

Public Affairs Office
113 Comanche Road
Ft. Meade, SD 57741
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Jill Broecher, Public Affairs Officer
Jill.Broecher@va.gov
605.720-7451 (Daytime)
605.490.5074 (Cell)

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 7, 2013

VA BHHCS Welcomes New Suicide Prevention Coordinator



Joanne Barreno, the new Suicide Prevention Coordinator at VA BHHCS

VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Joanne Barreno as the new Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPC).

Joanne will work to ensure appropriate measures are taken to prevent suicide in the VA BHHCS Veteran population. She will facilitate suicide prevention strategies through education, monitoring and coordination of activities. Joanne will assess Veterans for high risk suicide, track appointments and coordinate enhanced care as needed. As SPC, she will ensure Veterans identified as high risk for suicide are monitored and maintain communication through phone calls and mailings. Joanne will work in collaboration with VA Veterans Crisis Line staff and others to provide confidential support and referral for Veterans in crisis. She will also provide educational resources to medical providers, Veterans, family members and community members about risk factors and warning signs for suicide.

Joanne came to work at VA BHHCS in 2008 after transferring from the Vet Center Outstation in Martin, SD. She has been a social worker for various programs at the Hot Springs VA Medical Center and the Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Pierre. Joanne also provided outpatient mental health services to Eagle Butte, McLaughlin, Rosebud and Winner VA clinics while stationed at Pierre. She completed her Master of Social Work at the University at Buffalo, the State University of New York and Bachelor of Social Work at Buffalo State College.

Joanne grew up on her dad's reservation territory, Cattaraugus Indian Reservation in Irving, New York. She has been a career federal employee since 1985. Joanne is a certified foster parent through Lakota Oyate Wakanyeya Owicakiyapi, Inc. (LOWO). She is also an enrolled Oneida band member from Six Nations Reserve of the Grand River.

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