Suicide Prevention Programming: Comparing Four Prominent Frameworks (2024)

Authored By: Bryann DeBeer, Joseph Mignogna, Margaret Talbot, Edgar Villarreal, Nathaniel Mohatt, Elisa Borah, Patricia D. Russell, Craig J. Bryan, Lindsey L. Monteith, Kathryn Bongiovanni, Claire Hoffmire, Alan L. Peterson, Jenna Heise, Sylvia Baack, Kimberly Weinberg, Marcy Polk, Justin K. Benzer

RESEARCH BRIEF

This narrative literature review identified and compared existing suicide prevention programs to aid organizations and healthcare systems in building customized suicide prevention programs.

WHY IS THIS RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

- **Suicide represents a significant public health crisis worldwide.** More than one in 100 deaths globally were due to suicide in 2019, and an estimated 703,000 deaths are attributed to suicide each year.
- Despite the barriers to suicide prevention, more organizations, healthcare systems, and policy leaders are seeking to **implement best practices in suicide prevention**.
- Although elements of suicide prevention programs are evidence-based, **full suicide prevention frameworks have not been empirically tested as stand-alone programs.**
- **Two frameworks have been developed to promote prevention efficacy**: the NAM system and the SAMHSA strategy classifications. This review aims to outline the core prevention components of each framework.

HOW WAS THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED?

Major suicide prevention frameworks were gathered via Internet searches and from authors' expertise. The identified programs were required to have published documents describing both their frameworks and program components. Literature on the identified suicide prevention frameworks was reviewed and used to develop a codebook containing all unique and shared components of programs with a suicide prevention framework. A deductive approach was used to categorize each program component in accordance with NAM's suicide prevention strategy classifications. Next, program components were categorized into one of six broad prevention strategy classifications defined by SAMHSA.

OBSERVATIONS

- **Four comprehensive U.S. suicide prevention frameworks were identified**: The VA Suicide Prevention Program, the DoD Suicide Prevention Program, Zero Suicide in Health and Behavioral Health Care, and the technical package from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Protection.
- **The four frameworks' objectives are similar in their overarching goal of preventing suicide. However, each framework has a specific aim or focus**; thus, the program components and their implementation vary.

ACTION STEPS

Community organizations, healthcare systems, and policymakers may use this information to develop and build suicide prevention programs within their own organizations. When referencing these frameworks to develop new programs, clinicians and researchers need to examine several frameworks in order to understand the range of possible program components.