

Suicide is Everybody's Business!

Suicide Prevention Awareness Week

September 7th – 13th has been designated Suicide Prevention Awareness Week. This week is dedicated to activities that promote awareness concerning suicide and how individuals and communities can work together to reduce suicide. The VA is proud to participate in this week and to promote our efforts in this area.

Suicide is an international problem and a public health concern. Suicide claims approximately 1 million lives worldwide each year, resulting in one suicide every 40 seconds. There is an estimated 10 to 20 suicide attempts for each completed suicide, resulting in several million attempts each year. Suicide affects people of all ages, genders, races, and religions. Suicide affects men more than women.

Risk factors include mental illness, substance abuse, previous suicide attempts, hopelessness, access to lethal means, recent loss of loved ones, and unemployment. High self-esteem, supportive family and friends, problem-solving skills, meaningful roles (care-giving, work), and positive religious or cultural beliefs that prohibit suicide are examples of factors that buffer against suicidal behaviors.

Veterans, Family Members, Staff and Community Partners are Welcome to Participate in Suicide Prevention Awareness Week Activities at VA Ann Arbor Health System:

Wednesday, 9/10/08—VTEL in Library Conference Room or EBO2 in MHC
1:30—3:30 pm

"Evaluating Suicide Risk in PTSD and Other Diagnoses: An Evidence-Based Approach," Phillip M. Kleespies, PhD, ABPP, Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry Boston University School of Medicine/ VA Boston Healthcare System.

Thursday, 9/11/08—All presentations in Auditorium, refreshments provided
9:30 – 11:30 am

"suicideTALK"

suicideTALK is exploration of the question: "Should we talk about suicide?" and attitudes about suicide. Ways to help a person will be addressed. Limit: 35 persons.

Michelle Rose-Armstrong— Prevention Services, Washtenaw County Public Health Dept.

Noon – 1:30 pm

"Helping Returning OIF/OEF Veterans – Combat Trauma and Suicide Prevention"

Jennifer Loar, LMSW – Polytrauma Coordinator/Case Manager, Seamless Transition, VAAAHS

2 – 4:00 pm

"Creating a Life Worth Living: Recovery Includes Work and Home"

Winnetha Benn-Burton, PhD – Recovery Coordinator, VAAAHS; Deborah Davis-Worden, MA – Work Therapy Program, VAAAHS; Jon Voelkner, LMSW; Rebecca Hite-Horn, LMSW – Homeless Veterans Program, VAAAHS

VA Ann Arbor Health System

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