Assessing & Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR)
Core Competencies for Behavioral Health Professionals

A one-day workshop for behavioral health professionals on assessing suicide risk, planning treatment, and managing the ongoing care of at-risk clients.

Suicidal behavior is a major cause of death and disability in the United States. Over 30,000 people die by suicide each year, the equivalent of one major airliner filled with passengers crashing every two days. Hundreds of thousands of people are treated in hospital emergency departments each year following a suicide attempt. A significant proportion of people who die by suicide have had recent contact with a behavioral health professional. However, many providers are inadequately trained to assess, treat, and manage suicidal patients or clients.

Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk was designed to address that training gap. It teaches essential core competencies that meet the needs of an entire spectrum of behavioral health professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed counselors, social workers, chemical dependency professionals and employee assistance professionals.

Workshop Objectives

Participants will gain knowledge in the following core competencies:

- Managing one’s own reactions to suicide
- Reconciling the difference and potential conflict between a clinician’s goal to prevent suicide and a client’s goal to eliminate psychological pain through suicide
- Maintaining a collaborative, non-adversarial stance
- Eliciting suicide ideation, behavior, and plans
- Making a clinical judgment of the risk that a client will attempt or complete suicide
- Collaboratively developing an emergency plan
- Developing a written treatment and services plan that addresses a client’s immediate, acute, and continuing suicide ideation and risk for suicide
- Developing policies and procedures for following clients closely Implementing the principles of crisis management

Workshop Presenter - Josephine Ridley, Ph.D.

Josephine Ridley, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist and Program Manager of a Partial Hospitalization Program for the seriously mentally ill at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. She is a Clinical Instructor for Case Western Reserve University Psychology Department and is active in private practice, working with adolescents, adults and geriatric clients. Dr. Ridley received a B.A. degree from The College of Wooster, and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Clinical Psychology from West Virginia University. She completed her doctoral internship at the Cleveland VAMC with rotations in health psychology, PTSD, neuropsychology and inpatient psychiatry, and has worked at several sites in the VA.

Dr. Ridley has taught at Baldwin-Wallace College and Cuyahoga Community College. She serves on several VA Medical Center committees including the Psychology Training Committee, Police Evaluation Committee and the Institutional Review Board which approves all research conducted at the Cleveland VA. She has conducted workshops and seminars for a variety of organizations including the Ohio Psychological Association, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, Association of Black Psychologists, UMADAOP, CWRU and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center. She is published in the areas of anxiety and depression and is actively conducting research on depression and suicide. She is a member of the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation Advisory Committee and is certified by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center as a Master Trainer in Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk.

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For more information please visit: http://www.ohiospf.org