Suicide Prevention Symposium  
Collectively Preventing Suicide in Correctional Settings  
A Free Two-Day Symposium Presented by  
National Institute of Corrections and the Philadelphia Department of Prisons  
Monday, July 8, 2019 and Tuesday, July 9, 2019  
at the  
Philadelphia Department of Prisons

Correctional facilities across Pennsylvania are faced with the challenge of reducing the incidence of suicide of those entrusted in our care. Effective prevention of suicide in jails and prisons rests on a collective effort by a broad mix of professionals that includes correctional security staff, social workers, medical and mental health providers, policy makers, administrators, and more.

The National Institute of Corrections and the Philadelphia Department of Prisons are sponsoring a suicide prevention symposium to bring together expert speakers for engaging sessions illustrating what other institutions are doing to save inmate lives. The Two-Day Suicide Prevention Symposium will consist of opening speakers each day, seminar sessions, networking reception, lunch and much more.

OBJECTIVES
- Hear expert correctional, legal, medical, and mental health professional’s on suicide prevention efforts.
- Identify best practices and opportunities to guide a suicide prevention action plan.
- Learn strategies to mitigate compassion fatigue.
- Networking and sharing resources with correctional institutions from across Pennsylvania.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?
- Classification, Registration, and other Front-Line Officers or Staff
- Correctional managers, supervisors, and administrators
- Correctional professionals such as mental health personnel, medical staff and Social Workers.

SYMPOSIUM SESSION & ACTIVITIES
Symposium Session – “The First 24 Hours – An in-depth review of admissions processing”
Screening for risk of self-injury, essential communications, referrals, evaluation and assessment, housing, monitoring, behavioral health interventions, and more will be discussed.

Symposium Session – “Suicide Prevention Methods”
Awareness and education; diagnosis of chronic and hidden mental illness; and more are discussed in correctional settings.

Symposium Session – “Compassion Fatigue”
How do correctional facilities provide support when dealing with the aftermath of a suicide? Participants will learn strategies, programs, and procedures to improve support of medical, clinical, and correctional staff.

Symposium Session – “Philadelphia Department of Prisons Tour”
Hear from medical unit staff providing direct physical or behavioral health observation and supervision of inmates.

Symposium Session – “Case Study & Action Plan”
Investigate opportunities for improvement through in-depth case studies and document opportunities for plans of correction through guided action plan prompts.
Lunch and Reception
*Taste of Philly and Philly Restaurant Sampler Lunch*
Philadelphia is known for cheesesteaks, soft pretzels, water ice and more. Experience Philly’s popular food fare with a special Taste of Philly lunch on the first day. The second day goes beyond cheesesteaks and pretzels to experience our world-class and flourishing restaurant scene with a restaurant sampler.

*Symposium Reception*
Don’t miss this opportunity to meet and connect with fellow correctional professionals over light refreshments. The reception will provide an excellent chance to network, meet old friends and colleagues, as well as meet new people.

**SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS**

**John Wetzel, Secretary of Corrections**  
*Pennsylvania Department of Corrections*  
With nearly 30 years of experience in the field, John Wetzel is widely recognized as one of the thought leaders and influential voices of corrections today. His career spans over 22 years in county corrections culminating in a position of Warden of Franklin County Jail where he oversaw a 20% population reduction during his tenure.

In January 2011, Governor Tom Corbett first appointed John Wetzel as Secretary of Corrections for the PA DOC. He was then reappointed Secretary of Corrections by Governor Tom Wolf in January 2015 and again in January 2019.

During his tenure as Secretary, not only did the Department of Corrections experience the end of a 24-year average growth of 1500 inmates per year, but also the first population reduction in PA in over 4 decades, with a total reduction thus far of over 4200 inmates. Secretary Wetzel has guided the Department in restructuring Community Corrections, the mental health systems and implementing security enhancements while at the same time, significantly reducing spending.

Secretary Wetzel served as Chair of the Council of State Government’s Justice Center’s Executive Board of which he is now a member. He is currently the President of the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) and a member of Harvard’s Executive Session on Community Corrections.

On the federal level, Secretary Wetzel was chosen by the Obama Administration to be the corrections expert on the Charles Colson Task Force – created by Congress to examine and assess the Federal Bureau of Prisons and develop data driven solutions and recommendations for improvement. More recently, he was named by the Trump Administration to the Independent Review Committee as part of the federal First Step Act.

He is a graduate of Bloomsburg University, and recipient of Honorary Doctorate degrees from both Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Chestnut Hill College.

**Commissioner Blanche Carney, MSS, CCM**  
*Philadelphia Department of Prisons*  
Blanche Carney, MSS, CCM, graduate of Lincoln University and Bryn Mawr College’s Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research was appointed Commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP) in 2016. As Commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP), Ms. Carney is the first woman to head the almost 200-year-old jail system.

The PDP employs over 2,500 employees and contracted staff. There are 5 facilities in Northeast Philadelphia for under 5,000 inmates accused, or sentenced, of crimes in Philadelphia. Since her appointment, Ms. Carney has worked with criminal justice stakeholders to address the over reliance on jails and prisons to safely reduce the population and address racial and ethnic disparities, and the PDP was awarded the MacArthur
Foundation’s Safety and Justice Grant to further this mission. Since July of 2015, the prison population of Philadelphia has been reduced by nearly 40 percent.

