According to an evaluation conducted by the RAND Corporation, California state-supported suicide prevention hotlines are responsive to callers in distress, but vary in the quality of services that they provide. Researchers evaluated most of the 12 hotlines funded as part of a mental health initiative and found differences in the structure and organization of hotlines, and adherence to protocols for handling calls. For instance, among the centers included in the evaluation, approximately two-thirds of callers were asked about current suicidal ideation and about a quarter each were asked about past ideation and past attempts. The evaluation identified areas for improvement across sites, such as expanding digital assistance, referral networks, and resource recommendations. Rajeev Ramchand, the study’s lead author and a senior behavioral scientist at RAND, said, “Our evaluation shows that suicide prevention hotlines available to California residents provide a trusted and valuable service, but much can be done to make them more accessible and to improve the quality of their services. For example, digital services lag behind a growing demand and integrating more hotlines into existing health care systems could better connect callers to needed mental health services.”

Spark Extra! Read the research abstract [2] and report [3].

Links within this resource