



Working With the Client/Patient Who is Suicidal

A Guide for Service Providers / Health Professionals

Any client/patient threatening suicide, self-injury or reporting an attempt, must be considered high risk for completing the act.

Any client/patient threatening suicide should not be left alone for any reason.

Warning Signs — Red Flags



Actions

- Withdrawal (family, friends, school, work)
- Loss of interest in life in general
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Extreme behavioral changes
- Impulsivity
- Self-mutilation



Physical

- Lack of interest in appearance
- Change/loss in sex interest
- Disturbed sleep
- Change/loss of appetite/weight
- Physical health problems



Feelings

- Desperate
- Worthless
- Sad
- Hopeless
- Helpless



Thoughts

- 'I just can't keep my thoughts straight'
- 'I just can't take it anymore'
- 'I wish I were dead'
- 'No one can do anything to help me'



Stressful Events

- With FEELINGS OF LOSS (almost anything depending on how the person feels about it)



YOU have to ask the question – **Ask the question directly**

‘Are you having thoughts of suicide?’ ‘Are you thinking of killing yourself?’

If answer is **YES**, assess risk by asking the following questions:

- A) Do you have pain (*emotional and/or physical*) that at times seems unbearable?
- B) On a scale of one to 10, how would you rate your pain?
- C) Do you have a plan? How do you intend to do it? (*Is there means available, and has time been decided?*)
Note: The more lethal the means, the more available the means, and the more definite the time frame, the greater the risk.
- D) Have you tried to kill yourself before? When? How many times? What did you do?
- E) Do you know anyone else who has attempted suicide or has taken their life?
- F) Do you have family and friends you can go to for help? Would you go to them if you needed to?
- G) Has anyone close to you suggested that you need help?
- H) Have you experienced challenges with your mental health and/or addictions?
- I) Have you ever been prescribed medication for your moods or your nerves?
- J) Have you ever used alcohol and/or drugs to make you feel better?

WHAT to do

Haldimand-Norfolk 24 Hour Assistance

- **Emergency 911**
- **Ontario Provincial Police** – 1-888-310-1122
- **Local Emergency Rooms**
Norfolk General Hospital 519-426-0130
West Haldimand General Hospital 905-768-3311
Haldimand War Memorial Hospital 905-774-7431
- **Child and Youth Crisis Service (CYCS)**
(for clients under the age of 18) – 1-866-327-3224
- **Crisis Assessment and Support Team (CAST)**
(for age 16 and over) – 1-866-487-2278
- **Crisis Bed - Canadian Mental Health Association**
1-888-750-7778 Ext. 301
- **Haldimand-Norfolk Women's Services**
(24 hour crisis service) – 1-800-265-8076 • 519-426-8048
- **Children's Aid Society of Haldimand-Norfolk**
519-587-5437 • 1-888-CAS-KIDS

Ongoing Assistance

- **Haldimand-Norfolk REACH**
519-587-2441 • 1-800-265-8087
- **Community Addiction and Mental Health Services**
519-587-4658 • 519-426-8760 • 1-877-909-4357
- **Canadian Mental Health Association**
1-888-750-7778 • 519-428-2380
- **Haldimand-Norfolk Women's Services**
519-426-8048 • 1-800-265-8076
- **Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit**
Simcoe - 519-426-6170 • 905-318-6623
Caledonia - 905-318-5367
- **Union House - (Urgent Care Bed Available) (Youth 16 - 18)**
519-426-7604
- **Suicide Prevention Network**
c/o Haldimand-Norfolk REACH
1-800-265-8087 • 519-587-2441