

MAN THERAPY EVALUATION IN WASHINGTON COUNTY, RHODE ISLAND

FINAL REPORT

Period of Performance: October 1, 2020 – September 29, 2023

Subcontractor: University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMSSW)

Site Principal Investigator (PI): Jodi J. Frey, PhD

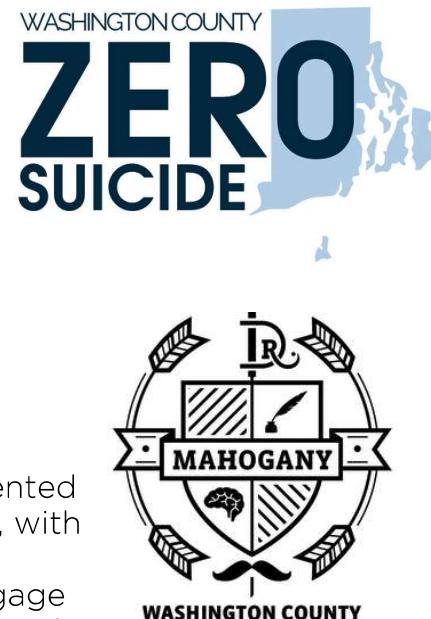
Man Therapy Washington County (MTWC) is a partnership between Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds (HBHM), Grit Digital Health (Grit), the Washington County Zero Suicide Program (WCZSP), and the University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMSSW) to promote and evaluate a male-oriented, online program, called Man Therapy™ (MT; www.ManTherapy.org) in Washington County, Rhode Island. The goal of the overall MTWC program is to improve mental health help-seeking related to depression and suicide among working-aged men in Washington County. This project's research protocol was approved by the University of Maryland, Baltimore's Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 11/16/2020.

The team launched MTWC in December 2020, during a time when the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic include well-documented increases in behavioral health challenges and increased risk for suicide, with working-aged men at particularly high risk. MT is a website designed specifically for men who are at risk for suicide and are less likely to engage in help-seeking behavior. The Site PI's previous CDC-funded (Grant Award #1U01CE002661) study was the first to test the effectiveness of MT with working-aged men. Two articles published in 2022 that provide a foundation from which the MTWC project was designed can be accessed here:

- [Effectiveness of man therapy to reduce suicidal ideation and depression among working-age men: A randomized controlled trial](#)
- [Help-seeking and Man Therapy: The impact of an online suicide intervention](#)

Overall, the results of the prior evaluation support the use of online interventions for depression and suicide screening and referral to resources for working-aged men. Applying lessons learned from this research, UMSSW co-led, with Washington County leaders and Grit, a county-wide public health campaign, *Man Therapy Washington County (MTWC)*, to engage men through online promotion, in-person and online education, and other high-tech, and high-touch promotions to encourage working-aged men throughout the county to visit the MT website. UMSSW, with Grit, tracked online utilization of screening and online services, in addition to evaluating men's experience using the MT website.

A summary of grant activities is outlined in this report and organized by the following topic areas: (1) Partnership Activities and Growth; (2) Outreach and Recruitment Activities; (3) Data Findings; (4) Challenges, Strategies to Overcome Challenges and Lessons Learned; and (5) Conclusion. An Appendix supplements the information provided in this report.



PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES AND GROWTH

At the start of this project, the UMSSW research team worked with the Washington County Zero Suicide Program (WCZSP) and Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds (HBHM) staff to compile a list of possible partners whom we would try to engage in order to help promote the Man Therapy (MT) website in Washington County. This list is comprised of WCZSP partner health organizations, countywide leadership team and staff, HBHM community partners, state health and behavioral health agencies and organizations in Rhode Island, federal contacts, Mental Health First Aid and QPR instructors, and other leaders working to reduce suicide rates in Rhode Island. At the conclusion of this grant, we have more than 175 Washington County-based partners/partner organizations that are receiving MTWC communications and promotional materials to disseminate in their communities.

It is important to note that MT was not an original part of the original WCZSP grant and it was not until the pandemic required in-person training and other outreach activities to be shut down that the county reached out to Dr. Frey to discuss partnership and promotion of MT. Dr. Frey and the WC team recognized the potential benefit of introducing MT to the county and using the online creatives to promote the website but also recognized that promotion might be hampered due to the limited ability (and total inability during the first year of the project) to engage potential partners face-to-face. Additionally, many of the high-touch promotional efforts that were used in the prior study (Frey et al., 2022) from which this project was built, were based on interacting with the community during community events. Unfortunately, this would be a limitation of promoting MT in Washington County during the first half of this project due to the pandemic and lack of community events.

Despite the limitations of promoting MT in person, MTWC partners were instrumental in promoting MT and engaging working-aged men in help-seeking. A few highlights from engaged partners that helped promote MT throughout the grant are described below.

- **Chief Sean Corrigan from Narragansett Police Department and partner in HBHM Mental Health First Aid and CIT** work recorded a videotaped testimonial with talking points provided by UMSSW. This video was promoted widely in conjunction with online promotion and distribution of challenge coins and other MT materials.
- **Chief Scott Kettle from North Kingstown Fire Department** recorded a videotaped testimonial with talking points provided by UMSSW. This video was promoted widely in conjunction with online promotion and distribution of challenge coins and other MT materials.
- **Mike Cerullo, QPR trainer**, presented at meetings including the Rhode Island Police Chief's Association and Southern Rhode Island Firefighters League Board, and visited many police and fire departments in the county to share information and marketing materials.
- **Amanda Brycki, Interim Director of Behavioral Health at Wood River Health Services (WRHS)**, met several times with the research team to discuss potential groups to outreach to and ways that she and her staff could help support and promote MT, including encouraging WRHS staff to share this free resource with their male clients/patients.
- **Erin Goodman, Peer Recovery Specialist for the WCZSP and employee of WRHS**, shared information with her colleagues, peer support groups, and individuals with lived experience.
- **Jeff Allen, former Charlestown Police Chief**, visited more than 45 facilities throughout the county, including marinas and boat clubs, gun shops and shooting ranges, and fire and police departments to share MT marketing materials and information. The team worked to follow up with all 45 facilities by phone and/or email.
- **Sue Orban, former grant coordinator from HBHM**, gave presentations to medical staff at South County Hospital and other colleagues.
- **Drs. Rob Harrison, Director of the WCZSP, and Jim McDonald, former Interim Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health**, created videotaped testimonials which were added to social media and outreach letters included in promotional partner packages to healthcare organizations.

