

## Moving into a New Year

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Happy New Year! As 2019 begins, please join us in pausing to reflect on some milestones from the past year in suicide prevention, as well as how we can make the most of the year to come. In 2018, suicide prevention continued to gain momentum as a national priority, with increased public awareness and media attention, as well as new resources and partners engaging at the local, state, and national levels. At the same time, new data revealed that we still have work to do if we are to reach our goal of reducing the national suicide rate. In the year ahead, let's work together to build on our successes—continuing to expand our reach, make our prevention efforts more effective, and spread hope to those at risk.

Providing safe and effective suicide care in health systems continues to be essential for reducing suicide in the U.S. and around the world. At the end of last year, over a thousand health care systems had adopted the [Zero Suicide](#) [1] model and many are seeing improvements in patient outcomes. Ensuring the quality and consistency of suicide care has increasingly become a priority, with the release of new standards and guidance, such as the Action Alliance's [recommended standard care report](#) [2], CARF International's [standards manual supplement](#) [3], and the Council on Accreditation's standards for [public agencies](#) [4] and [private organizations](#) [5]. In 2019, the Joint Commission will be requiring hospitals to meet a new [patient safety goal](#) [6] for suicide prevention, and SPRC will be releasing new resources on financing suicide care.

The past year saw a large number of [data releases](#) [7] and [analyses](#) [8] from the CDC and other sources, highlighting the continued upward trend in suicides in the past 20 years. At the same time, these data included [important new information](#) [9] that can help us improve prevention efforts, including the need for suicide prevention in settings beyond behavioral health care. As we continue to reinforce the multiple strategies needed for [effective suicide prevention](#) [10], more and more partners and sectors are stepping up to help carry out comprehensive prevention efforts. The Action Alliance has been instrumental in bringing the [construction](#) [11] and [entertainment](#) [12] industries, [public safety](#) [13] groups, [faith communities](#) [14], and [firearms stakeholders](#) [15] to the suicide prevention table. People with lived experience of suicide are also playing an increasingly important role in our field, helping to identify [what works in suicide care](#) [16] and [how lived experience can be included in prevention efforts](#) [17].



# Suicide Prevention Resource Center

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As the [evidence](#) [18] linking suicide and opioid misuse grew in 2018, new partnerships have formed to help address this intersection. Many in the suicide and substance abuse prevention fields are collaborating on innovative ways to tackle some of the shared risk factors behind [recent declines in life expectancy](#) [19]. SPRC featured some of these examples in our collaborative two-part webinar series on the connection between [opioid abuse, overdose, and suicide](#) [20] and [the role of chronic pain](#) [21]. As we enter a new year, it will be critical to continue to examine these connections, including the impact of loneliness and isolation, and work together to tackle the complex issues behind deaths of despair.

We've also seen changes this year in how our field is speaking about suicide prevention and how the media is covering it. With the Action Alliance [Media Messaging Workgroup](#) [22] bringing together key national partners, the field is communicating a more unified message, emphasizing hope, recovery, and prevention steps everyone can take. This collective effort has helped bring about [a new kind of news coverage](#) [23]—one informed by the voices of people with lived experience, which emphasizes hope and healing over sensationalism. In 2019, we look forward to continued collaboration with local and national partners to convey shared prevention messages.

In 2018, SPRC continued its commitment to bringing relevant, evidence-based resources to the field in grateful collaboration with diverse partners. We released an array of resources to address key challenges in suicide prevention, including:

- An updated [Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Practices](#) [24]
- The second edition of [After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools](#) [25]
- New data resources, including [Breaking Down Barriers: Using Youth Suicide-Related Surveillance Data from State Systems](#) [26] and [Suicide Surveillance Strategies for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities](#) [27]
- An updated and redesigned version of our free [Counseling on Access to Lethal Means](#) [28] online course

As we enter a new year, please join us in building on the momentum of the past year's successes and renewing our commitment to meet the challenges ahead. Together, with partners new and familiar, we can reverse current trends and connect more people across the country to support and hope.

## Links within this resource

[1] <http://zerosuicide.sprc.org/>

[2] <https://theactionalliance.org/resource/recommended-standard-care>

[3] <http://www.carf.org/comprehensive-suicide-prevention/>

[4] <http://coanet.org/standards/standards-for-public-agencies/>

[5] <http://coanet.org/standards/standards-for-private-organizations/>

[6] [https://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/R3\\_18\\_Suicide\\_prevention\\_HAP\\_BHC\\_11\\_27\\_18\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/R3_18_Suicide_prevention_HAP_BHC_11_27_18_FINAL.pdf)

[7] <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db330.htm>

[8] <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a1.htm>

[9] <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/suicide/index.html>

[10] <http://www.sprc.org/effective-suicide-prevention>

[11] <https://theactionalliance.org/construction>

[12] <https://theactionalliance.org/messaging/entertainment-messaging>

[13] <https://theactionalliance.org/communities/workplace/public-safety>

[14] <https://theactionalliance.org/faith-hope-life>

[15] <https://theactionalliance.org/task-force/lethal-means>

[16] <http://www.sprc.org/micro-learning/lived-experience-story-about-what-makes-difference-0>



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- [17] <http://www.sprc.org/micro-learning/leah-harris-lived-experience-what-it-how-include-it>
- [18] <https://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/early/2018/08/08/injuryprev-2018-042889>
- [19] <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db330-h.pdf>
- [20] <http://www.sprc.org/events-trainings/intersection-opioid-abuse-overdose-suicide-understanding-connections>
- [21] <http://www.sprc.org/events-trainings/intersection-opioid-abuse-overdose-suicide-role-chronic-pain>
- [22] <https://theactionalliance.org/task-force/media-messaging>
- [23] <http://www.sprc.org/news/speaking-one-voice-suicide-prevention>
- [24] <http://www.sprc.org/settings/primary-care/toolkit>
- [25] <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/after-suicide-toolkit-schools>
- [26] <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/breaking-down-barriers-using-youth-suicide-related-surveillance-data-state>
- [27] <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/suicide-surveillance-strategies-american-indian-alaska-native-communities>
- [28] <https://training.sprc.org/enrol/index.php?id=20>

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