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(South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs)

South Dakota Joining Forces Initiative

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of the Military and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs have selected Dr. William Meirose to lead their new South Dakota Joining Forces. The main goal of the Initiative is to assist veterans, service members, and their families in finding the right door to receive care and the services they need.

Dr. Meirose will provide program development, oversight and coordination for the Joining Forces Initiative. He will enhance the state's ability to meet the behavioral-health care needs of its service members, veterans and their families by increasing access to appropriate care, closing gaps in the system, building the system's capacity, increasing interagency communication, and building collaboration.

"Our two departments want to leverage existing resources and explore opportunities to expand service capacity to service members, veterans and their families," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "We have a new friend in South Dakota who will have resources available for needs that arise in emergencies, or during daily crisis. With over 220 thousand members in this club it is tremendous to have a friend to lend a hand."

Service in any of the branch of the military has both inherent risks and rewards. The intent of the South Dakota Joining Forces Initiative is to help the state's Veterans, Service Members and their families navigate the maze of programs and services to get them through the right door at the right time.

"Anything we can do to enhance the relationship between our South Dakota communities, providers, and our service members, veterans and their families is worth the initiative," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG. "That is exactly what this proposal is all about."

"I am excited about working with the many diverse organizations and individuals across the state of South Dakota to create an effective network for our veterans, service members and their families. This network will help them gain access to the benefits and services they have earned through their service to our state and country," said Dr. Meirose.

Dr. Meirose can be reached at sdjf@midco.net or 605.490.1246.