



Massachusetts Authorization for Suicide Prevention Funding

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[The Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention](#) [1] (MCSP) was established in 1999 as a public/private partnership between government agencies such as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), community-based agencies, and individuals. The MDPH provides administrative support to the MCSP and also houses the Massachusetts Suicide Prevention Program, through which it provides leadership for suicide prevention in Massachusetts.

Members of the MCSP pay tiered dues that generate revenue to help fund a paid staff person who advocates to the legislature for suicide prevention. The coalition also provides an annual strategic evaluation of the suicide prevention efforts carried out by the MDPH and its statewide partners.

The MDPH has a full-time managing director of suicide prevention and provides funds to 10 regional suicide prevention coalitions. The MDPH develops an annual report on suicides, as well as an annual data bulletin on regional suicide prevention efforts. These reports and bulletins are informed by the evaluation efforts of the MCSP and are shared regularly with the state's legislature, demonstrating the impact of funding for suicide prevention in Massachusetts.

Through these collective efforts, Massachusetts has created a self-sustaining prevention effort in which leaders, advocates, and the legislature share a common understanding of and dedication to suicide prevention. This self-sustaining effort did not appear overnight. Massachusetts state funding for prevention began in the early 2000s when the legislature approved a line item for suicide prevention in its annual budget. In 2006, a champion within the state legislature and his wife shared their personal testimonies of suicide loss. Once they did, other legislators with similar experiences came forward. This led to growth in state support for suicide prevention and a budget increase to \$2.5 million dollars, which has grown to \$4.49 million over the years.

When asked how other states could garner support for an annual state budget line item in suicide prevention, the director of the Massachusetts Suicide Prevention Program shared the following:

“You must involve individuals with lived experience in advocacy to and with the legislature. Survivors’ stories



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enable government to see the value and need for suicide prevention in the state. In addition, you cannot forget the importance of finding a champion within the state legislature or a prominent figure who can present his or her own or constituents' experiences connected to suicide prevention.”

Learn how your state can develop similar infrastructure and read additional examples by visiting the [Authorize](#) [2] essential element of SPRC's State Infrastructure Recommendations.

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.masspreventssuicide.org/>

[2] <http://www.sprc.org/stateInfrastructure/authorize>

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