

## **Oregon's Elder Suicide Prevention Community Planning Process**

The purpose of the planning process is to create opportunities for communities, advocates, and professionals to provide direction and input into developing strategies that will become part of an Elder Suicide Prevention Plan for Oregon.

The purpose of the Elder Suicide Prevention Plan is to identify specific strategies to reduce the incidence and prevalence of suicide among elderly Oregonians through data collection, primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs, evaluation activities, research, and policy development. This project is funded through a one-time only cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and through in-kind staff support from the Oregon Department of Human Services. Completion of the overall project is anticipated in the fall of 2004.

Community planning meetings will be held in six sites. The sites and their local hosts are:

Portland Metropolitan Area	Judy Strand
Coos Bay	Dianne DeVilliers
Baker City	Mary Jo Carpenter
Bend	Tim Malone
Grants Pass	Gary McConahay
Eugene	Al Levine

Planning meetings will occur in local communities during June and July 2004. Local hosts will be inviting senior advocates, suicide survivors, professionals working in the fields of senior services, mental health providers, primary care practitioners, members of faith communities, and the media to attend.

Community planning sessions will include a brief description of the problem of elder suicide in Oregon and a presentation of eleven broad concepts for prevention. After the presentation attendees will be invited to provide input. The planning process advisory committee needs input from community members that describes:  
How communities are already implementing some or all of the prevention concepts; and  
Suggestions on what implementation strategies should be included in the prevention plan.

The eleven prevention concepts include:

1. **PROMOTE AWARENESS** that suicide in older adults is a public health problem that is preventable.
2. **DEVELOP BROAD-BASED SUPPORT** for elder suicide prevention.

3. Develop and implement strategies to **REDUCE THE STIGMA** associated with aging and with being a senior consumer of mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention services.
4. Develop and implement **COMMUNITY-BASED SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS** for older adults.
5. Promote efforts to **REDUCE ACCESS** to lethal means and methods of self-harm by older adults.
6. Implement **TRAINING FOR RECOGNITION AND ASSESSMENT** of at-risk behavior in and delivery of effective treatment to older adults.
7. Develop and promote effective **CLINICAL AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES**.
8. Improve **REPORTING AND PORTRAYALS** of suicidal behavior, mental illness, and substance abuse among older adults in the entertainment and news media.
9. Promote and **SUPPORT RESEARCH** on late life suicide and suicide prevention.
10. Improve and expand **SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS**.
11. **EVALUATION** of prevention programs.

The Elder Suicide Prevention Planning Advisory Committee members are:  
Sandra Moreland, Lynda Crandall, Mark Kaplan, Mercy Dekker, Jeanne Dalton, Judy Strand, Dianne DeVilliers, Tim Malone, Mariana Bornholdt, Lisa Millet, Deborah Profant, Janice Alexander, Lee Anna Bennett-Ashworth, and Mel Kohn.

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