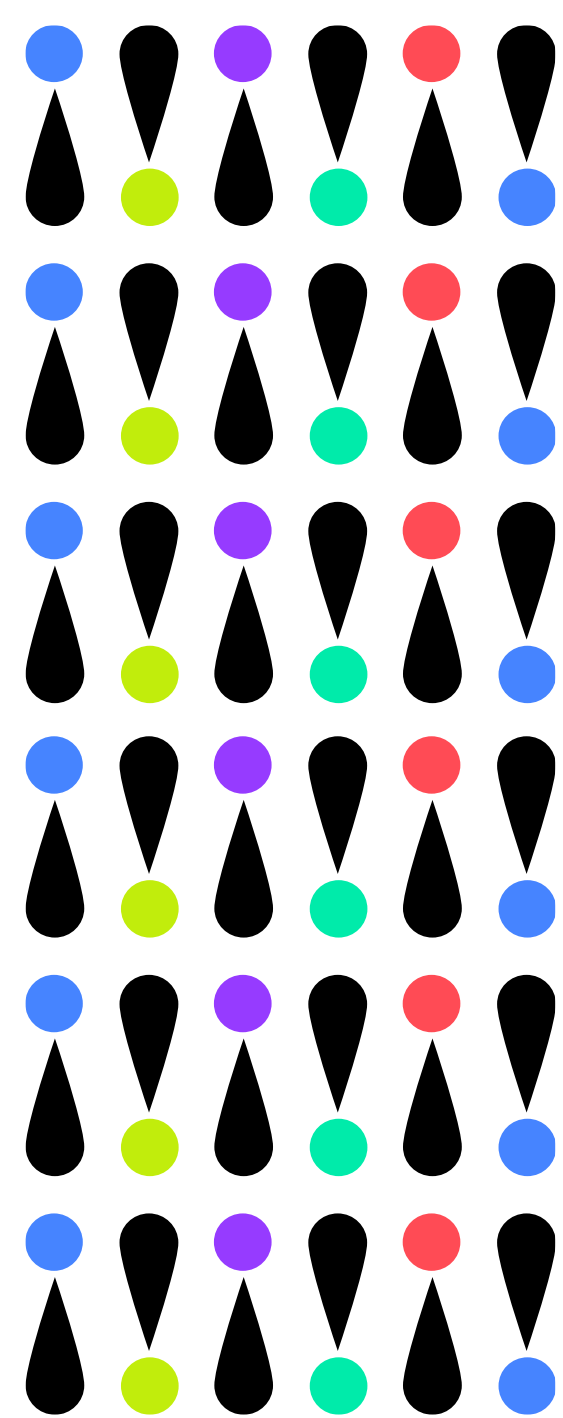




Overview of Lifeline Network and the Universal Platform

By Shari Sinwelski
Deputy Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Vice President of National Networks, Vibrant Emotional Health

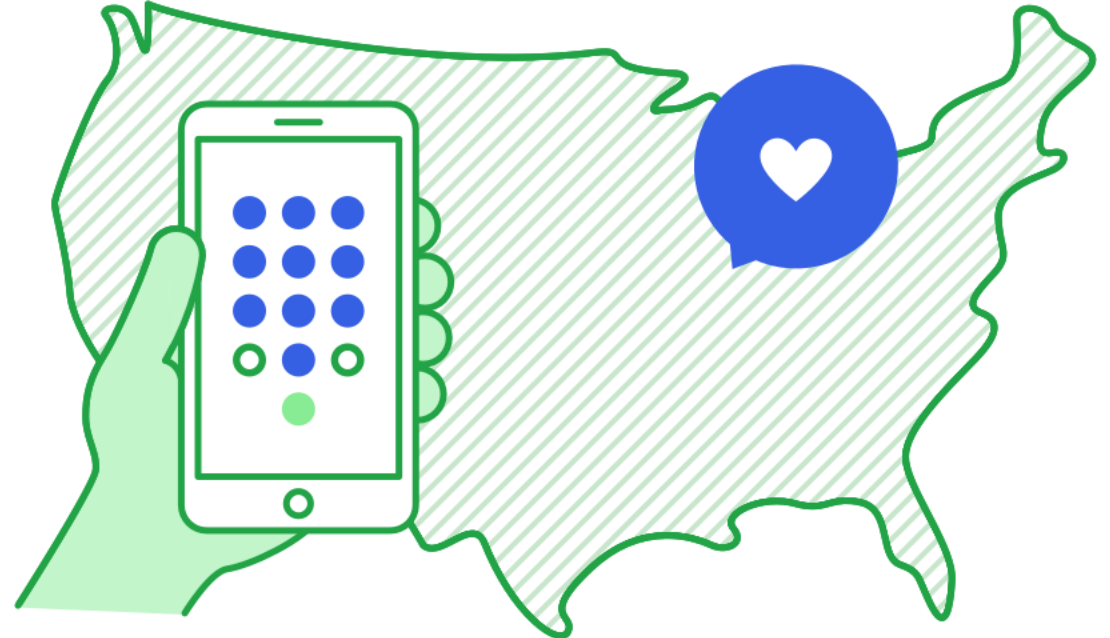
988 State Planning Grants Community of Practice



