



Commissioner Robert L. Quinn | Assistant Commissioner Richard C. Bailey, Jr. | Assistant Commissioner Eddie Edwards

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Tyler Dumont, Public Information Officer

[PIO@dos.nh.gov](mailto:PIO@dos.nh.gov)

(603) 724-7178

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSTS FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUMMIT WITH GOVERNOR CHRIS SUNUNU, DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY COMMISSIONER ROBERT QUINN, AT&T AND FIRSTNET AUTHORITY**

DURHAM, New Hampshire – A 2-day regional public safety summit attended by approximately 100 first responders from across New Hampshire and New England concluded this afternoon in Durham. The summit, held on the University of New Hampshire campus, was hosted by the State of New Hampshire and sponsored by FirstNet®, Built with AT&T.

Along with viewing technology and resource demonstrations, attendees participated in a daylong health and wellness training workshop with the All Clear Foundation. Compared to the general population, first responders experience higher rates of depression, post-traumatic stress, burnout, anxiety and other mental health issues.<sup>1</sup> In law enforcement, one study found a more than 20-year difference in life expectancy compared to the average American male.<sup>2</sup>

Governor Chris Sununu joined Department of Safety Commissioner Robert L. Quinn and University of New Hampshire Police Chief Paul Dean to speak with first responders about the importance of mental well-being. May is observed nationally as Mental Health Awareness Month.

“This was an unspoken crisis 5, 10 years ago. And we’re doing everything we can at the state level to really bring it to light,” Governor Sununu said at the summit. “It hits all of us in some way. Whether it’s in our departments, whether it’s in our family, whether it’s a coworker, whether it’s at home – it could be anywhere.”

Dr. Anna Courie, FirstNet’s Director of Responder Wellness and a national expert in first responder health and wellness, offered critical guidance, statistics and best practices for all members of the public safety community during a keynote speech.

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce that was first chartered in 2012. FirstNet’s mission is to deploy, operate, maintain and improve the first high-speed, nationwide wireless broadband network dedicated to public safety; providing a single interoperable platform for emergency and daily communications.

“It’s your lifeline. It will save lives. It matters,” Commissioner Quinn said at the summit. “There’s nothing more important than sustainable communication when you need it. I’m so pleased that FirstNet and AT&T have supported us in the investment that we need to make for all of our first responders.”

FirstNet’s Jason Porter and Stephen Benjamin, Chairman of the FirstNet Authority Board, the federal governing body that oversees FirstNet, also addressed attendees.

First responders also had opportunities to interact with Dex, a specially-trained therapy dog that is part of FirstNet’s ROG the Dog program.

*For additional information about FirstNet, contact: Karen Twomey, AT&T Corporate Communications [kv083a@att.com](mailto:kv083a@att.com) - Phone: 508-370-2535*

<sup>1</sup> Purvis, M., Fullencamp, L. & Docherty, M. (2020). *Animal Assisted Therapy on Law Enforcement Mental Health: A Therapy Dog Implementation Guide*. Bowling Green University.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4734369/>

###DOS###

**About the Department:**

*The New Hampshire Department of Safety is one of the largest departments of state government, with more than 2,200 full-time, part-time, non-classified, and seasonal employees functioning in both uniformed and civilian capacities throughout the State. The Department affects the lives of all New Hampshire residents and visitors by enforcing criminal, motor vehicle and boating laws, and providing for fire safety, fire and emergency medical training, emergency communications and disaster planning. Established by the New Hampshire General Court in 1961, the Department consists of the divisions of Administration, Emergency Services and Communications, Fire Safety (Office of the State Fire Marshal), Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Motor Vehicles and State Police. Follow us on [Twitter](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#).*

*“To continually enhance the safety, security and quality of life in New Hampshire through professional, collaborative and innovative service to all.”*