

November 17, 2014

Senator Llew Jones, Chair

Legislative Finance Committee  
State Capitol Building  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Chairman Jones:

The following responses are being provided to answer questions asked by committee members during the September meeting of the Legislative Finance Committee:

Rep. Dudik: Jail Suicide Prevention Program Update

The funding is being used in the following areas:

1. Two evidence-based trainings at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy.
  - a. Mental Health First Aid, which is an 8 hour training that teaches officers the fundamentals of mental illness, including recognition of symptoms, how to intervene, and how to refer to appropriate health care professionals.
  - b. QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer), which teaches officers how to identify the warning signs of suicide, how to intervene, and how to refer to appropriate level of care. Mobile training is also available to law enforcement departments that request trainings in their community.
2. The bigger project is developing and implementing a universal screening tool for suicide assessment that will be offered to all county detention centers and jails. This is collaboration between DPHHS and the Montana Association of Counties (MACo), which oversees the statewide jail standards advisory group. The screening tool has been identified. It was created by Flathead County Sheriff's Dept. They have been willing to design the tool to be used at a statewide level, but issues have been raised by the Flathead County Commissioners concerning reimbursement for the software and design costs. We are currently negotiating the terms of purchasing the software from Flathead County and a meeting has been tentatively set for December 10 in Kalispell.

Attached you will find the State Suicide Prevention Plan.

Thank you,

Glenda Oldenburg