Year's Resolutions likely focused on their physical health, in a recent Navy Medicine Live **blog post**, Lt. Cabino offers a different approach to achieving physical *and* emotional health goals this year—with the help of an IBHC. "The good news is that you don't have to work alone to achieve these goals. Internal behavioral health consultants are available for support and to help you," she says.

IBHCs provide a holistic approach to care. Appointments are 30 minutes in duration and focus on achieving goals through action, support, skills development and lifestyle changes to help patients work through their concerns. For example, this past holiday season, Lt. Cabino assisted two service members who sought help with navigating the stress of being separated from their families. She taught them additional skills to cope with this separation and helped them work through the challenges that were inhibiting their normal daily function. "Their appreciation was immediately evident and I was once again reminded of why I love this job," she said.

Seeking help is a sign of strength. IBHCs are available to help you keep your physical and psychological health—and resolutions—strong throughout your Navy career. Lt. Cabino is one of many providers who is dedicated to being there for *Every Sailor, Every Day*.



Resilience Corner

How Stress Impacts Your Heart Health

Heart disease remains the number one killer of men and women in the United States. Stress is a natural reaction; it is the body's way of coping with a perceived threat. We all experience stress from time to time, however, prolonged periods of stress can be unhealthy.



As part of the 'fight or flight' response, stress signals the body to produce more energy by elevating the heart rate, increasing production of LDL cholesterol and blood glucose. Stress can lead to poor eating choices, missed workouts and a lack of sleep. Left unchecked, a combination of these factors may lead to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes.

According to the 2013 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment, only 12 percent of active duty Navy respondents and 13 percent of active duty Marine respondents indicated that they experienced work stress. However, those numbers increased as time away from home station increased. To help navigate stress, follow these tips:

- Eat healthy, stay hydrated, and limit caffeine and alcohol;
- Exercise regularly to reduce stress, burn calories and improve sleep;
- Get 7–8 hours of sleep; and
- Use **relaxation** techniques, such as deep breathing exercises.

Check out **strengthening resilience** and the **NavyNavStress** blog for more stress navigation tips.

February is Heart Health Month. Navy Suicide Prevention Branch thanks Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center for providing the above information, which can be found in their fact sheet "Heart Health: Risk Factors and Lifestyle Choices" in the February HPW Toolbox.

Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook Now Available

For your convenience, there are two ways to access the handbook. We recommend storing an electronic copy on your computer and/or mobile device, as well as printing a paper copy to store in the duty binder.

To download/print: **Navy Suicide Prevention > Command & Leaders > Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook**

To view online (desktop, mobile, tablet):

www.issuu.com/opnavn171/docs/commanding_officer_s_suicide_preven.

News and Resources

Military Health Resources
Infographic
[Real Warriors Campaign](#)

How to Successfully
Communicate as a Couple
[Military OneSource](#)

Stress Continuum Model
Infographic
[OSC](#)

Shine Some Light on the
Winter Blues
[Health.mil](#)

Success Story: Change What
You Eat, Improve how You
Feel
[DCoE](#)

Wounded Warriors Introduced
to Adaptive Athletics
[Health.mil](#)

Sailors Remember their Little
Ones
[Stennis74](#)

Shifting from Service Family to
Civilian Family
[HPRC](#)

Healthy Hearts: It All Starts
with Lifestyle
[Health.mil](#)

A Long-Term Look at Quality
of Life: The Wounded Warrior
Recovery Project
[Navy Medicine Live](#)

Super Bowl Not 'Super' for
Viewers with PTSD
[DCoE](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

Heart Health Month
February
[Details Here](#)

SPC Training Webinars

February 11, 1400
February 23, 1000
March 10, 1800
March 23, 1000

Note: All times are CST
[Register Here](#)

Rekindling Your Relationship with Money

Money is one of life's most highly-coveted companions that fills many roles; from comforter and friend, to a reflection of our impulsiveness and uncertainties. These roles contribute to our lifelong relationship with money, which evolves similar to any worthwhile relationship. First, we identify and pursue the qualities we're seeking. Then, we nurture our relationship's well-being with dedication and care. And finally, we must be committed for the long-haul, through good and bad times, pleasant surprises and unforeseen obstacles.

The Pursuit. Our personal relationships often begin with a spark or common interest, much like our financial ones. We have needs (shelter, food, etc.) and wants (such as an island vacation or a new car)—and pursue paths to increase our cash flow as a means to achieve them. We've now entered into a relationship with money. Like any relationship, our image of success can be influenced by positive experiences—such as using a bonus to pay off debt early—and negative ones, like unplanned expenses and “budget-busters.” It's also common for blind spots to exist in our relationships that we may not recognize or acknowledge. These blind spots can include emotional overspending, failure to plan and not setting goals. Understanding our underlying reasons for the pursuit of money and having a balanced perspective of its tangible and intangible value can thwart us from a relentless chase. Military OneSource has resources to help you get a better handle on your money relationship, like this article on **living within your means**.

Satisfaction and Well-Being. Healthy relationships are not just defined by current mutual feelings of satisfaction, but also by a positive outlook on the future—a long-term perspective. According to the **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau**, having financial well-being means that “a person can fully meet current and ongoing financial obligations, can feel secure in their financial future, and is able to make choices that allow enjoyment of life.” Achieving well-being in your financial relationship is possible by applying the **Principles of Resilience**:

- Exercise *Predictability* by building an emergency financial plan tailored to your lifestyle;
- Build *Trust* in yourself through exploration of long-term savings and investment opportunities that can secure your financial future; and
- Find *Meaning* by liberating yourself to make money decisions that will help you enjoy what life has to offer—all in good balance and reason of course (*Controllability*)!

Overcoming Obstacles. Challenges and hurdles will occur, but how we handle them can shape our relationship. Medical catastrophes, job losses, poor decision-making and lack of communication can all play a part in creating new financial realities for us. When these occur, obtaining guidance and advice from objective sources can light a path where we can see a hopeful end. Asking for help is the first step toward progress! Keep in mind that accepting a new reality and making personal progress require that we do not dwell on the past, but rather set in motion small steps aimed at a better future. Unwillingness to forgive, blame and retaliation will not produce the life changing results needed to overcome financial challenges. Your local **Fleet and Family Support Center** can refer you to a Military Financial Counselor to minimize stress and get you back on track.

Nurturing your relationship with money takes commitment, and recognizing the profound impact it can have in your life can be a powerful motivator for behavioral change. Spend time with your partner—money—and constantly seek ways to improve your communication with one another. Be a good listener when your accounts tell you that now may not be the right time to splurge, and find other ways to connect!

*Stacy Livingstone-Hoyte, AFC is an experienced financial counselor and regular contributor to the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign. Read more of **her tips and tricks** to spend and stress less on the [NavyNavStress blog](#).*