This guide is designed to assist Emergency Department (ED) health care professionals with decisions about the care and discharge of patients with suicide risk. Its main goal is to improve patient outcomes after discharge. The guide helps ED caregivers intervene effectively while the patient is in the ED, decide if the patient can be discharged or if further evaluation is needed and ensure that the patient will be safe after leaving the ED.

The guide, funded by SAMHSA, was developed with extensive input from a consensus panel of experts from emergency medicine and suicide prevention organizations, including individuals with lived experience (those who have lived through suicide attempts and suicidal thoughts or feelings). Recommendations in the ED Guide were developed using an iterative process that included both a review of the literature and expert panel consensus.