

VHMAC-ST Meeting Minutes (16 June 2021)

I. Call to Order

Council Chair, Dr. David La Pointe called to order the regular meeting of the Veterans' Healthy Minds Advisory Council-South Texas, at 11:02 on 16 June 2021, via Zoom video/tele-conference.

Council roll was called by Secretary Karah Smith.

Roll Call – Present or Excused: David La Pointe, Carlos Acosta, Gingerlei Seda, Karah Smith, Kevin Crozier, Larissa Martinez, Leah Whitmire, Lisa Firmin, Michael Carrion, Natasha Walden, Robin Soto, Wil Seda

Dr. Betsy, VA Employee

Becki Williams, VA Care Provider

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeremy Crostley-Assistant Chief of Psychology

Not Present: Christopher Vidaurre, Edsel Thomas, Jose Gonzales

II. Approval/Review of Previous Minutes/Current Agenda

Council Chair Dr. La Pointe motioned to accept previous (May) meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Kevin and approved at 11:04. Nobody opposed.

Started council with Old Business.

III. Old Business

VHMACST – Women Veteran Sub-Committee (Col Lisa Firmin) Lisa is meeting tomorrow 6.17.21 with new women's program manager who is new to hospital system. Focusing meeting on what the plan is for the women's clinic at the hospital. Asked UTSA to link to Healthy Minds Website. Coordinating a national panel on MST and she is working with Larissa to confirm panelists. She will send link to VFW magazine that features what she has been doing regarding MST. She was asked to go to DC to participate in Artist Talks and do a poetry reading. Working on taking the stigma away. Her book is progressing as she is collaborating with a publisher and editor.

VHMACST – Outreach Sub-Committee 13 folks that they keep in contact with. Wil should be back soon after family concerns and Mike will be able to focus more on this in the near future.

Next Door Community App (Dr. La Pointe) – requested folks to post information on local HOA or Nextdoor app if available. Reported he has already received responses.

VHMACST - Budget (Dr. La Pointe) – no new updates at this time

VHMACST Resource Guide (Dr. La Pointe) – this is currently on hold. Working on a legible way to collate all the information and make it usable, will hold off on this until we are meeting again in person.

VHMACST – Veteran Resilience and Recovery (Dr. Davis) – Dr. Davis thanked those involved for participation in mental health event last month. Currently working on the mental health summit, scheduled to take place Sept 24th, virtually, focusing on female veterans. Thank you to Kevin for putting survey online.

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IV. New Business

- ✓ **SPEAKER: Dr. Jeremy Crostley, Assistant Chief of Psychology – Growth in the Mental Health Department- How VA has changed and growth expected in coming years.**
In terms of changes in last year there have been a lot with expansion of virtual care which happened in lightning speed in VA standards. Starting to come back to face to face but still mostly virtual. Winter storm delayed opening for Frank Tejada clinic, opening soon. San Antonio is fast growing city but among veteran is fastest growing market in USA. They are working hard to address delays to try to keep up with growth. They are referring to community when available and appropriate but finding even community is full. Working on making virtual options permanent in some aspects to serve veterans who prefer that option. In terms of recruitment, they got approval for 60 staff last fall. They are currently at about 150 staff and adding 60 in the near future. They are working hard to fill these positions. The positions are in many areas of mental health and different sectors of the VA. About 1/3 of the way full but still working on growth.
- Dr. La Pointe-discussed that we are coming up on 2 years as an organization-thanked Dr. Davis for work on the council.
- Col. Lisa Firmin-discussed rooms used for therapy-Discussed that seating is uncomfortable, rooms are not soundproof, and the setting is not conducive to receiving the most effective care. Asked Dr. Crostley if the VA was planning on updating the building, spacing out providers so sound is not distracting, replacing furniture. Dr. Costley encouraged folks to use the suggestion box that is posted at VA locations to help start initiating changes. Col. Firmin also discussed that the automatic door to the VA clinic is not currently working, the VA is aware and working on addressing the issue. Dr. Davis suggested perhaps starting with Dr. Brieda to address current concerns. Also discussed the possible use of white noise machines, utilizing space while it is available.
- Asked about suicide prevention team that exists at VA-Dr. Crostley discussed 4 staff currently-they will be growing by 3 and may request another 2 next year. Lee Hoover is suicide prevention program manager-they receive consults with crisis line if anyone calls and make referrals. They do outreach. They give out gun locks for free-they are required to do community outreach each month. Dr. Davis suggested they may be added to the list of potential presenters during Council meeting.
- Dr. Costley discussed that Northwest medical center will be opening soon-Frank Tejada will remain but staff will be changing to focus on primary care, neuropsychology and a few other programs but NW Medical center-near Sea World will be a large outpatient clinic with primary care, MH, PTSD specialty program, dental clinic, audiology, day surgeries. Clinic is off Hwy. 151. Opening later this year, likely in the fall to start services. Col. Firmin asked if there is a women's clinic going into new building, uncertain at this time, Lisa will confirm during her meeting tomorrow. Dr. Davis stated there is a new women's veteran psychologist.
- There have been discussions about having the council meetings take place in the new building.
- Still working on phone system issues that had been raised previously. They are short staffed as well and are trying to work on the phone system. Hopefully fixing that in the future.
- Lisa Firmin asked if they intend to do marketing after they hire more staff in order to get the veterans that have walked away due to poor care back into the VA after the new staff is hired. Discussed using local outreach as the best ways to get that word out.

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◦ Dave discussed that someone was coming in to do IPV (intimate partner violence) training, and they had the first IPV class for men, Dave participated, and he is very thankful for the opportunity. He appreciates that the VA did what they said they would do. He wanted to send along his appreciation.

Miscellaneous-Kevin apologized for how he greets people/has greeted people in the past. Try not to use the word lovely ladies, not intended to be offensive. Col. Lisa appreciated the statement. Lisa stated that words can make people feel like you are talking down to them. She really appreciated him taking that step. Dave discussed his history of adding “sweetheart” to an email. Discussed difference between intent and perception. Super appreciate Kevin’s VA webpage and work. Council members agreed that they need to be mindful of wording and how they interact with others.

Larissa-asked if it is open topic-has there been or is there an App that exists where patients can rate VA doctors. Larissa discussed that they are not able to choose provider, but they should be able to rate who they have. Her provider was changed without any notice to her-she felt that there was a large disconnect with current provider. She feels they should be able to rate providers since they get paid to provide care to veterans. -Dave responded that a provider who is not a good fit, it might be good to ask the VA to be redirected to a new provider. Dr. Davis encourages that this could be included in a letter to make suggestions. The patient advocate is available to process this information and part of their job is to track patterns, encouraged to change primary care if desired.

Dave-last month discussed MST and if questions were asked on each visit. They ask annually but they will likely not be asking the question at each visit. Dr. La Pointe discussed his story of when he fell shortly after a hip replacement and his negative experience with VA ER and hospital staff. Discussed how using the patient advocate can be helpful.

Larissa asked what the process in the VA is if a staff member is reported for harassment. When someone reports a staff member they are removed from all communication and provided no follow up on what happened to that situation. Asked if a patient advocate can speak to the council about what the process is if a staff member is reported. Dave stated that you can make a report with both VA and San Antonio police.

Patient caregiver program through VA-Larissa has been hearing feedback that a lot of caregivers are being denied if caregiving is based mostly on mental health. Larissa looking for record on the difference of how many are approved between physical and MH condition. Stated that it is starting to sound like there is some discrimination between mental health and physical ability to get caregiver. Dr. Davis stated that the eligibility criteria may help to gain insight. Larissa states that criteria are physical and mental health. 3 areas are physical and 3 are mental health areas. Larissa is looking at seeing if there is information on if they are monitoring the difference of acceptance rate between MH and physical health. Dave and Larissa will meet together later to create a letter and reach out to gain more information on this topic.

Upcoming Training:

- Virtual LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual) – Tuesday, 22 Jun, 1300-1500, Register Online – Endeavors
- Dr. Betsy asked if we made connections with Dr. Mick who is the LGBTQIA coordinator-her role is to make sure staff is trained

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Upcoming Events;

- “PTSD and the Family” - Thursday, 24 Jun, 0830 – 0930, - Clarity, Register Online via WebEx – <https://bit.ly/MPAT624>

V. Next Meeting 21 July 2021, 1100

VII. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 12:10

VIII. End of Minutes

Minutes submitted by Secretary Karah Smith

Minutes reviewed by Council Chair, Dr. David La Pointe.

davelp.lapointe@gmail.com

From: davelp.lapointe@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, June 19, 2021 01:43 PM
To: Andrea Strong; Angela Sobery; Becki Williams; Becky Smith; Carlos Acosta; Christina Lynch; Christopher Vidaurre; Col Lisa Firmin; Dr. Betsy Davis; Edsel Thomas; Gingerlei Seda; Glorive Cabino; Jill Palmer; Jose Michael Gonzales; Karah A. Smith; Kelly Brook-Van Drury; Kesha Delasbour; Kevin Crozier; Larissa Martinez; Leah Whitmire; Michael Carrion; Michael O'Connell; Natasha Walden; Richard Delgado, Jr.; Richard Martinez; Robin Soto; Sammy Lewis; Scott Rios; Susan Hart-Walch; Wil Seda
Cc: Dr. David A. La Pointe
Subject: ELECTIONS

ALL,

It's that time again. For our next meeting please be prepared to nominate individuals (yourself or others), for Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and Secretary for the coming physical year (1 October 2021 – 31 September 22).

