Evaluation Protocol for the LifeSpan Model

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An evaluation of the LifeSpan model could provide the suicide prevention field with an example of how to systematically study a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to preventing suicide.

The LifeSpan model consists of nine evidence-based strategies implemented in four regions of New South Wales, Australia. The strategies include interventions for individuals and populations at risk, as well as those for the wider community. The model will be evaluated using a stepped-wedge, cluster randomized trial design. In this type of trial, the four regions adopt the interventions in four-month intervals and then implement them over a two-year period. By the end of that period, all nine strategies are expected to be operating simultaneously. To evaluate the effectiveness of the model, researchers will compare rates of treated suicide attempts and suicide deaths during the pre-implementation period to rates in the implementation period.

If proven effective, the LifeSpan model could build knowledge of how to systematically study multilevel solutions to complex public health problems. These evaluation results could have an international impact on research and policy.