**Raymond F. Patterson, MD, D.F.A.P.A.**
Dr. Patterson is a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology in Forensic Psychiatry and is a member of the faculties of the Howard University College of Medicine and the Georgetown University Department of Psychiatry.

Dr. Patterson has noteworthy experience as a private practitioner and in senior leadership positions of numerous institutions including the Washington, DC Commission on Mental Health services, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services of the City of Baltimore and St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in the District of Columbia.

He serves or has served as consultant in forensic psychiatry to numerous jurisdictions and organizations including the Ohio Legal Rights Service, the U.S. Department of Justice, the State of Louisiana, the New Jersey Department of Corrections, the California Department of Corrections and, of course, the Philadelphia Department of Prisons.

Dr. Patterson lives with his wife in Washington, close to their children and grandchildren.

**Sandora Cathcart, BSW, MS, Correctional Program Specialist**
*National Institute of Corrections*

Sandy Cathcart is a Correctional Program Specialist with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) – Jails Division and has been in this capacity since September 2014. She manages Crisis Intervention Teams training, Mental Health Systems in Jails, Mental Health First Aid training, and additional mental health and medical technical assistance requests for jails.

Ms. Cathcart worked in local corrections for 27 years between the Baltimore City Jail and the Anne Arundel County Department of Detention Facilities in Maryland. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work (with licensure), a Master’s Degree in Correctional Administration, and a Certificate in Human Services Management. She has served as a member of a New Jail Transition team, a Unit Manager of female housing, a manager of classification, a policy and procedure writer, a certified trainer, a Social Work Associate, and a Criminal Justice and Social Work Adjunct Professor for the Anne Arundel Community College. She was instrumental in developing a jail-based Case Management System for Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Before her employment with NIC, Ms. Cathcart served as the Assistant Correctional Facility Administrator of Inmate Services for the Jennifer Road Detention Center in Annapolis, Maryland.

**Dr. Dena M. Williams**
Dr. Dena M. Williams received her Master of Arts degree in Forensic Psychology from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology and received her Doctor of Psychology degree in Clinical Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology, Chicago Campus. Dr. Williams worked with the mentally ill detainee population at Cook County Department of Corrections for years. During her time at the Cook County Department of Corrections, her clinical work has consisted of providing treatment in the form of diagnostic interviewing, mental status evaluations, group and individual therapy to male and female detainees diagnosed with chronic mental illness, with comorbid substance use disorders and severe character pathology. Dr. Williams served as the Director of Behavioral Health, Religious, and Enrichment Programs for the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC) where she oversaw and helped launch the Cook County Sheriff’s Office Mental Health Transition Center, a first of its kind. Dr. Williams lead a team of clinicians at the Mental Health Transition Center where a variety of services are offered to higher functioning detainees with mental illness, which include substance abuse and mental health treatment, vocational skills training, and
educational services. Additionally, Dr. Williams also oversaw religious and enrichment programs and services provided to all detainees housed on the compound.

Jonel Coleman  
St. Charles County Department of Corrections  
Jonel Coleman is the Suicide Prevention Coordinator at the St. Charles County Department of Corrections in St. Charles, MO. Ms. Coleman was given the responsibility of creating and operating the Suicide Prevention Program. Her duties include writing policies, conducting mental health training and managing specialized correctional staff. Ms. Coleman also assists as an independent contractor for the National Institute of Corrections, providing training in Crisis Intervention and Mental Health First Aid.

Her previous experience in Corrections has spanned over 20 years in line and mid-management positions at the Northeast Correctional Center and the St. Louis County Dept. of Justice Services. Ms. Coleman is a field advocate for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and volunteers on the mental health allocations panel for the West Region of the United Way. She holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology and Business Administration from Columbia College, a Masters of Public Policy Administration from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and is a recent graduate of the National Jail Leadership Command Academy.

SYMPOSIUM GENERAL INFORMATION  
REGISTRATION  
Registration is free for the two-day symposium. Space is limited, and registration is required. Participants may attend one-day or both days. Reserve your spot at NIC/PDP Suicide Prevention Symposium Registration.

LOCATION  
Philadelphia Department of Prisons  
Riverside Correctional Facility  
8151 State Road, Philadelphia, PA 19136  
• The symposium will take place inside the Philadelphia Department of Prisons secured perimeter.  
• Laptops, recording devices, and other electronics are not permitted due to firewall restrictions.  
• Cell phones are permitted and will be secured during sessions taking place inside the secured perimeter.  
• Symposium staff will be readily available to provide information, assist participants accessing their phones, providing help during breaks, etc.  
• The Suicide Prevention Symposium dress code is business casual. Comfortable footwear is suggested. Open toe, sandals, and mule shoes are not permitted.

ACCOMMODATIONS  
Four Points by Sheraton Philadelphia Northeast  
9461 Roosevelt Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19114  
Rate: $180/night (mention government rate for Philadelphia Department of Prisons)  
Reservation Contact: Ms. Bessie Valenti, 267-350-6016, bvalenti@fpphiladelphia.com

TRANSPORTATION  
Transportation is provided from the hotel to the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. Designated parking is also available for those who choose to drive.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
Natalie Payne, Training Administrator, Philadelphia Department of Prisons  
215-685-8561    natalie.payne@prisons.phila.gov