**PROCEDURE FOR USING SUICIDE ALERT CARD FOR INCOMING PHONE CALL FROM SUICIDAL PERSONS**

**PURPOSE.** To establish Standard Order of Procedure (SOP) for the management of potential suicidal Veterans calling into the VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinics.

1. **POLICY.**  Veterans calling into the Medical Center and/or Community Based Outpatient Clinics will receive immediate attention when exhibiting suicidal ideation.
2. **RESPONSIBILITY**
3. The Chief of staff is responsible for ensuring the respective services comply with the requirements of this SOP
4. The Clinical Service Chiefs are responsible for defining procedure and ensuring that employees under their supervision are familiar with the requirements of procedure.
5. It is the responsibility of all VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Staff to provide immediate priority attention to Veterans calling with suicidal ideation.
6. **PROCEDURES**
7. Placement: Printed/Laminated Suicide Alert Card (SAC) would be placed near employee phones in a standard location.
8. Employee receives call from suicidal caller within Medical Center or Outpatient clinic.
9. Call recipient waves SAC to attract attention and alert surrounding staff that assistance is needed.
10. Closest person takes SAC from call recipient and uses contact numbers listed on reverse of the card to contact Mental Health (MH) staff for immediate assistance.
    * If unable to reach first contact, proceed down the list until a contact is successfully reached.
11. Inform MH Responder that a veteran in crisis is actively speaking to coworker and help is needed immediately. Give location to responder.
12. Call Recipient is to keep Veteran engaged, making sure to obtain necessary information (name, last four digits of SSN, and phone number).
13. Determine if Veteran is alone. If not alone, ask to speak with person present.
14. Keep Veteran engaged in conversation until MH responder arrives.

* If no contact made with 5 minutes, person would request immediate assistance from nearest clinical staff in the area.
* If necessary, offer a warm transfer to Wade Park Psychiatric Assessment and Observation Center (**ext. 66042**) or contact Veterans Crisis Line **1-800-273-8255**.
* Original call recipient records information as soon as possible in CPRS adding Supervisor, Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPC) and MH Responder as cosigners. If CPRS is not accessible, email Supervisor/MH Responder using encryption to protect patient information.

1. Person receiving the warm transfer must also create a CPRS note documenting the action taken and outcome.
2. Suicide Prevention Coordinator must be notified of the incident within 24 hours.
3. The supervisor will ensure their staff members are debriefed appropriately,

with assistance from SPC or Mental Health if needed.