- **Deidre Denning Norton, Vice President and Site Director (North Kingstown) of Well One**, worked with the team to identify materials and to disseminate them to businesses located in and around the Quonset Industrial Park.
- **Amy Neilson, Chariho Community Health Worker of Chariho Youth Task Force**, promoted MT at United Way of Rhode Island's 2-1-1- Outreach RV, which functions as a mobile resource center.
- **Dan Fitzgerald, Executive Director, and staff at Chariho Youth Task Force** helped spread the word and added MT to its online resource library which was promoted through the use of QR codes posted throughout the community.
- **Laura Pointek, Recycling Coordinator at Rose Hill Regional Transfer Station and Central Landfill**, shared materials with the Human Resource Directors who distributed MT information to its employees.
- **Michelle Garisole, Founder of Fresh, LLC**, was an early adopter of MT and shared materials with her colleagues, business owners, and men in the community and her church fellowship.

UMSSW created a free online Google Drive folder populated with ecards, flyers, posters, presentation materials, and other creatives for partners to access, download, and share. Additional content was added as it was created throughout the grant and shared with partners. Updates to the folder and additional resources were shared during monthly Zero Suicide community meetings. The team worked with Grit to develop a customized marketing logo for MTWC, incorporating it into all promotional materials and social media. UMSSW also developed an infographic based on the data provided in the [2012 White Paper](#) about MT that was shared with partners.

The UMSSW team created Facebook and Twitter accounts for the project and began posting messages and engaging partners via social media in December 2020. UMSSW, HBHM, and Grit worked together to develop promotional marketing plans involving both a high-tech and high-touch strategy for bringing awareness about this project and directing men in Washington County to the MT website. Additionally, we posted information about the partner organizations, including trainings, community events, and Washington County-specific content to further support the development of a county-wide network of suicide prevention resources and activities. Engagement on the MTWC pages includes:

FACEBOOK

Page Followers: 134

Page Likes: 113

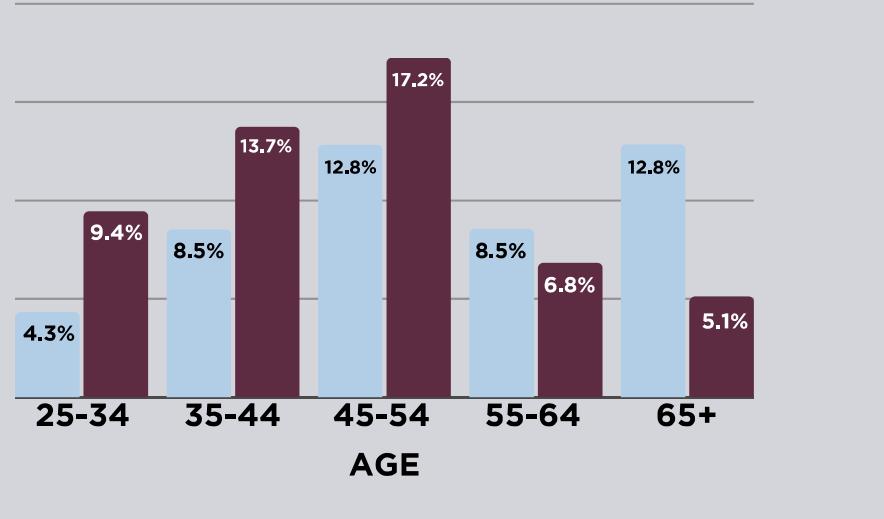
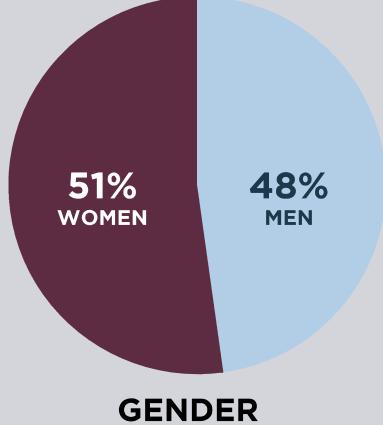
Reach*: 6,119

*how many Facebook users saw your content (organic and paid)

TWITTER

Followers: 71

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



TOP FACEBOOK POSTS

Based on reach

(Click on image to view post)

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS/ZERO SUICIDE NIGHT

RHODE ISLAND VS. SAINT LOUIS
MARCH 2ND AT 7 PM



DATE: 02/28/22
REACH: 794
REACTIONS: 23
SHARES: 5

Coffee & Chat
Veterans Group with Rob Harrison, MD

1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month at 10am
Charlestown Sr. Comm Center
Alzheimer Park

DATE: 11/02/22
REACH: 782
REACTIONS: 16
SHARES: 8



DATE: 06/22/23
REACH: 605
REACTIONS: 22
SHARES: 2

In addition to working as a team to tailor our promotional messaging for individual groups (e.g., first responders, healthcare) and organizations (e.g., recreation, sports), we worked with partners/partner organizations to promote their wellness events and activities on MTWC Facebook and Twitter pages. See the examples below.

Community Mental Health & Wellness Fair

May 16th, 5:30 - 7:30 PM
Warwick Public Library 600 Sandy Ln.

Something for everyone
RESOURCES ★ GIVEAWAYS ★ ACTIVITIES

Directions of local agencies & institutions will be available throughout the fair.
Info Studio, Large & Small Meeting rooms, & Courtyard

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Washington County - Rhode Island

From our friends at BH Regional Conditions:
Attention community members!!!!
You are invited to: The Mental Health & Wellness Fair:
Where: Warwick Public Library... See more

First Aid for Life

Today is Self-Injury Awareness Day. There are many resources available to learn more about how to identify and find support for self-harm. Check out Crisis Text Line, LifeSIGNS or what this great video from First Aid for Life

Self Harm
Mental Health First Aid

First Aid for Life™
The First Aid Experts

Today is Self Injury Awareness Day 2021. This video explains signs someone may be self-harming and how to approach the topic

FREE FAMILY EVENT Sat. July 9 from 11 AM - 1 PM at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Alton, RI. Del's lemonade, puzzle swap, games and more!

