



National Guidelines for Seniors' Mental Health: The Assessment of Suicide Risk and Prevention of Suicide

Setting
Multiple

Type of Program
Protocols & Guidelines

NSSP Goals Addressed
4.6

Program Description

Developed by the Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health (CCSMH), the *National Guidelines for Seniors' Mental Health: the Assessment of Suicide Risk and Prevention of Suicide* provide 38 recommendations regarding the assessment of suicide risk and prevention of suicide in seniors. Each of the recommendations is graded on an A, B, C, D scale, according to its corresponding level of scientific evidence.

Program Objectives

The objectives of the *National Guidelines* were to:

1. Identify best-practice guidelines in the area of seniors' mental health both for Canada and internationally.
2. Facilitate the collaboration of key healthcare leaders within the realm of seniors' mental health in order to review existing guidelines and the literature relevant to seniors' mental health.
3. Facilitate a process of partnership where key leaders and identified stakeholders create a set of recommendations and/or guidelines for identified areas within seniors' mental health.
4. Disseminate the draft recommendations and/or guidelines to stakeholders at the CCSMH Best Practices Conference in 2005 in order to create an opportunity for review and analysis before moving forward with the final recommendations and/or guidelines.
5. Disseminate completed guidelines to health care professionals and stakeholders across the country.

Program Development

The *National Guidelines* were developed by an interdisciplinary group of experts on seniors' mental health issues brought together under the auspices of the CCSMH to become members of the guideline development group. The guideline development group met at monthly meetings with frequent informal contact in between meetings. Project phases were (1) group administration and preparation for draft documents, (2) creation of draft guidelines, (3) dissemination & consultation, (4) revised draft of guideline documents, (5) final completion of guideline documents, and (6) dissemination of guidelines.

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Costs

The *National Guidelines* are available for free. They can be downloaded from the CCSMH website: www.ccsmh.ca.

*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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