



PHILADELPHIA VA MEDICAL CENTER  
*Serving those who served.*

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# News Release

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## VA Takes Life-Saving Line to Streets of Philadelphia

### Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Beginning Monday, the Department of Veterans Affairs began advertising the Suicide Prevention Lifeline on Philadelphia's SEPTA mass transit. The effort includes 140 SEPTA buses, 48 bus shelters, 97 subway interior posters, and 110 rail/subway station posters with a message of hope for those who have served their country and find themselves in an emotional crisis.

"It's exciting to have this resource come to Philadelphia," said Dr. Dave Oslin, the Philadelphia VA Medical Center Interim Chief of Staff. "It highlights an important program for a Veteran or loved one who may need a place to turn for help. And that help is available if they will just call."

Dr. Oslin adds that it is especially important for family or friends to notice the warning signs of suicide and to provide the Lifeline number to their loved one. These signs can include talking about death, displaying uncontrolled rage or anger, and trying to get guns, pills or other means to harm oneself.

Since its inception in July 2007, VA's Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), has rescued more than 10,000 Veterans and provided counseling for more than 180,000 Veterans and their loved ones at home and overseas. The hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by trained mental health professionals prepared to deal with immediate

crises. The hotline also offers an anonymous online chat feature available at [www.suicidepreventionhotline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionhotline.org). Look for the chat feature in the upper right hand box.

VA has publicized the hotline through mass transit campaigns since summer of 2008, increasing the number of calls and lives saved with each city the campaign has reached. VA is partnering with Blue Line Media ([www.BlueLineMedia.com](http://www.BlueLineMedia.com)), a [transit advertising](#) company, for the campaign. The SEPTA advertisements continue until Jan. 9, 2011.

VA has also promoted awareness of the hotline through national public service announcements featuring actor Gary Sinise and broadcast journalist Deborah Norville. The transit advertisements and both PSAs are available for download via You Tube and at [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention).