

Suicide touches everyone, but especially working aged adults

- Depression, one of the most significant risk factors for suicide, is a leading cause of workplace absence and low performance
- Since 2005, the suicide rate had continued to rise in the general population

There is hope and there is help when individuals and workplaces join forces to prevent suicide.

The free MENder's Support Group Meetings:

ATHOL GROUP

First and Third Monday of the month from 7:30-9:00 pm in the Athol Hospital Briggs Conference Room (2033 Main Street, Athol)

FITCHBURG GROUP

Second and Fourth Thursday of each month from 7:00-9:00 pm at First Parish Church of Fitchburg (923 Main Street)

GARDNER GROUP

First and Third Wednesday of the month from 7:00-9:00 pm in the Heywood Hospital Community Education Room (242 Green Street, Gardner)

LEOMINSTER GROUP

First and Third Thursday of each month from 7:00-9:00 pm at St. Mark's House (62 West Street, Leominster)

MENder's brings together guys facing similar issues including illness, anger, stress, substance abuse, relationship problems or major life changes. By using a whole host of techniques, participants can develop the skills to deal with stressors. Members of support groups often share experiences and advice.

Crisis Numbers

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Press # 1 if you are a Veteran

Samaritans Statewide 1-877-870-4673

Resources

Heywood Hospital 978-630-6377

Men's Suicide Prevention Project 978-630-6455

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)

Statewide Emergency Services 1-877-382-1609

Community Health Link 1-800-977-5555

Gardner Community Health Center 978-410-6100

Online Resources

Suicide Prevention Task Force
www.suicidepreventiontaskforce.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
www.afsp.org

Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention
www.masspreventssuicide.org

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/

Heywood Hospital's Men's Suicide Prevention Project
www.heywood.org/mensproject

Athol Hospital's Men's Suicide Prevention Project
www.atholhospital.org/mensproject

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
www.NAMI.org

Montachusett Suicide Prevention Task Force
242 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440 | (978) 632-3420
suicidepreventiontaskforce.org/mensproject



Men's Care Project



Montachusett Suicide Prevention Task Force

Providing Hope to Our Community



The workplace can be the source of non-productive stress leading to physical and mental health problems, including suicidal thoughts and behaviors. The majority of suicide deaths in the United States are among working aged adults (ages 24-64), especially men (CDC, 2010).

The financial cost associated with mental illness and suicide is significant. Spending on depression alone is estimated to be \$30-40 billion in the United States while the medical and work loss costs of deaths by suicide, among people age 25-64 years, was over \$20 billion. Other direct costs that may be incurred in the case of suicide attempts include nursing home care, psychological and/or physical rehabilitation, and pharmaceuticals. There may also be costs associated with lost productivity by family and friends caring for injured victims.

The cost of workplace suicides extends far beyond what the monetary figures indicate. Intangible and human costs include the emotional and mental health effects (pain, grief, suffering, and quality of life) on co-workers, the workplace culture, family, and friends.

There are a large number of risk factors for suicide. Some of the most significant ones are:

- Prior suicide attempt(s)
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Mood and anxiety disorders, e.g., depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Access to a means to kill oneself, i.e., lethal means

Suicide risk is usually greater among people with more than one risk factor. For individuals who are already at risk, a “triggering” event causing shame or despair may make them more likely to attempt suicide. These events may include relationship problems or breakups, problems at work, financial hardships, legal difficulties, and worsening health. Even though most people with risk factors will not attempt suicide, they should be evaluated by a professional.

Other behaviors may also indicate a serious risk, especially if the behavior is new; has increased; and/or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

There are some behaviors that may mean a person is at immediate risk for suicide. These three should prompt you to take action right away:

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

What can employers do?

Critical elements in workplace suicide prevention are:

- (1) creating a workplace culture in which help-seeking behaviors are encouraged;
- (2) developing early intervention programs and policies;
- (3) adopting and making available qualified employee assistance programs for employees seeking help;
- (4) training of all employees, managers, directors and executives.

There are many benefits for employers of creating a workplace environment and culture that supports the health and safety of workers including reduced absenteeism, reduced medical expenses, and increased productivity. Employees are more likely to experience higher morale and a greater sense of loyalty that results in a greater retention of staff for the employer. Implementing sound policies and procedures combined with clear messages of their commitment to creating a caring environment are necessary to accomplish this goal.

QPR Suicide Prevention Training is available through the Montachusett Suicide Prevention Task Force.

For more information please contact Barbara Nealon at (978) 630-6386.