CHARIH hangouts

KICK-OFF TO SUMMER FREE FAMILY EVENT
July 9, 2022
11AM-1PM
St. Thomas Church, Alton
322 Church St, Richmond, RI

Activities:

- Giant Jenga
- Del's Lemonade
- Make-your-own garden pavers
- Board Game & Puzzle Swap
- Resource fair
- And MORE!

GETTING OUT OF THINKING TRAPS

FAST FACTS

It's easy to fall into negative thinking patterns and spend time berating yourself. Instead of getting stuck in the negative, here are some ways to get out of your own way.

COMMON COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

Everyone believes holding a grudge is better than letting go of one situation or place of residence. Personalization: Holding on to grudges because you feel like you're the only one who has been wronged. Discrediting: Focusing on the negative aspects of a situation while ignoring the positive. Catastrophizing: Seeing things out of proportion, assuming the worst possible outcome. Striving for Perfection: Striving to be perfect and failing to let go of the facts. Overgeneralization: Seeing things in black and white, and assuming from this one example that "I'm a failure." Minimization: Minimizing your own accomplishments by focusing on what you did not do instead of what you did do.

TIPS FOR CHALLENGING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Address: Think about a different way to view the situation. For example, if you thought "I'm not good enough" about yourself, you could think "I'm not perfect, but I'm good enough." Reframe: Reframe the negative thought into a positive one. For example, if you thought "I'm not good enough" about yourself, you could think "I'm good enough." Reverse: Reverse the negative thought into a positive one. For example, if you thought "I'm not good enough" about yourself, you could think "I'm good enough."

TAKING A MENTAL HEALTH BREAK: WHAT TO DO ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Visit: www.bhddr.ri.gov/pauseri

RHODE ISLAND
Managing Stress During COVID-19

Try the following:

- Take a Nap
- Play with your Pet
- Write down what you are thankful for
- Have a Movie Night
- Video Chat with Friends and Family

QPR
An Evidence-Based Suicide Prevention Training

Certified Instructor: Rob Harrison, MD
Date/Time: July 25th from 10am to 11:30am
Location: Richmond Senior/Community Center (2nd Floor, above the Richmond police station)
Who: Anyone age 17 and up is welcome
Free and Open to the Public

Human Services of Richmond, RI
All are welcome to join us for this free and important training to help our family, friends, and neighbors who may be going through difficult times or in crisis... See more

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

UMSSW worked with WCZSP, HBHM, and Grit to strategize efforts and activities and implement cost-effective ways to engage partners in promoting MTWC to their local networks and communities. Between January 2021 and June 2023, we identified and outreached to several groups located in Washington County including, but not limited to:

- **Healthcare**

- The team in Washington County distributed materials to facilities across the county, in person when possible. Follow-up, which consisted of a minimum of two phone calls and emails to each organization, was completed by UMSSW research staff.

- **Wellness and prevention**

- UMSSW researchers identified mental health, behavioral health, substance use treatment facilities, and suicide survivor, prevention, and advocacy groups and sent outreach materials to these groups. Follow-up was conducted by phone.

- **First responder groups**

- The team collaboratively developed outreach materials with relatable creatives and messaging for partners in Washington County to disseminate. A Challenge Coin package, complete with a Man Therapy mug, coin memento, and instructions for using and sharing the coin, with posters and other outreach materials was distributed to the police, fire, and EMS departments in Washington County.

- **Sanitation companies and landfill companies**

- We developed targeted partner outreach materials, highlighting the importance of taking care of oneself, especially sanitation workers who are essential workers and have been sorely impacted by COVID, and sent materials by email to Washington County's two landfill locations and nine sanitation companies. We followed up by phone.

- **Boating associations and license boards and marinas and boat clubs**

- We created fresh designs, building off the state symbol (Anchor) and motto (Hope) for use as gifs in social media posts or static pages for printing flyers and posters and shared with approximately 40 marinas, yacht clubs/boat clubs. UMSSW research staff followed up with an email to each club.

HBHM also worked with Lamar Advertising Company to schedule advertising space on billboards. The ads were launched in November 2020 and first appeared in two towns: North Kingstown and Hopkinton. To generate buzz about the billboards and the MTWC website, UMSSW, and HBHM worked on a press release titled "Humorous billboards in North Kingstown kick off effort to encourage Washington County men to address their mental health needs", which was circulated to various press and media outlets and published later in November. Following this press, Dr. Harrison was featured on a local radio station and Ms. Sue Orban was interviewed for an article in the South County Independent.

UMSSW also outreached to local news outlets including Providence Business News, Coventry Courier, The North Kingstown Standard Times, and The Narragansett Times. HBHM invested in paid advertising and contracted with Sun Media Group to provide marketing via radio spots, interviews, articles/press, and digital ads. Results from this campaign revealed:

- **Over 200 people clicked through to the MT website as a result of audio ads**
- **The ad was played 37,083 times**
- **The ad was heard by 14,875 unique listeners**
- **Banners received 209 link clicks**



During 2022-23, UMSSW identified approximately 45 businesses around each billboard location (approximately 8 ads throughout Hopkinton, Westerly, and North Kingstown) and mailed an introduction outreach letter and MT promotional wallet cards, requesting their support in sharing the cards and other MT materials at their place of business. We followed up with these businesses by phone, trying to secure as many partnerships as possible.

WCZSP and HBHM personally visited businesses in Washington County to inform them about MT, QPR training, and other suicide prevention education and prevention events and activities, and to request their help to disseminate promotional materials. Included in grassroots outreach activities are: The Gentleman Barber, Ray's Barber Shop, Richmond Smoke Shop, US Extruders, Junk and Java, VFW and American Legion, South Kingstown Chamber of Commerce, Quonset Business Park, VFW and American Legions, and Heroes Horizons, to name a few.

