

Dear Primary Care Provider:

As a provider of primary care services you are in a unique position to prevent suicides among your patients. Research tells us that people who die by suicide are more likely to have seen their primary care provider shortly before their death than any other health care professional. At any given time, between two and four percent of your patients are having thoughts of suicide. They may come to your exam rooms presenting with many different concerns, but the one they may not be telling you about could be the one that will kill them – unless you and your staff are prepared. While no prevention strategy is fail-safe for every patient, use of this Toolkit will facilitate development of a comprehensive office strategy that will save lives.

Start your suicide prevention journey by familiarizing yourself with the Quick Start Guide in this Toolkit. It will walk you step-by-step through the process of seamlessly integrating suicide prevention into your practice. Whether for an adolescent struggling with a life crisis, a war veteran suffering from PTSD or traumatic brain injury, a mid-life worker with depression and alcohol dependence, or a lonely elder with a terminal illness, your practice can soon have systems in place that will allow you to intervene effectively without significantly disrupting the flow of patients – the lifeblood of your practice.

Please do not delay. This Toolkit should not sit in your in-basket or on the shelf for even a minute. Take the first step to saving lives as soon as you possibly can. Open the Quick Setup Guide and get on your way to helping some of your most troubled patients find a pathway to a satisfying life.

Sincerely,

Suicide Prevention Resource Center
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education – Mental Health Program