South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH)

Program Name: Zero Suicide Initiative
Grant Type: Zero Suicide
Grant Status: Active
Year Awarded: 2018
State: South Carolina

Abstract: The South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) will implement the ZERO Suicide Initiative to reduce suicide attempts and deaths among South Carolina (SC) adults age 25 and older. SCDMH, the largest behavioral health provider with a vast footprint, will serve as the base and build on established as well as future relationships to reduce deaths by suicide in SC. Based on what we know about populations at the greatest risk for suicide in SC, the ZERO Suicide Initiative will ramp up efforts to serve anyone suspected of being at risk, with a specific focus on the following subpopulations: white males, veterans, law enforcement/first responders, and the homeless population. The project will increase the ability of organizations, agencies, and individual professionals to provide coordinated, responsive, and effective rapid follow-up and aftercare to adults who have attempted suicide, as well as those who are assessed as being at risk of suicide. To work with collaborative partners on the SC State Suicide Prevention Coalition to make fundamental policy changes at a systemic level that support provision of excellent aftercare to suicide attempt survivors. Key goals of ZERO Suicide Initiative include but are not limited to: 1) To implement effective, evidence-based treatments that directly target suicidal thoughts and behaviors. 2) To strengthen and revise discharge protocols at emergency departments (EDs) and acute care psychiatric hospitals (ACPHs) to provide aftercare for at-risk adults age 25+. 3) To promote suicide prevention as a core component of healthcare services (NSSP Goal 8) through provision of training. 4) To promote and implement effective clinical and professional practices for assessing and treating those identified as being at risk for suicidal behaviors (NSSP Goal 9) through provision of training (Zero Suicide Academy) to health and behavioral health providers. 5) To embed suicide prevention strategies/activities into the behavioral health system. 6) To increase use of SC Lifeline by SC residents so at least 70% of calls remain in-state.