

Suicide Prevention Team- Education and Training

VA Connecticut's Suicide Prevention team is available for in person and virtual training. We specialize in a number of suicide prevention topic areas which are listed below. We can also customize a training based on the needs of your audience. Please reach out to CONSPCVACT@va.gov for more information and to schedule a training.

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VA S.A.V.E.- This will provide tools to act with care and compassion if you come across a Veteran who is in crisis or having thoughts of suicide. The acronym S.A.V.E. can help you remember the important steps of suicide prevention. The training also includes discussion of helpful resources for Veterans, such as the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, Press 1 for Veterans).

S- Know the Signs that indicate a Veteran might be thinking about suicide

A- Ask the most important question of all — “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”

V- Validate the Veteran's experience

E- Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

Lethal Means Safety- This training will discuss the importance of lethal means safety as a best practice strategy in suicide prevention. Reducing access to lethal means can save an individual's life. This training will include practical recommendations for secure storage, as well as guidance for lethal means safety counseling.

Risk Assessment – This training is geared to enhance clinicians' understanding of suicide risk assessment and management, and will draw from concepts of therapeutic risk management (TRM). Risk stratification; the assessment of the severity and temporality of an individual's risk, will also be discussed. The utilization of a suicide prevention safety plan will be discussed here as a risk mitigation strategy.

Safety Planning- Developed by Stanley and Brown, the suicide prevention safety plan is an evidence based intervention that teaches adaptive coping skills for a suicidal crisis. Safety plans are developed dynamically between a provider and a client, and should be integrated into a treatment plan to mitigate risk for suicide.

Public Health Approach to Suicide Prevention- This training will provide an overview of the public health approach to suicide prevention, as well as evidence based interventions used to mitigate risk for suicide in Veterans receiving care at VA, the largest integrated healthcare system.