



Suicide Prevention Efforts for Individuals with Serious Mental Illness: Roles for the State Mental Health Authority



Setting
Multiple

Type of Program
Protocols & Guidelines

NSSP Goals Addressed
Multiple

Program Description

Developed by the Medical Directors Council of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), *Suicide Prevention Efforts for Individuals with Serious Mental Illness: Roles for the State Mental Health Authority* outlines the leadership role that State Mental Health Authorities can take in preventing suicide among persons with serious mental illness. It suggests ways in which State Mental Health Authorities can increase collaboration, raise awareness of the signs of suicide, and intervene to save lives. The report is organized into four sections:

1. Epidemiology of mental illness and suicide, including suicide risk factors for those with serious mental illness;
2. Perspectives from survivors of suicide attempts, and family and friends of those who have died by suicide;
3. Overview of the national response to suicide prevention, including specific suicide prevention strategies for specific settings; and,
4. Conclusions and corresponding recommendations regarding a variety of suicide prevention efforts relevant to State Mental Health Program Directors.

Program Objectives

Those who read the report should have greater knowledge of:

1. The characteristics of individuals with serious mental illness who have attempted or died by suicide;
2. The role State Mental Health Administrators can play in preventing suicide; and,
3. Conceptual models for State Mental Health Administrators to use in improving the system of care for those with serious mental illness to reduce their risk of suicide.

Program Development

The report was created through a collaboration of the NASMHPD Medical Directors Council and representatives from governmental, non-profit, and higher education institutions (a complete list of collaborators is found in the report). Information used in the report was gathered from presentations and commentary by participants, informed by the suicide prevention literature, in workgroup meetings held in January 2007.

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Costs

Suicide Prevention Efforts for Individuals with Serious Mental Illness document is available for free. It can be downloaded from the Association website, www.nasmhpd.org/publicationsmeddir.cfm, under 2008 Technical Papers.

*The content of programs listed in Section II (Expert and Consensus Statements) of the SPRC/AFSP Best Practices Registry address specific goals of the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* and have been reviewed by a panel of three suicide prevention experts and found to meet standards of importance, likelihood of meeting objectives, accuracy, safety, congruence with prevailing knowledge, and appropriateness of development process. Programs were not reviewed for evidence of effectiveness. Additional information about the Best Practices Registry can be found at www.sprc.org.

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