UMSSW also scheduled meetings and presentations to businesses and groups located in Washington County including, but not limited to:

- Ocean State Waves
- Cargill
- Mental Health Association Rhode Island
- Chariho Youth Task Force and United Way of Rhode Island 2-1-1 Outreach RV
- State Commander of the VFW and American Legion
- Chambers of Commerce
- Legal groups from the Rhode Island Bar Association, Help Rhode Island Law and Volunteer Law Program, Rhode Island Legal Services and Dad's Divorce resource
- Department of Environmental Management and Farmers, Fishers, and Forestry group
- Ocean Community YMCA
- Washington Trust Community Skating Rink
- Yawgoog Valley Winter Resort facility
- Johnny Cake
- Block Island Ferry

The team developed a partnership with the University of Rhode Island Rams, resulting in their promotion of mental health awareness, including Man Therapy, at two URI basketball games. We posted pictures highlighting the events of the evening on social media.



WCZSP and HBHM regularly presented to groups and attended local activities and community events, handing out promotional materials and capturing video testimonials from men about what they do to keep their mental health strong. Events attended by team members include:

- Annual Chris Collins Whiffle Ball Tournament
- Annual Maddie Potts Foundation Golf Tournament
- Coffee and Chat group with Veterans
- Wood River Health Services' Head-to-Toe Wellness Fair
- AFSP Suicide Prevention Walk
- University of Rhode Island Alumni and Family Weekend



DATA FINDINGS

The UMSSW team collected data from three primary data sources to evaluate the project's outcomes: (a) MT dashboard data, (b) evaluation survey data (quantitative and qualitative), and (c) interview data (qualitative only).

a. Man Therapy Dashboard Data and Data Analytics

Data regarding the utilization of the MT site online is collected through a Data Dashboard and directly with the MT creator and partner, Grit. While paid media and paid campaign data is a big driver of traffic to the website and one that we can more readily report on with online analytics, it is not the only driver in this public health campaign as you read above with our partners sharing materials. The first section of this data report will include results from our paid media performance. These results are monitored and reported on by Thomas Vossler, Project Manager for Grit.

Paid Media Performance: September 30, 2020 – June 30, 2023

A key planning and optimization leading into this time period was the Paid Search campaign. Over the course of the project, we worked to tighten geographic targeting to Washington County-only which yielded a higher cost per click but has captured a higher volume of user search queries within the county. We also expanded our keyword targeting list to include more non-brand, mental health-specific topics, including localized Washington County Rhode Island search terms.

• Overall summary

- Sessions of Man Therapy in Washington County increased by 62.6% and completed Head Inspections increased by 29% compared to the previous year. Paid search saw a 130% increase in user traffic and a 55% increase in total Head Inspections completed. As described later in the report, the Head Inspections are an important indicator of engagement on the MT website and also lead to great help-seeking behaviors.

- **Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Google Adwords Insights**

- PPC traffic drove 8,409 users to the website, 9,244 sessions, an average time on site of 1:37, 3.34 average pages per session, and 2,589 total completed Head Inspections.
- 30.7% of Paid Search traffic completed a Head Inspection.
- The top keywords by click-through rate included: *am I depressed, mental health test, mental health, depression, symptoms of depression*.
- Key Optimizations and Learnings
 - Washington County only Geo-targeting: During the course of the project, we switched the campaign's geo-targeting from the entire Rhode Island region to Washington County, RI specifically to reach and screen more men in our direct evaluation area. We saw significant overall decreases in traffic and Head Inspection completions, and significant increases in cost per click and conversion. The optimization did however significantly increase the direct traffic and Head Inspection completions for Washington County. During the first month in which we made this optimization, March 2023, Washington County increased Head Inspections completed by 190% and user traffic by 244%; despite overall campaign traffic decreasing by 60% and overall Head Inspections completed decreasing by 75%.
 - The top 10 converting keywords drove 86% of the total completed Head Inspections: *depression test, depression, mental health, mental illness test, clinical depression, anger management, depression symptoms, feeling down, stress, and alcohol abuse in that order*.

- **Paid Social Insights: Facebook and Instagram**

- Paid Social drove traffic drove 1,414,486 impressions and reached 166,235 users in Washington County, RI.
- Overall, the campaign drove 1,725 users, 1,874 sessions, an average time on site of 0:43, 2.02 average pages per session, and 140 completed Head Inspections in total.
- Key Optimizations and Learnings
 - Broad audience and tight geographic targeting are most efficient. With strict geographic targeting in a lightly populated area, our campaign only reached users who were living or visiting Washington County. With an already limited potential audience size, combining it with an even smaller audience in specific occupational fields created frequency and campaign efficiency issues. In response, we removed demographic targeting and focused broadly on working-aged men living (or working for the evaluation) in Washington County.
 - Rotating and pulsing creative. We did see gradual user fatigue as high-performing creatives declined over time. We optimized against this by regularly rotating new creative into rotation followed by pulsed time frames with creative in market and out of market.

- **Website Insights - Washington County users**

- Washington County drove 5,229 users, 6,187 sessions, and 950 completed Head Inspections.
- Top resource cards by pageviews, excluding homepage and Head Inspection included: Gentlemental Health, local resource cards, Tips and Testimonials, Worried about Someone, Man FAQs, and Testimonials, which totaled 4,026 pageviews.
 - Mental Health Resources cards totaled 1,373 pageviews
 - Local Resource User Experience Optimization. In July 2022, additional user navigation and experience content was added to the Man Therapy site allowing for users to get from a national resource level to a state, and ultimately county-level resource in a new way. In the first 30 days after launching the updated content experience, pageviews to our mental health resource category cards, which included all local resources, increased by 164%. This was also during a time period when overall traffic was down.

- Local resource cards viewed:
 - *Rhode Island Local Mental Health Practitioners*: 102 pageviews
 - *Rhode Island Local Resources*: 87 pageviews
 - *Follow Man Therapy Washington County on Social*: 84 pageviews
 - *Butler Hospital Substance Use Outpatient Service*: 82 pageviews
 - *Rhode Island Mental Health Practitioners*: 70 pageviews
 - *Connect to Local Resources Near You*: 55 pageviews
 - *Rhode Island Nearby Group Practices*: 45 pageviews
 - *Wood River Health Services*: 5 pageviews
 - *Coastal Wellness Collective*: 5 pageviews
 - *The Journey to Hope, Health, Healing*: 5 pageviews

Data Dashboard

Overall, the data on website engagement is positive, showing growth in the number of users and content over the duration of the project, as can be seen in the table below. Overall, the number of new users during the project increased 20 times for new users finding the MT site on their own before the project.

The 20-point Head Inspections online are an important indicator of engagement with the site and mental health help-seeking. Even though the average time on the website decreased, the percentage of Head Inspections increased from 30% complete to 71% complete. When men are on the website and using the Head Inspection, their time on the site is much more directed to what they are struggling with and/or seeking specifically, including referral resources. We also used the data from the dashboard to help promote the site throughout the county based in part by what men were searching for and pages they were viewing online.

Engagement in Rhode Island	Before MTWC 9/30/2017 - 9/29/2020	During MTWC 9/30/2020 - 9/29/2023
New users to the MT website	687	13,724
Head Inspections on the MT site started and completed	407 started; 30% completed	4,554 started; 71% completed
Pageviews	2,893	52,179
Average time spent on the site	3 minutes 14 seconds	1 minute 34 seconds
Search filters	Veteran/military; anxiety; relationships and sex; anger; depression and suicide	Depression and suicide; anxiety; relationships and sex; anger; sleep
Crisis services	8 clicked the red phone	51 clicked the red phone 4 clicked the chat feature

b. Man Therapy Evaluation Survey Data

Quantitative Data Review

The UMSSW team administered an online survey to evaluate men who met certain criteria from screening and agreed to participate in the voluntary evaluation survey. The online survey (T1) was administered immediately online when men were screened and agreed to participate and then again (T2) one-month after completing the initial survey. Survey items include demographics, user engagement on the MT website, mental health help-seeking and support items, and standardized measures (i.e., PHQ-9; Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Help; Perceived Stigma and Barriers to Care for Psychological Problems).

Once on the MT site, a modal popped up to invite people to learn more about the survey. If they agreed to learn, they were taken to a new window online that included the screening questions. People who identified as male or transgender male, between 25-64 years old, who live or work in Washington County, who had never previously completed the survey, and who scored at moderate to high risk for depression (a total score of 10 or more) and/or any risk for suicide on question 9 on the PHQ-9 were invited to participate in the evaluation study. A summary of the sample inclusion responses is described below.

- Depression and Suicide Screening Scores
- Total of 192 people responded to the online website modal inviting people to learn more about the voluntary evaluation study.
 - One hundred fifty-five (81%) people entered demographic information (i.e., gender, age, location, first participation in survey).
 - Of the 155, 59 (38%) men were eligible based on gender, age, and where they live and/or work.
 - Among the 59, 35 (59%) agreed to participate.
 - Among those who completed the PHQ-9 screening ($n=31$), 55% ($n=17$) of men ages 25-64 screened at minimal or mild risk for depression and 45% ($n=14$) screened at moderate or severe risk for depression. The 14 men were invited to complete the first survey.
 - 23% ($n=7$) reported suicidal ideation on the ninth item of the PHQ-9.
 - Among the 14 respondents who were eligible for the study based on the PHQ-9 screening, 50% ($n=7$) screened at risk for both depression and suicidal ideation and 50% ($n=7$) screened at risk only for depression and did not report suicidal ideation.
 - None of the men screened at risk only for suicidal ideation, with an absence of depression.
 - Thirteen men reported living/working in the following towns:
 - Richmond ($n=3$)
 - Westerly ($n=3$)
 - North Kingstown ($n=2$)
 - South Kingstown ($n=2$)
 - Charlestown ($n=1$)
 - Exeter ($n=1$)
 - Narragansett ($n=1$)
 - Twelve (12) men completed the first survey (T1).
 - Fifty-eight percent ($n=7$) completed the follow up survey (T2; one month post T1).

Below is a summary of our **initial survey (T1) data.**

- Demographics
 - The mean age of participants is 43 years old ($SD=11.6$).
 - Study participants are primarily ...
 - White (92%) and Multiracial (8%)
 - Non-Hispanic or Latinx (92%)
 - Married (33.3%)
 - College graduate (42%)
 - Employed (75%)

- **Referral Source**
 - Participants reported first learning about the MT website from social media/online ads (57.1%) and printed materials (28.6%).
- **Man Therapy Utilization and Satisfaction**
 - The majority of participants (92%) reported that they had never visited the MT website prior to visiting the website and participating in the study.
 - Overall satisfaction with the site: Mean score is 4.17 out of 5 ($SD=0.94$).
 - Men shared their experience using the website by selecting what they like best and least about the website.
 - What did men like best: funny approach (25%) and having good information and the website was made for men like me (both 16.7%).
 - What did men like least: about one-third of participants reported they liked the website all. Some reported that there is not enough information (16.7%) or lack of diversity (16.7%).
- **Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviors and Outcomes**
 - Twenty-five percent of participants reported that they are currently receiving care from a doctor or other professional for mental health problems.
 - Six (50%) of participants reported that they received care in the past, but were not currently receiving care.
 - The remaining 25% of participants reported that they never received care from a doctor or other mental health professional.
 - Sixty-seven percent of participants intended to use the resources or follow up with at least one or more recommendations mentioned on the MT website in the next 30 days. Twenty-five percent indicated that they may use the recommendations.
 - Six (75%) participants reported they intended to use self-care tips from the MT website. Five (63%) participants intended to talk with loved ones or trusted friends about their concerns. Four (50%) participants intended to make an appointment with a primary care doctor and/or begin seeing a therapist. Three (37%) intended to make an appointment with a mental health professional.
 - Participants' likelihood of meeting with a mental health counselor in the next month was on average 3.08 out of 5 ($SD=1.51$).

