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## Vibrant Emotional Health Announces Training Evaluation Process Led by ICF

*The two-year project will improve training processes and support the professional development of 988 Lifeline staff*

**NEW YORK, NY (July 27, 2023)** – [Vibrant Emotional Health \(Vibrant\)](#), one of the nation’s leading mental health organizations and the nonprofit administrator of the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, is pleased to announce today that it has selected global consulting and technology services provider ICF to conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of the 988 Lifeline’s core self-paced, online training program.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with ICF to conduct a thorough evaluation of our training processes,” **said Dr. Tia Dole, Chief 988 Lifeline Officer at Vibrant Emotional Health.** “Vibrant is committed to improving professional development at our crisis centers and connecting individuals with well-trained, professional, and confident counselors. We look forward to the program’s findings and the continued growth of the 988 Lifeline.”

This comprehensive evaluation will focus on crisis counselors’ comfort utilizing the Lifeline’s model to assess safety and provide skillful short-term intervention with all contacts. Findings from this evaluation will help Vibrant understand how training can be improved to continue enhancing guidance for the nation’s largest network of crisis centers in assisting contacts in suicidal crises or emotional distress.

“We conducted a competitive search process and reviewed applications from a number of qualified institutions for this program. ICF was selected because of its deep experience and rigor in training evaluation efforts,” **said Dr. Christopher Drapeau, Head of Research and Evaluation at Vibrant Emotional Health.** “Dr. Walrath and ICF will work closely with the Vibrant team to evaluate current training efforts and identify areas for improvement. Vibrant is fully committed to providing valuable development opportunities to Lifeline staff and improving professional education efforts across the Lifeline network.”

ICF’s winning proposal, titled “Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant) Evaluation of a Network-wide Training Initiative” and led by Dr. Christine Walrath, meets the goals outlined above and expands their aims to measure conditions under which crisis counselors’ skills vary based on comfort working with different groups, and explores individual, organizational, and role-related characteristics that may explain variations in self-efficacy, knowledge, skills, and behavior including those related to minority stress and

cultural fluency. ICF also proposes a sub-study to measure the extent to which skills learned in training are transferred to crisis counselor behavior.

This evaluation will seek to evaluate the efficacy of three specific, required core training courses, which are mandatory for crisis center staff, to increase crisis counselors' self-efficacy, knowledge, and skill in Lifeline Safety Assessment. These self-paced online training courses cover the following:

- Fundamentals of Crisis Counseling
- Essential Skills in Crisis Counseling
- Assessing Safety and Suicide Risk.

In the project's first year, the Lifeline Training and Evaluation teams will work with ICF to develop and implement the project, beginning in Summer 2023. Data collection will also begin in the project's first year, to be completed by June 2024. The final analysis and write-up are expected to be completed in June 2025.

"We're honored to work with the team at Vibrant and SAMHSA to bring our suicide prevention and mental health evaluation expertise to improve 988 crisis counselor preparation, strengthen crisis care and better empower the 988 workforce to support those who need it most," said Dr. Walrath, ICF chief Science Officer for Public and Behavioral Health Research and Evaluation.

ICF combines deep domain and scientific expertise with leading-edge technology solutions to help public health clients address their greatest challenges. The company has deep expertise in public health research and evaluation, which it has applied in the evaluation of numerous priority mental health initiatives, including suicide prevention, substance use, systems reform, supported employment and more.

To learn more about Vibrant Emotional Health, visit [www.vibrant.org](http://www.vibrant.org).

### **About Vibrant Emotional Health**

Vibrant Emotional Health is a non-profit organization that helps individuals and families achieve emotional wellbeing. For over 50 years, our groundbreaking solutions have delivered high-quality services and support when, where and how people need it. We offer confidential emotional support through our state-of-the-art contact center and crisis hotline services that use leading-edge telephone, text and web-based technologies, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Disaster Distress Helpline, NFL Life Line and NYC Well. Through our community wellness programs, individuals and families obtain the support and skills they need to thrive. Our advocacy and education initiatives promote mental wellbeing as a social responsibility. Each year we help nearly 5 million people live healthier and more vibrant lives. We're advancing access, dignity and respect for all and revolutionizing the system for good. Visit [vibrant.org](http://vibrant.org). And follow Vibrant on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.