We will accept nominees at our July meeting, vote for new officers at our August meeting, have our carry over meeting (new and old officers working together) at our September meeting and our NEW OFFICERS will take over in our October meeting.

If you have any questions, please ask any of our current officers for clarification. And - PLEASE give serious thought to the process in considering running for office and then taking part in the election process itself. As always – THANK YOU.

Dave

David A. La Pointe

Dr. David A. La Pointe, PhD, MBA, CCT, SPHR
(SMSgt, USAF Ret.)
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Chairperson, Veterans Healthy Minds Advisory Council – South Texas
Audie Murphy VA Hospital, San Antonio TX
VHMACST@gmail.com VHMACST.com
Veteranshealthymindsadvisorycouncilsouthtexas.com
[@vetminds](https://www.facebook.com/vetminds)

Claims Department Offices

OFFICE NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	ZIP	PHONE	HOURS
Texas Veterans Commission Taylor County Annex	400 Oak Street Suite 170	Abilene	79602	325-338-4814 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30a-4:30p
Thomas E. Creek VA Medical Center	6010 Amarillo Blvd. West	Amarillo	79106	806-468-1883 norhwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	7901 Metropolis Dr. Room 1G113	Austin	78744	512-638-7190 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	3420 Veterans Circle Room 507	Beaumont	77707	409-981-8598/Cell281-475-9698 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Bee County Office (temp vacant)	3800 Charco Road Room 5-104	Beeville	78102	361-230-9109 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Hutchinson County Courthouse Annex	1400 Veta Street Room 117	Borger	79007	806-273-0148 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:30
George H. Obrien, JR. VA Medical Center	300 W. Veterans Blvd. Room 147B	Big Spring	79720	432-263-7361 ext.7007 norwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30 - 4:30
Texas Veterans Commission	1401 Medical Parkway Room 492	Cedar Park	78613	5120638-7190 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	1651 Rock Prairie Road Suite 100	College Station	77845	979-218-0330 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Conroe Community Outpatient Clinic	690 South Loop 336 West, 3A 153	Conroe	77304	936-522-4024/Cell281-678-4083 Cell 281-678-4468 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission	VA Annex Bldg. 5283 Old Brownsville Rd	Corpus Christi	78405	361-230-9109 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Corpus Christi Naval Air Station	Naval Health Clinic Room 4101 - 4 th Deck	Corpus Christi	78419	361-230-9109 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Medical Center	Bldg. 2, Rm 1C-423- A-G 4500 S. Lancaster Rd.	Dallas	75216	214-433-2122 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Val Verde County Services Office (Temporarily Vacant)	508 E 11 th Street	Del Rio	78840	361-230-9109 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Denton County Veterans Service Center	400 S Carroll Blvd. Suite 2000	Denton	76201	940-243-8234 940-243-8499 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Health Care Center, Ft. Bliss	5001 N. Piedras Room B-209-210	El Paso	79930	915-564-7852 915-564-7843 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission	SFL-TAP 503 Pershing Rd, Room 102	Fort Bliss	79916	915-568-2086 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Good Samaritan veteran Outreach Center	202 Connelly Room 211 & 212	San Antonio	78203	210-727-7907 / 210-632-6027 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00

