



**savir**

Society for Advancement of  
Violence and Injury Research

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATE PROFILE

## Sara Kohlbeck, PhD, MPH

### Candidate background

Dr. Sara Kohlbeck is the Director of the Division of Suicide Research and Healing in the Comprehensive Injury Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin. She is also an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine. Dr. Kohlbeck is also the Assistant Director of the PhD program in Public and Community Health at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Sara received her PhD in Public and Community Health from the Medical College of Wisconsin in 2022, her Master of Public Health from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2015, and her Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in 2000. Sara's research interests focus on understanding suicide from a public health perspective. Specifically, she is conducting research that focuses on better understanding suicide among disproportionately affected populations, including farmers, veterans, and youth of color, to facilitate the development of appropriate prevention strategies. She is also engaged in community-based research with communities across Wisconsin who are implementing suicide prevention activities.



### SAVIR experience

Dr. Kohlbeck has been an active member of SAVIR for nine years. She has attended each SAVIR annual conference in that time and has presented research findings in either oral or poster presentation form at several of these conferences. Dr. Kohlbeck was a speaker at the SAVIR Fall Forum, where she presented on new research findings related to suicide among youth. She has served as an abstract reviewer for SAVIR conferences and has attended several SAVIR webinars and educational offerings. In 2022, Dr. Kohlbeck, in her role as Board President of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), made a connection between AFSP and SAVIR which resulted in AFSP sponsorship of a SAVIR conference. Finally, Dr. Kohlbeck has attended Council of Center meetings as an alternate when regular members from her organization were unable to attend.

### Vision

SAVIR has an opportunity to lead transformative, interdisciplinary research that not only prevents violence and injury and informs policy but also advances equity both in terms of health outcomes but also in the space of supporting a more diverse injury research workforce. Specifically, SAVIR can support equity and inclusion in research by launching initiatives to support underrepresented communities in research. This could include establishing partnerships with

HBCUs and other universities serving minoritized students. SAVIR could also develop or elevate frameworks for culturally responsive injury and violence prevention research and fund community-based participatory research. SAVIR also has an opportunity to become a leader in leveraging innovative technology around injury and violence research. This could include supporting research on emerging technologies (AI, wearable technology) for injury-related data collection. SAVIR could also host hackathons or innovation labs focused on leveraging emerging technology for injury and violence research. Finally, given SAVIR's prominence in the field, there is an opportunity to establish important global partnerships to advance the science of injury and violence research. This includes partnering with groups like the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) to support comparative research on violence and injury across countries.