

Vermont has received a five-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support the implementation and evaluation of the state's comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention in Vermont.

Overview

The Department of Health, in coordination with Department of Mental Health, will use the federal grant to build on existing partnerships and programs to implement and evaluate a data-driven public health approach to suicide prevention in Vermont. The grant will bolster collective efforts on the integration between healthcare and mental health, and work to ensure all Vermonters have access to the supports they need. Goals will include:

- Develop a coordinated statewide prevention effort with state partners and communities.
- Promote awareness of existing suicide prevention activities and programs across the state.
- Utilize data analysis to identify priority populations and to better characterize risk and protective factors impacting suicide.
- Expand the delivery and provision of suicide prevention and safer suicide care for at-risk and underserved populations with a focus on health equity and improved access.
- Expand *Zero Suicide* activities to rural Vermont counties and engage Community Health Teams to support planning to improve screening, treatment, and transitions of care for patients experiencing suicidality.
- Facilitate "Gatekeeper" trainings among social services agencies and community partners to increase the identification of persons at risk of suicide and refer them to treatment or supporting services.
- Expand recovery and peer support groups, including groups for first responders, farmers, and individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide.
- Support the adoption of evidence-based suicide prevention activities in the Emergency Department and other healthcare settings, including *Counseling about Access to Lethal Means*, which focuses on how to reduce access to the methods people use to kill themselves.

- **Developing a coordinated statewide suicide prevention effort**
- **Improving data analysis to support priority populations**
- **Expanding Zero Suicide, Gatekeeper training, and peer supports**
- **Expanding suicide prevention in Emergency Departments and other healthcare settings.**

For more information:

Organizations and stakeholder interested in engaging with this work can contact *Nick Nichols*, *Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator*, for more information at nick.nichols@vermont.gov or 802-495-8756.