Ft. Hood Field Office	Soldiers Service Center Building 18010	Fort Hood	76544	254-287-3341 254-288-5124 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	2201 SE Loop 820	Fort Worth	76119	817-730-0077 817-730-0605 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	3828 Avenue North	Galveston	77550	409-761-3200 409-761-3204 cell281-475-3022 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Health Care Center	2601 Veterans Drive Room 2D111	Harlingen	78550	956-254-9189 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Health Outpatient Center	2106 Treasure Hills Blvd. Room 104	Harlingen	78550	956-254-9189 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Regional Office	6900 Alameda Rd.	Houston	77030	713-794-7785 713-794-7913 Cell281-825-8599 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:00-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center	2002 Holcombe Blvd. Room 2A-112	Houston	77030	713-794-7785 713-794-7913 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:00-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	750 Westgreen Blvd.	Katy	77450	281-578-4600 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	4602 N. Bartlett Ave.	Lake Jackson	78041	979-230-4866 cell281-979-5463 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:00-4:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	6104 Avenue Q South Drive Rm. 902	Lubbock	79412	(806) 472-3400 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Charles Wilson VAOPC	2206 N. John Redditt Drive	Lufkin	75904	936-671-4335 936-671-4442 Cell936-707-5893 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Lufkin Vet Center	3003 N. Medford Dr	Lufkin	75904	936-899-7110 936-899-7111 Cell832-409-8245 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Harrison County Veterans Service Office	P.O. Box 1981 102 W. Houston St.	Marshall	75901	903-503-3012 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	901 E Hackberry Ave. Room E-400E	McAllen	78503	956-254-9189 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Midland County Annex	2110 N. "A" Street Suite 194	Midland	75149	432-688-4879 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-4.30
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	2000 S. Loop 256 Suite 36	Palestine	75801	281-455-2965 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Guadalupe County/Central Texas Technology Center	2189 FM 758, Bldg B Room 158I	New Braunfels	78130	830-481-2140 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Center	4602 N. Bartlett	Laredo	78041-3 803	956-254-9189 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC)	3551 Roger Brooke Dr. Room 615-25	JBSA Ft. Sam Houston	78234	210-251-2340 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Kerrville VA Medical Center	3600 Memorial Blvd. Room 332	Kerrville	78028-5 768	830-481-9892 / 830-481-2115 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Lamar County Veterans Service Office	231 Lamar Ave. Room 101	Paris	75460	903-249-5687 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00

Texas Veterans Commission VAOPC Clinic	4240 Southwest Blvd. Room 3	San Angelo	75460	403-737-2484 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Frank M. Tejada VA Outpatient Clinic	5788 Eckhert Road Room 2A122	San Antonio	78240	210-608-4753 / 210-680-2580 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Audie L Murphy Memorial VA Med Ctr	7400 Merton Minter Suite 107	San Antonio	78229	210-251-2340 southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Olin E. Teague Veterans' Center	1901 Veterans Memorial Drive Bldg. 208; Rm 119	Temple	76504	254-743-0549 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Texarkana College	2500 Robinson Road	Texarkana	75599	903-249-3906 northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission VA Outpatient Clinic	1200 W Main Street	Tomball	77375	281-516-1505Ext. 11776 Cell281-475-3451Cell281-678-4468 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00
Texas Veterans Commission Watkins-Logan Texas State Veterans Home	11466 Honor Lane	Tyler	75708	VACANT	7:00-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Pattie Dodson Public Health Center	2805 N. Navarro Street	Victoria	77901	361-582-5810 Fax361-582-5811 southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission VA Regional Office	One Veterans Plaza 701 Clay Avenue	Waco	76799	254-299-9950 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:30-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Sheppard Air Force Base	82 MSS/MSP Bldg. 402, Room 234 426 5th Avenue, Suite #234	Sheppard AFB	76311	940-676-4140 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	7:45-4:30
Texas Veterans Commission Wichita County Courthouse Annex	600 Scott Street Suite 203	Wichita Falls	76301	940/716-8599 940/766-8139 northwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov	8:00-5:00

davelp.lapointe@gmail.com

From: Gerard Migeon <gerard.migeon@claritycgc.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 01:14 PM
To: Gerard Migeon
Cc: Ciara Sanchez
Subject: PTSD Awareness Month / MPAT
Attachments: MPAT registration flyer 6-24.pdf; MPAT Flyer June 2021.jpg