Below is a description of data collected from participants with the second survey (T2) one month after the first. Additionally, comparison data is also presented. However, due to the small sample, results should be interpreted cautiously and statistical comparisons were not possible to run.

- **Man Therapy Continued Utilization and Satisfaction**
 - 43% of participants visited the MT website after completing the first survey (about 1 month prior).
 - On average, participants visited the MT website three times during the course of the study (1 month; $SD=1.73$).
 - During their last visit to the MT website, 67% of participants reported viewing the 20-point Head Inspection; local/Rhode Island-based resources; Rich's Resources List; and the Professional Therapist list.
 - Overall satisfaction: Mean score is 3.57 out of 5 ($SD=0.53$).
 - 29% of participants reported that they are "very likely" to recommend the MT website to a family member or friend; 43% reported that they were "somewhat likely" to recommend the site to a family member or friend.
 - At T2, participants shared their thoughts about using the website:
 - What did participants like best: they liked the funny approach (43%), and having good information, anonymity of website, easy to locate resources, and the website was made for men like me (all 16.7%).
 - What did participants like least: 43% participants reported they had difficulties navigating the website and 29% of participants reported that there was too much information on the website.

- Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviors and Outcomes
 - Half of the participants were currently receiving care at the time of the 2nd survey.
 - Two-thirds of the participants indicated they were “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to continue to meet with a doctor or other professional for mental health care in the near future ($M=3.83$, $SD=1.2$).
 - After viewing the MT website and completing the initial survey one month ago, one participant contacted their primary care doctor to schedule an appointment to discuss their mental health concerns.
 - 60% of the participants agreed that viewing the MT website impacted their decision to seek care for mental health ($M=3.2$, $SD=1.3$).
- Changes in scores from T1 to T2 (*due to the small sample, we are just reporting descriptive statistics*)
 - We used the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) to measure depression symptoms. Higher scores indicate greater depressive symptoms. The items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale (0=Not at all, 3=Nearly every day) and a sum score of each item was used (range from 0-27). Seven participants completed the PHQ-9 at both T1 and T2. The PHQ-9 score decreased on average from 14.9 to 12.7.
 - We used the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ), which consists of eight items (eight sources of help, such as family, friends, etc.), to measure help-seeking behavior. Higher scores indicate greater help-seeking intention. The items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Extremely Unlikely, 7=Extremely Likely) and a sum score of each item was used (range from 8-56). Seven participants completed GHSQ at both T1 and T2. The GHSQ score increased on average from 26.2 to 27.8.
 - We used the Perceived Stigma and Barriers to Care Scale, and higher scores indicate greater perceived stigma and barriers. The perceived stigma subscale contains six items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree). A sum score of each item was used (range from 6-30). Seven participants completed this scale at both T1 and T2. The perceived stigma score decreased on average from 15.8 to 13.3. The perceived barriers subscale contains five items (i.e., cost, time). A sum score of each item was used (range from 5-25). Participants’ perceived logistic barriers to care decreased on average from 14.0 to 12.8.
 - We used the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale—Short Form. The response options of this scale range from 0 to 3 (0=Disagree, 1=Partly Disagree, 2=Partly Agree, 3=Agree). Higher scores indicate more positive attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help. Average scores increased on average from 17.7 to 18.9, indicating an increase in participants’ positive attitudes towards help-seeking over time.

Qualitative Data Review from Surveys

The survey includes several open-ended questions asking what prompted participants to initially visit the MT website.

- At Time 1, almost 40% of participants reported that they were experiencing mental health problems, such as symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression. Some quotes included:
 - “My wife said I’m depressed so I googled symptoms. I’ve been dealing with a lot of stress lately.”
 - “I’ve been overly stressed and dealing with imposter syndrome the past few months.”
- Fifteen percent of participants visited the MT website for resources about seeking therapy. For example, one participant wrote:
 - “Thought of trying new avenue of therapy. I haven’t had much success in the past.”
- One participant mentioned having relationship/marital issues (i.e., “wife wants a divorce”) and that these prompted him to visit the website.
- Other participants reported that they visited the website out of curiosity or after seeing an advertisement for MT.

Some participants shared their experience using the MT website in responses to the open-ended questions. A few examples are included below:

- *"I haven't explored much but I like that you're marketing mental health services to men. It's the first time I've seen any group take mens' mental health seriously. Mental health and well-being is always exclusive to women. Nobody cares about men, until now!" (T1)*
- *"Like that this offers an alternative to traditional therapy where I've found no success." (T1)*
- *"I thought that it could help me because it knew how I am feeling." (T1)*
- *"There was good information but difficult to navigate." (T2)*

Regarding help-seeking barriers, three participants responded and included comments about a lack of motivation for seeking help or feeling "uncomfortable opening up to new people", and some logistical barriers. For example, one participant wrote:

- *"Dealing with doctor's offices and insurance is such a hassle. Every time, without fail, it's so exhausting to even schedule an appointment. 30 minutes here, 10 minutes there. Waiting in a lobby. I have a 15 month old daughter and have started my own business and time is precious."*

c. Man Therapy Interview Data

In addition to the data presented above, the UMSSW team also wanted to understand how a more general population of working-aged men who are not at high risk for depression and suicide interacted with and evaluated the MT website. To accomplish this, the researchers invited eligible men to participate in a one-time interview in which participants were asked about their use of and satisfaction with the MT website, and barriers and facilitators to seeking mental health services. The team submitted a modification to the UMB IRB to conduct interviews and it was approved on 6/9/2022.

Participants who were invited for the interview should meet the same demographic criteria as men invited to complete the survey (i.e., men, aged 25-64, live or work in Washington County, no previous participation in the survey), but were screened with minor or no depression on the PHQ-9 and the absence of suicidal ideation. After June 2022, seven participants met the criteria and two agreed to be interviewed.

From the two interviews, the raw data was transcribed and two trained research assistants independently coded the data to look for patterns and themes. The PI, Dr. Jodi Frey reviewed the codes and final quotes. From the two interviews, the team identified five codes and provided definitions of each code. The five codes included: Recruitment, Motivation, Reaction, Feedback, and Suggestions. Some of the codes had multiple categories and sub-categories. The team then worked to select quotes that best illustrated the meaning of the categories within the five codes. A copy of the final qualitative interview codebook with supporting quotes is included in the Appendix.

CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

Some of the challenges and what we did to overcome them, in addition to lessons learned and recommended next steps are summarized in this final section.

Grassroots, county-wide campaigns need a local champion(s)

An important lesson learned from our work is the need for a local advocate on the team to help launch the campaign and ensure meaningful and sustained engagement with partners throughout the life of the project. This person should attend important conferences, meetings, and community events to solidify existing relationships and develop new relationships with groups that might be reluctant to promote men's mental health.

As an example, Dr. Rob Harrison and Mike Cerullo (MTWC promotional partner and QPR trainer) presented at a meeting of the Rhode Island Police Chief's Association and Southern Rhode Island Firefighters League Board early on in project.

They visited each department in the County personally, showing Chief Corrigan and Chief Kettle's video testimonials and providing posters, mugs, Challenge Coins, and other promotional materials. HBHM later hired Jeff Allen, a former police officer, to conduct grassroots outreach efforts in Washington County. He visited approximately 45 facilities throughout the county, including marinas and boat clubs, gun shops and shooting ranges, fire departments, and small businesses. Website engagement data revealed the **number of MT users increased in the months Mr. Allen worked**, specifically, an increase from 80 users in August 2021 to 151 users in August 2022.

The HBHM team and members of the Zero Suicide Program were strong advocates for MT and critical to the successes identified in this final report. However, in order to fully saturate the community and increase brand recognition, the evaluation team recommends a dedicated half-time employee to work regularly promoting MT in person and online within the local community. The pandemic and the restraints on the ability to budget for this position to be dedicated to MT had a direct impact on the speed in which MT was promoted around the county and subsequently recognized by the public. For some organizations, they needed time to really learn and think about how to use MT in their broader suicide prevention programming, and this grant was only active for a short time period.

Need to make outreach local and inclusive

While the team received feedback from the community that they liked the humorous approach and funny billboards created by the MT team, we also heard that some of the creatives that focused on Dr. Rich Mahogany did not resonate with some groups of men (e.g., BIPOC men, LGBTQ+ community). In an effort to be more inclusive, given that the wording in many of the ads resonated without focusing on the image of Dr. Rich, the team was creative and flexible. For example, we worked with Lamar Advertising Company to provide billboard space over the course of the grant, changing the advertisements quarterly. In years one and two of the grant, HBHM worked with Grit Digital Health to select creatives that were proven effective based on Grit's evaluation of its marketing tools. In year three, we received feedback on removing Dr. Rich from creative ads and worked with the team to adapt existing creatives by removing Dr. Rich's picture, leaving only text. See the example of a modified advertisement below.



MT website users need an easy and clear way to directly connect to local services and supports. Early in the third year of the project, Grit Digital Health provided UMSSW with a breakdown of topic areas men were most commonly searching on the MT webpage in Rhode Island. We discovered that many users were not connecting to the local resource pages listed on the MT website. In an effort to provide users with clearer guidance and direct pathways to local resources when they looked for information about a particular topic area(s), UMSSW worked with Grit Digital Health to create a 'next steps for help-seeking behavior' digital card set to build direct pathways online to connect users to local resources. This additional user navigation and experience content was added to the MT website in July 2022. Just within the first 30 days after launching the updated content experience, **pageviews to the mental health resource category cards, which included all local resources, increased by 164%**.

As a result, Grit Digital Health is scaling up the team's recommendation for these cards within other states to help improve help-seeking across the country. A summary of the page views linking men to local resources directly from the MT website are included in the table below. This was an important step in the project that helped to demonstrate help-seeking behavior online in the absence of being able to demonstrate outcomes with the survey evaluation.



The local resource cards viewed since we created them online, include:

Rhode Island Local Mental Health Practitioners	102 pageviews
Rhode Island Local Resources	87 pageviews
Follow Man Therapy Washington County on Social	84 pageviews
Butler Hospital Substance Use Outpatient Service	82 pageviews
Rhode Island Mental Health Practitioners	70 pageviews
Connect to Local Resources Near You	55 pageviews
Rhode Island Nearby Group Practices	45 pageviews
Wood River Health Services	5 pageviews
Coastal Wellness Collective	5 pageviews
The Journey to Hope, Health, Healing	5 pageviews

Recruitment

Recruitment and enrollment into the formal evaluation portion of the study was challenging and therefore the number of participants is limited and data is not generalizable to men throughout the county. In an effort to increase enrollment, UMSSW made several modifications to the study protocol over the course of the project, the most significant of which include:

- Expanding inclusion criteria to include men who **live and/or work** in Washington County, Rhode Island. In reviewing screening data early on in the project, we found a significant number of men who did not qualify for the evaluation survey study due to living in a nearby county that was outside of Washington County. Given the small size of the state and the likelihood that men who live outside of Washington County drove in to work there, we expanded the inclusion criteria to include these men in the study if eligible according to all other criteria.

- Inviting men who are eligible for the evaluation study based on their reported gender, age, and living/working in Washington County (WC) but who do not meet criteria for higher risk (i.e. suicide or depression) to participate in a one-time **Interview with a researcher**. The purpose of the interview was to understand how men in general respond to the MT website and the potential for the website to help other men.

Unfortunately, these changes were not enough to generate a robust evaluation sample for the study. Some of these challenges were due to the small size of the overall population, making it difficult to recruit high-risk men from a small pool and the limitations in being able to meet with people and organizations face-to-face during the height of the pandemic that hindered the team's ability to get the word out about MT and promote in a way that uses best practices for grassroots public health campaigns.

In addition to outreach efforts to increase recruitment and enrollment into the formal evaluation, UMSSW also worked with Grit Digital Health to optimize paid promotions. During the second year of the campaign, we switched the campaign's geo targeting from the entire Rhode Island region to Washington County specifically to reach and screen more men in the direct evaluation area, an optimization that did **significantly increase the direct traffic and Head Inspection completions for Washington County**. In the first month we made this optimization, Washington County increased Head Inspections completed by 190% and user traffic by 244%.