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The Lifeline Mission

To effectively reach and serve all persons who could be at risk of suicide in the United States through a national network of crisis centers.



The Lifeline is a Local Safety Net

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a network of independently operated, independently funded local and state call centers. The Lifeline is *not* one large national call center.

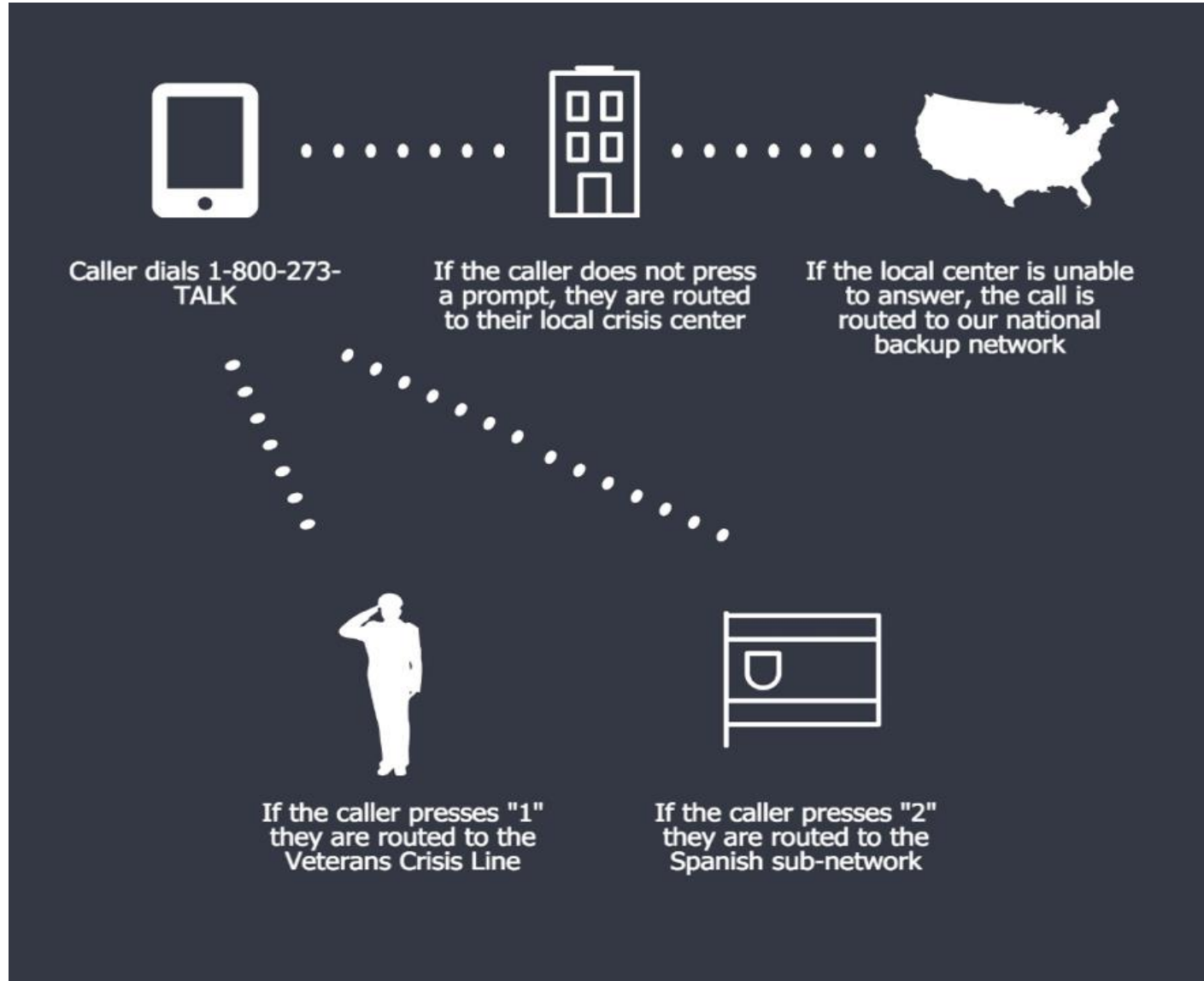
- SAMHSA's Lifeline grant is administered by Vibrant Emotional Health in New York City.
- Major Partners: NASMHPD, National Council for Behavioral Health, Columbia University, NAMI, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

