University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Program Name: Campus Suicide Prevention Program
Grant Type: Hispanic Serving Institution
Grant Status: Active
Year Awarded: 2017
State: Texas

The School of Medicine of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (SOM/UTRGV) Campus Suicide Prevention Program (CSPP) in collaboration with the Counseling Center seeks to raise awareness of suicide as a critical but preventable issue. The School of Medicine of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), is located on the border between Texas and Mexico. The larger UTRGV serves a traditionally underserved population, which is largely Hispanic in ethnicity (89% as of Fall 2015). While Hispanics constitute a clear majority, UTRGV students are diversified among a broad range of special populations including medical students; veterans; athletes; international students; students with disabilities; and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersexed (GLBTQI) students. An overwhelming majority of students are also economically disadvantaged, relying on financial assistance and external employment to subsidize their college educations. The CSPP will address the numerous risk factors facing its target population through seven goals focusing on the implementation of training programs and activities geared to educate the faculty, staff, and students of the School of Medicine and the UTRGV campus on the identification and prevention of suicidal behaviors and appropriate intervention measures. Furthermore, it will implement outreach activities for students and their families, awareness campaigns that seek to destigmatize mental illness, implementation of wellness programs and the development of collaborative partnerships with community-based mental health agencies. The School of Medicine, Office of Student Support, Counseling and Wellness (Office of Student Wellness) in collaboration with Counseling Center will lead the implementation of the CSPP. Through a contractual agreement, The Office of Student Wellness will provide specialized training, employing the QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Model, to over 300 faculty, staff and student leaders annually and 900 over the funding period. The QPR, a standardized program used in schools throughout the nation as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs, delivers a broad assessment and intervention strategy for addressing issues of suicidality on college campuses. Assessment of the efficacy of the CSPP will include collection and analysis of data sets from the process, performance, and outcomes of the Program as well as collection and analysis of the cross-site data required by SAMSHA. Ultimately, the CSPP will result in the establishment of a comprehensive plan designed to prevent suicidal behaviors among students and to facilitate the utilization of mental health services for those at risk.

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