

Daily Activities of Prevention Personnel

BLUF: Prevention Personnel focus on non-clinical and integrated primary prevention of harmful behaviors, with the goal of stopping the harmful behaviors before they occur. At the installation level, Prevention Personnel serve as frontline public health workers, with a strong connection to their communities and a deep understanding of the local factors influencing potential for harmful behaviors. Harmful behaviors prevented may include sexual assault, intimate partner/domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, harassment, bullying, hazing, and suicide.

Daily Responsibilities:

- Multi-faceted and often fluctuate from day-to-day, depending on leadership and program priorities
- Work often involves integrating multi-agency data and resources and ensuring primary prevention efforts are synchronized, collaborative, and cross-cutting to have the greatest impact on reducing negative outcomes
- Apply multiple evidence-based and research-informed prevention strategies at different levels of the social ecology – for example, focus on building knowledge/skills at the individual level and establishing or sustaining positive social norms at the organizational level – and ensuring evaluation of efforts.
- Day often begins with daily leadership briefings focused on the following activities.

A Day In The Life of

Prevention Personnel

Primary Prevention of Harmful Behaviors is the Priority.

Prevention personnel focus on the primary prevention of harmful behaviors—stopping the harmful behaviors before they occur. Prevention personnel oversee primary prevention programs and activities in a non-clinical capacity to mitigate risk and enhance protective factors, making it less likely harmful behaviors will occur.

What does this look like in practice?

- Educate leadership and other stakeholders frequently and consistently on the difference between prevention and response
- Engage different programs and leaders in discussions on what primary prevention is and their roles in primary prevention

Note: This document was created based on a summary by the Department of the Air Force; modifications were made to reflect the activities of prevention personnel across the Department.

Focus on Integrated and Comprehensive Prevention.

Prevention Personnel focus on non-clinical and integrated primary prevention of harmful behaviors. This involves an integrated, holistic, multiagency, and collaborative approach with other programs/offices on primary prevention efforts. It also requires the use of programs, policies, and practices across individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels of the social ecology.

What does this look like in practice?

- Work with different programs/offices to determine what is being done (across prevention and response) and how efforts can (and should) complement each other
- Share information on the impacts of the various forms of harmful behaviors and shared risk and protective factors and identify areas where integrated prevention efforts can increase efficiency and make the best use of scarce resources
- Identify areas of shared interest across programs/offices for shared activities
- Develop plans that are aimed at preventing harmful behaviors at the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels of the social ecology – plans include programs, policies, and practices for each of the harmful behaviors.



Build Collaborative Relationships *DAILY*.

Prevention Personnel implement the prevention system, data informed actions, and elements of integrated prevention. But, their work is not accomplished alone. Effective collaborations are necessary for successful prevention efforts.

What does this look like in practice?

- Identify who the stakeholders are in the military community (need to identify those who can be positive and negative influencers)
- Develop plans to appropriately engage and communicate with all stakeholders – and be iterative in this process, as stakeholder influence changes over time
- Engage diverse stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are being considered in selecting, implementing, and evaluating prevention activities
- Lead or participate in community boards/coalitions focused on prevention across the military community and in the civilian setting



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Monitor Local Data and Analyze Trends.

Prevention Personnel are responsible for understanding the problem and selecting and implementing prevention activities that appropriately address the identified needs. Prevention Personnel must identify emerging issues and assess the organizational climate, values, beliefs, and quality of life to determine which prevention activities are needed. Prevention personnel regularly develop, collect, and share pertinent information/data from their respective functional perspective to analyze trends and implications.

What does this look like in practice?

- Conduct regular community needs assessments that assist in determining the needs of a military community
- Compile data, gather local data that is needed to fill data gaps, and analyze data to assess trends and compare with any state/national trends
- Educate leadership on the needs of the military community and allow them the opportunity to make data-informed decisions



Select and Implement Evidence-Based Prevention Activities.

Prevention Personnel are responsible for selecting and implementing evidence-based prevention programs, policies, and practices to address priority issues of the military community. Where possible the prevention activities are integrated and are focused on individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels of the social ecology.

What does this look like in practice?

- Implement prevention education that is focused on building skills and knowledge (e.g., building connectedness during times of change, promoting healthy relationships among new service members)
- Develop, implement, and constantly reinforce positive messages focused on healthy behaviors and attitudes (i.e., tell people what “to do”, as opposed what “not to do”); while prevention and awareness months focus attention on a specific topic, prevention professionals take steps year-round to integrate prevention and awareness efforts in communities as part of the comprehensive plan.
- Identify policies or practices that may have impacts on the system and advocate for implementation of these policies/practices with leadership and other stakeholders



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Evaluate Prevention Activities for Impact.

Prevention Personnel are responsible for evaluating prevention programs, policies, and practices for their impacts on the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs they were designed to address. Impacts may be assessed on long-term outcomes like sexual assault, child abuse and neglect, suicide, or other harmful behaviors but these impacts are not observed immediately. Long-term outcomes are often not observed until 5, 7, or sometimes 10 years after a prevention activity has been implemented. Thus, prevention personnel must also assess the risk and protective factors that are associated with the harmful behaviors.

What does this look like in practice?

- Identify and select measures/surveys that have good reliability and validity for assessing short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Preference is given to measures that have been used previously, as opposed to developing a new measure/survey.
- Determine the occurrence of assessing outcomes and other methods, such as whether a comparison group will be used and how many people will be recruited.
- Seek appropriate approvals for evaluation activities.
- Identify partners who can support evaluation efforts and data analysis.



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