County / regional-level Lifeline-affiliated center participation, as well as city, county, and state support for centers is essential so that callers:

- have their calls answered,
- have their calls answered quickly,
- have their calls answered with linkages to relevant local services,
- have their calls answered in accordance with the best possible standards in suicide crisis care.



How Routing in the Lifeline Works



Current Network Routing and Subnetworks

The Lifeline connects individuals with local crisis centers by using a system that routes calls based on the individual's location.

- Location is determined by the telephone number that the call originates from.
- Lifeline centers choose a coverage area based on county, area code, or zip code.
- Lifeline-affiliated centers can also set their time of coverage for Lifeline calls. You do not have to answer calls 24/7. We can work with you for what best suits your staffing needs and call volume loads.
- The Lifeline has 9 national back-up centers.
- Veterans can call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press "1" to reach the Veterans Crisis Line, which is staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, NY and Atlanta, GA.
- The Lifeline also operates a Spanish sub-network, which allows Spanish-speaking callers (who press "2") to be connected to a bilingual counselor at one of the eleven centers currently participating in the sub-network.

A National Portal for Local Service

Benefits of local centers

- **State/local ownership** of suicide prevention; cost sharing efficiencies
 - Over half use volunteers and paid staff
 - State and locals stakeholders can share costs with Feds for responding to calls
- Local dissemination of **best practices** allows Lifeline to be a “force-multiplier”
 - Over 80% centers educate and train in communities
 - 85% of local centers’ calls are non-Lifeline, allowing Lifeline best practices to be applied
 - Local resource knowledge, work with providers, law enforcement, crisis services

Challenges to date

- Lack of efficiencies in call routing
- Inability to have accurate, timely data
- Difficulty in communicating with dispersed network for updates, training, etc.

A New Unified Platform

Potential benefits

- **A hub** for all things 988, counselors will have to access Contact Center System (CCS), Customer Relationship Management System (CRM), Network Resource Center (NRC), Training Resources, etc.
- **Centralized routing** can result in faster connection to a live agent when any one center is at capacity; easy to incorporate network and center level customizations
- **Reduced operational complexity will** enable enhanced performance management and quality monitoring, and quicker adoption of standardized practices and/or system changes; Greater ability to communicate updates and announcements to center leadership and line staff
- **Consolidated resourcing** may increase ability to ensure all centers have sufficient capacity and technology infrastructure
- **Access to resources** for a larger geographic area
- Easy **data collection** at different levels (e.g., center, state, network) enabled by a common tech stack across all network centers

Contact Information

- Questions about 988 – including questions about Unified Platform and this presentation should be directed to: grants@vibrant.org