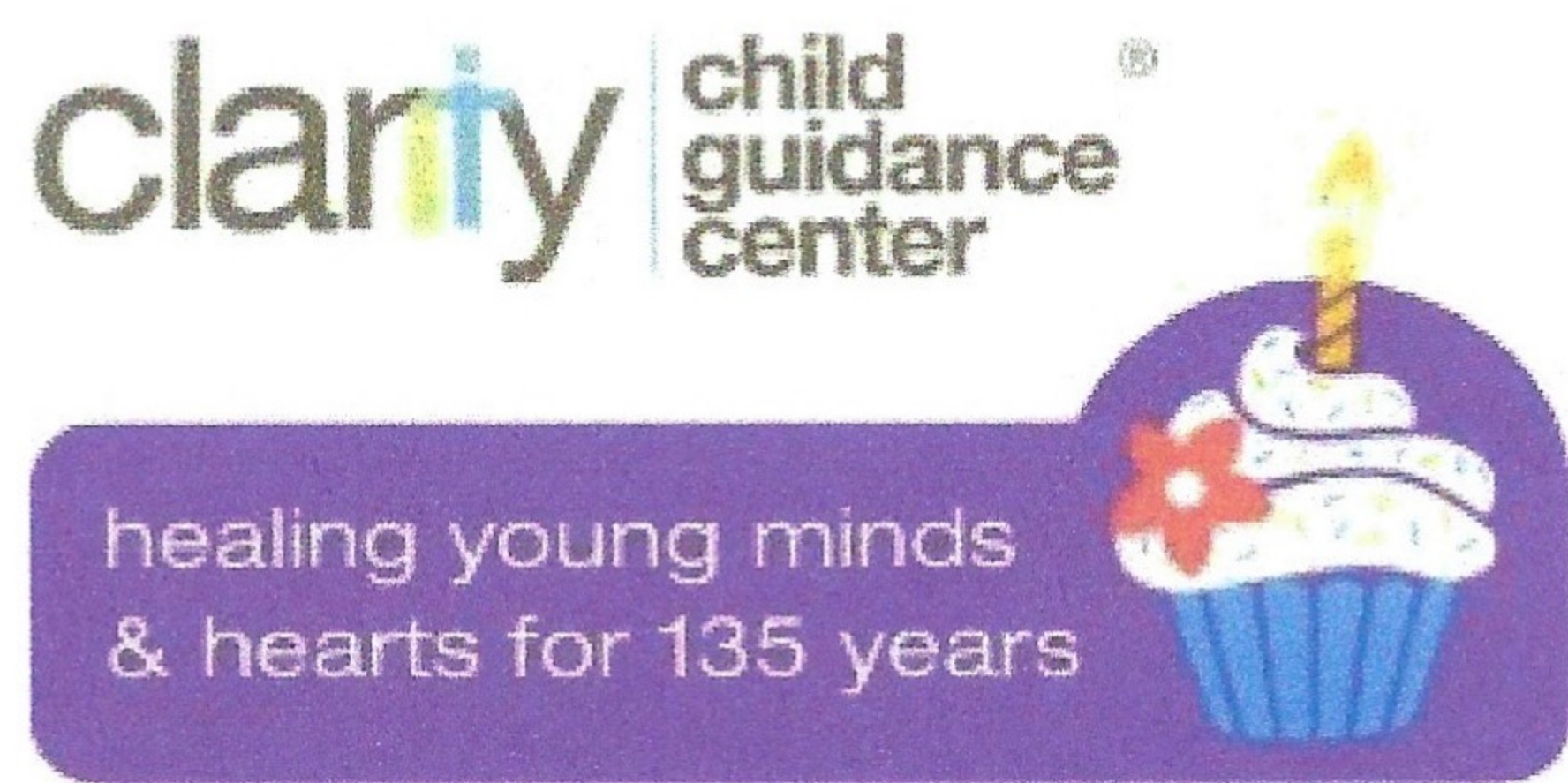
Hello: since June is dedicated to those who experience PTSD, this month MPAT's topic is "*PTSD and the family*" and we will discuss its impact of PTSD on the veteran and his/her family, and some strategies to help. The Featured Agency is the Military Spouse Advocacy Network and they will give a short briefing. The meeting will take place on Thursday, June 24 from 8:30 to 9:30 am. Please find attached the flyer and registration link.

Please feel free to share with colleagues who work to help military families to join this unique networking opportunity. I hope you can join us and look forward to seeing you in 2 weeks.

Many thanks!

Warm regards,

gerard migeon
director of strategic initiatives



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(210) 616-0300 main
1-877-676-KIDS toll free

www.claritycgc.org
www.1in5minds.org

Clarity Child Guidance Center is a not-for-profit solely dedicated to mental health care for children ages 3-17.



PTSD in the Family

Are you working to help improve the family life of military and veterans? Join us for this monthly information and networking meeting with other Bexar County organizations

This meeting is organized by Clarity Child Guidance Center, as part of their 1in5minds campaign to raise awareness about children's mental health



Thursday
June 24

08:30am
-
09:30am

- WHO:** Military connected professionals and agencies
- WHAT:** Military Professionals Advisory Team (MPAT) is a monthly meeting of professionals and organizations serving Military and Veterans to improve their Family Life.
- WHERE:** Virtual discussion via Webex
- WHEN:** Thursday, June 24, 2021 | 08:30 am - 09:30 am
- WHY:** Learn, connect, share resources

FEATURED AGENCY: Military Spouse Advocacy Network



Military Spouse Advocacy Network
Strong Spouses. Stronger Families.

Questions?

Contact Ciara Sanchez at 210-593-2160 or email events@claritycgc.org

Click here to register and join the conversation on June 24: <https://bit.ly/MPAT624>



The One in Five Minds campaign for military families is brought to you with the support of USAA.