Man Therapy Users and Head Inspections (HI) Completed in Washington County by City:
Before and During the Evaluation

Washington County, RI	Before 12/31/2017 - 9/29/2020	During 9/30/2020 - 6/30/2023
Westerly	23 users 8 HI Completed	1,578 users 295 HI Completed
South Kingstown	54 users 12 HI Completed	1,409 users 226 HI Completed
North Kingstown	10 users 3 HI Completed	1,078 users 205 HI Completed
Narragansett	8 users 0 HI Completed	526 users 95 HI Completed
Charlestown	3 users 0 HI Completed	282 users 44 HI Completed
Richmond	0 users	182 users 49 HI Completed
Hopkinton	0 users	141 users 26 HI Completed
Exeter	0 users	33 users 10 HI Completed

Another challenge that came up was not having MT materials available in Spanish. Approximately 4% of the population in the county is Hispanic or Latino, according to the US Census Bureau, and Hispanic/Latino people make up 13.7% of the workforce ([Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022](#)). There were businesses the team met with that employ many Spanish-speaking individuals and were therefore unable to share MT with its employees. For example, UMSSW met with the Human Resources Specialist at Cargill, a national food processing and packaging company with a large facility located in North Kingstown, to discuss promotional opportunities.

They agreed to include MT information in their company wellness resources but were not able to promote MT more widely due in part to the lack of materials available in Spanish as they have a large Spanish-speaking workforce. HBHM received similar feedback when meeting with a representative from Ocean State Job Lot. The team shared this feedback with Grit Digital Health and since these meetings, Grit received funding to expand the MT website to be more culturally responsive, including the expected launch later in 2023 of Man Therapy 3.0 that will have a Spanish-speaking version of the website with corresponding marketing materials.

CONCLUSION

When Dr. Frey was first introduced to Man Therapy in 2013, she was not convinced that it would have an impact or resonate widely with men. However, given the growing popularity of the site, she was interested and decided to research the impact of MT. As mentioned in the introduction, her research, coupled with her experience working with hundreds of partners working to integrate MT into their more comprehensive suicide prevention programs, convinced her that MT is an important tool in one's toolbox to consider using in a public health campaign. Data collected during this project - online, from partners, and from MT users directly - support the use of MT as a website that can reach men, aged 25-64, who are struggling with depression, suicidal ideation and other mental health challenges. Our online data from the MT website itself supports that men are engaged in learning about their risk through the 20-point Head Inspection and then interested in help-seeking resources, evidenced by the high number of pageviews for the local resources recommended within Washington County on the site.

Given the incredible work that was put into this project and the amount of brand recognition that was created throughout the past three years, it is recommended that Washington County continue to promote MT as it is a free website that can be used by anyone at any time. The results of the evaluation suggest positive trends from using the site and the expected updates to the site that will be coming later in 2023 are in part a direct response to the experiences shared by Washington County users and partners.



MAN THERAPY EVALUATION APPENDIX

ACCESS HERE

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ay4X_enDqzK5YW5X3BCsPu5WAIkbRRZ?usp=sharing

APPENDIX 1: INFOGRAPHICS

- Appendix 1a: Year 1 summary
- Appendix 1b: Year 2 summary
- Appendix 1c: Year 3 summary
- Appendix 1d: Man Therapy White Paper

APPENDIX 2: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW CODEBOOK

- Appendix 2a: Qualitative Interview Codebook

APPENDIX 3: COMPILED PRODUCTS

- Appendix 3a: Man Therapy Washington County logo
- Appendix 3b: Man Therapy Washington County QR code
- Appendix 3c: 'It's not Shellfish' flyers for Charlestown Seafood festival (2 files)
- Appendix 3d: Livestock and farming postcards for Washington County Fair
- Appendix 3e: Posters suitable for promotions in public restrooms (4 files)
- Appendix 3f: Messages for parents and caregivers (3 files)
- Appendix 3g: Scorecard for golfers with the MT brand
- Appendix 3h: Messages for boating facilities (5 files)
- Appendix 3i: Mustache Moments (3 files)
- Appendix 3j: Video testimonials (2)
- Appendix 3k: Slides for partners to incorporate into their training and presentations
- Appendix 3l: Press release and article about the billboards to kick off effort to encourage Washington County men to address their mental health needs (2 files)
- Appendix 3m: Letter to the Editors published in the Rhode Island Medical Journal
- Appendix 3n: Radio ads and PSAs such as this one on Man Therapy and football season
https://www.audiogo.com/preview-ad?a=audiogo_ad_ff0f58d3-8464-4e84-8ff2-b9254e3c1c19.mp3&type=music

MAN THERAPY WASHINGTON COUNTY NEWSLETTERS

- Summer 2021: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/--Man-Therapy-WC-s-First-Newsletter.html?soi=1114009451637&aid=9rTNENq1IKI>
- Fall 2021: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Preparing-for-Suicide-Prevention-Month---Free-Social-Media-Content-to-Support--.html?soi=1114009451637&aid=bjE6rH0uzNE>
- Winter 2021: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/--Happy-Fall-from-Man-Therapy-WC.html?soi=1114009451637&aid=YsZwL1Y6uMO>
- Winter 2022: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/--Welcoming-the-New-Year-from-Man-Therapy-Washington-County.html?soi=1114009451637&aid=9LpzVQoxhCY>
- Spring 2023: <https://ssw195.activehosted.com/index.php?action=social&c=773&m=861>

ADDITIONAL WEBSITES AND ONLINE ACCOUNTS CREATED BY UMSSW FOR THIS PROJECT

- Google drive with a variety of flyers, postcards, ecards, stickers, videos, and promotional materials for partners to download for free
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Gy0KLbbZOLNkZjah1M4NhnX9S7tePlu2>
- YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@mantherapywashingtoncounty1418>
- Man Therapy Dashboard <https://lookerstudio.google.com/u/1/reporting/24e4f284-400e-4c06-8a5b-cdc66c329d9a/page/Ym8IB>
- Facebook account @ManTherapyWashingtonCounty
- X (formerly Twitter) account @ManTherapyWC