

MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE: SUICIDE

Ministry of Public Health,
Guyana



Situational Analysis, Guyana

- ▶ According to a recent study about suicidal behavior in Guyana carried out by B. Harry et al. of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) and the Ministry of Health (MoPH), data show that there were 673 suicide deaths from 2010 to 2012 (mean approximately 226 deaths /year). A representative sample of 555 cases was surveyed and suicide rates by regions highlight 2, 6,3 and 4. Results also reveal that there were 946 reported suicide deaths during 2003–2007. Further, available statistics indicate that 201 suicides deaths were recorded in 2003; 186 deaths in 2004; 171 deaths in 2005; 202 deaths in 2006; and 186 deaths in 2007. The average annual rate of deaths by suicide during the period under review was 180 to 200 deaths.



This programme identifies the following groups for whom a tailored approach to their mental health is necessary for the suicide risk to be reduced.

These groups include:

- ▶ Indo-Guyanese males
- ▶ Young people of reproductive age
- ▶ People with depression (treated or not);
- ▶ Specific occupational groups, such as farmers and agricultural workers
- ▶ People who are especially vulnerable due to social and economic circumstances;
- ▶ People who misuse drugs or alcohol
- ▶ Children and the elderly
- ▶ Survivors of abuse or violence, including sexual abuse
- ▶ People living with long-term physical illnesses



Goal

- ▶ Reduce the incidence of suicide mortality (by 50%) and attempted suicide, thereby preventing premature death from suicide or morbidity/disability from attempted suicide, across the life span.



Objectives:

This Suicide Prevention Programme has the following objectives:

- ▶ To reduce the availability, accessibility and attractiveness of the means to suicide (e.g. Pesticides, firearms).
- ▶ To develop multidisciplinary effective interventions and actions to prevent suicidal behavior and implement new initiatives to help those affected by suicide.
- ▶ To promote a healthy lifestyle and implement culturally-sensitive approaches, to reduce the risk of suicidal behavior, especially in risk groups.
- ▶ To promote the use of mental health services and services for the prevention of substance abuse and suicide.
- ▶ To improve the quality and timeliness of national data on suicide and suicide attempts and support the establishment of an integrated data collection system.



Strategies and actions:

- ▶ Strategic Line of Action – 1: Risk factors reduction, health promotion and prevention

- ▶ Objective 1. To develop comprehensive interventions for the promotion of healthy lifestyles, prevention of suicidal behavior especially in key -risk group:

- 1.1.1 Provide evidence-based information about the magnitude, risks and consequences of suicidal behavior.

- 1.1.2 Promote healthy lifestyles in the general populations including the reduction of substance abuse and alcohol intake as a component of suicide prevention.

- 1.1.3 Communication through a specialized strategy of social communication focused on suicidal behavior.



▶ Strategic Line of Action – 2: Reduce access to the means of suicide

▶ Objective: 1. Develop different actions to reduce access to means of suicide

2.1.1 Restrict access to means of self-harm /suicide.

2.1.2 Reduce the number of suicides as a result of self-poisoning

2.1.3 Reduce the number of suicides as a result of overdoses of medications

2.1.4. Reduce the number of suicides as a result of hanging and strangulation

2.1.5 Reduce the number of suicides at high-risk locations

2.1.6 Reduce the number of suicides occurring on the road

2.1.7 Response to new methods of suicide



- ▶ Strategic Line of Action – 3: Health System Response to suicidal behaviour

- ▶ Objective 1. Improve the quality of health services to treat and manage people with mental disorders.

3.1. Increase access to management and interventions for treatment, control, and rehabilitation of persons who attempt suicide.



- ▶ **Objective 2. To strengthen human resources in the health system, and communities to provide care, treatment and support in cases of suicidal behavior.**

3.2.1 Train “gatekeepers” to identify individuals at risk, level of risk and how to refer at-risk individuals for treatment.

3.2.2 Mobilize communities and develop interventions to address the factors that influence suicide risks (trauma or abuse, discrimination and relationship conflict)

3.2.3 Develop Interventions to support Survivors



▶ Strategic Line of Action 4: Suicide Surveillance and Research

- ▶ Objective 1. Improve data collection on the incidence of suicidal behaviour, research and evaluation of effective interventions.

4.1.1 Improve case registration.

4.1.2 Conduct researches on suicidal behaviour.





**Thank you for
your attention**

