

Abstract

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported in 2018 that suicide remains one of the top ten causes of death in the United States. It is therefore, necessary to implement quality improvement projects to help prevent and mitigate harm. In June, 2020 a suicide crisis management plan (SCMP) was implemented at an urban outpatient psychiatric facility, after stakeholders identified a need for it. Providers at the site treat a high risk population of depressed, and anxious individuals, who are at risk for suicidal behavior. Providers were educated and trained on using the SCMP including a protocol with assessments and interventions and a safety plan. High and moderate risk patients were flagged in the electronic health record (EHR).

Providers were administered a pre and post competence survey to assess for increase in competence level treating patients with suicidal behaviors. All four provider's total survey scores for confidence and competence increased from pre to post intervention. Provider 1, provider 2, and provider 4 had a high confidence and competence score for the pre and post surveys. Provider 3's total survey score increased 10 points from a medium level of confidence to a high post intervention confidence and competence level (high confidence/ competence range = 49-65). A chart audit demonstrated compliance rates increased from week one (62.5 %) to week four (77.5 %). Due to the small sample size, a Wilcoxon sign test was unable to be conducted and there was no statistically significant increase in provider competence level. Results suggest use of a SCMP is an effective way to increase provider confidence and competence. This low cost intervention can be widely implemented in outpatient facilities.

Keywords: suicide interventions, crisis plan, crisis management, suicide risk assessment

