Suicide Prevention Strategies: Overview of Evidence Informed Actions

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Marion Cooper
Program Specialist Mental Health Promotion
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Themes from the literature

- Suicide is a complex issue with complex contributing factors
- Requires multiple interventions/strategies
- Focus at a community level
- Target at-risk groups
- Ensure activities are culturally relevant
- The responsibility of everyone and not the exclusive domain of the health services sector

Goals of Suicide Prevention

- Activities directed towards the reduction of suicidal behaviour
- Four levels of action including:
  - Primary prevention
  - Secondary prevention
  - Intervention
  - Postvention

Essential Components of a Suicide Prevention Strategy

- System-wide protocols
- Community development
- School climate improvement
- Organizational policy
- Family support
- Support groups
- Gatekeeper training
- Crisis centres and hotlines
- Generic skill building
- Suicide awareness education
- Screening
- Means restriction
- Media education
- Treatment/intervention/postvention

Levels of Evidence for Suicide Prevention

- Different levels of evidence of effectiveness are identified in suicide prevention practice:
  - Theoretical/non-empirical support
  - Weak empirical support
  - Moderate empirical support
  - Strong empirical support

Moderate Empirical Support

- Generic skills building
- Suicide awareness education
- Screening
- Means restriction
- Media education
- Treatment, intervention and postvention

Gardiner, Laforge, Vincent and Gaida, 2003
Weak Empirical Support
- Gatekeeper training
- Crisis Centres and Hotlines

Theoretical/Non-empirical support
- System wide protocols
- Community development
- School climate improvement
- Organizational policy
- Family support
- Support groups

Winnipeg Region Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Developed in 2004 with input from a committee led by the WRHA Adult Mental Health Program and Population and Public Health Program
- An action plan also developed and partially implemented
- Focused on centralized activities and opportunities

Components of the Winnipeg Region Suicide Prevention Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Promotion</th>
<th>Awareness &amp; Understanding</th>
<th>Prevention &amp; Intervention</th>
<th>Knowledge Development &amp; Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Generic skill building - Community development</td>
<td>Suicide awareness education - Media education</td>
<td>- Screening - Gatekeeper training - Treatment/intervention/postvention - System wide protocols</td>
<td>- Ongoing surveillance</td>
</tr>
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Manitoba Suicide Prevention Framework
- Developed by a committee led by Manitoba Health and Healthy Living - Mental Health and Addictions Branch with representatives from regional health authorities, self-help organizations, consumers, family members, First Nations and Métis communities, and a representative from CASP Board of Directors.
- Framework completed March 2006.
- Planning tool to assist SP strategy development at a community level and identification of goals and objectives that will be implemented at a provincial level.

Manitoba Suicide Prevention Framework Components
- Assessment and Planning
- Mental Health Promotion
- Awareness and Understanding
- Prevention, Intervention and Postvention
- Data Surveillance, Research and Evaluation

A Framework for Suicide Prevention Planning in Manitoba, March 2006
Next Steps

- Strengthen Winnipeg Region’s Suicide Prevention Strategy and capacity for implementation
- Mobilize action to target community areas and neighbourhoods
- Enhance collaboration between community action, practice and research