

# ZERO SUICIDE IN TEXAS



February 2015



## Paradigm Shift By: Denise M Pazur

There's significant change underway today in delivering competent, ethical and effective clinical care to suicidal people. Common approaches, some used for decades, have been found ineffective by consensus panels of national experts. These include inadequate assessments of suicidal risk, use of safety or no-harm contracts, overuse of inpatient hospitalization, and overreliance on medication.

In contrast, emerging research points to evidence-based approaches for assessing, treating and managing suicidality that optimize positive outcomes for both individual and practitioner. These approaches focus increased emphasis on intensive suicide-specific outpatient treatment, stabilization planning, and the explicit development of coping techniques that may render suicidal coping obsolete over time. Among these is an evidence-based clinical intervention known as CAMS. The Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality is one of only a handful of empirically supported interventions shown to reduce patient suicidal ideation, hopelessness and symptom distress.

Surprisingly, today only a few other clinical treatments have replicated empirical support that substantiates their effectiveness; among these are DBT, or dialectical behavior therapy and CT-SP, or cognitive therapy for suicide risk. Moreover, the research so far shows that psychosocial interventions, and not medications, are most effective for treating suicidal ideation and behaviors.

"Becoming more competent in appropriately and effectively assessing and treating suicidal patients is critical to delivering ethical and effective care," says clinician researcher David A. Jobes, Ph.D., ABPP, developer of the CAMS framework. "As we reflect the ethical principles and latest standards of care in our field, we not only improve our clinical practices, but we potentially save the lives of patients who might otherwise be lost to suicide."

"CAMS represents a whole new standard of care where managing suicide risk is synonymous with working in the best interest of the patient."

## CAMS is coming to Texas

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A brand new e-Learning course about CAMS will be piloted in Texas beginning in early 2015. This course, *Managing Suicide Risk Collaboratively: The CAMS Framework*, is a 4-hour interactive self-paced online training from Empathos Resources. The course focuses on elements of competent clinical care for suicidal individuals, fundamental in the CAMS framework. These include:

### **Sufficient Informed Consent**

In CAMS, the clinician lets the person know the treatment ground rules, limits and boundaries; and this forthrightness encourages trust and a strong therapeutic alliance vital to positive treatment outcomes.

### **Adequate Assessment of Risk**

The assessment phase of CAMS is thorough, extensive and multifaceted, so that both clinician and individual understand the potential for suicidal behavior.

### **Appropriate Risk Management**

The CAMS framework gives clinicians a roadmap for treating, tracking and documenting suicide risk until it is resolved. The treatment delivered in CAMS is collaborative, with person and their practitioner working together to reduce risk and help the individual find a life worth living.

## About the Author

Denise M. Pazur is Founder and Director of Strategic Partnerships at Empathos Resources, an organization dedicated to preventing suicide through widespread education of those who interact with at-risk individuals. She has more than 20 years as a strategic communications professional, trainer and prevention advocate.

## What the data tells us...



Youth with Elevated CANS Strengths or Needs – Comparing Low and High Risk Groups

Selected CANS Items	Minimal Suicide Risk	High Suicide Risk
Other Risk-Taking Behavior	2.1%	12.6%
Recent Runaway Behavior	1.7%	6.3%
Depression Impacting Function	19.0%	68.8%
Adjustment to Trauma	6.4%	20.2%
Substance Abuse Impacting Function	3.5%	10.8%
Significant Sleep Disruption	11.3%	26.7%
Problematic School Performance	19.3%	35.6%

## Upcoming Events



### **Safety Planning Training for ZEST sites**

Thursday, February 26, 2015 12:30pm-4:30pm and Friday February 27<sup>th</sup> 8:30am-12:30pm

Trainer: Dr. Barbara Stanley, the treatment developer. This is a best practice training in suicide prevention and intervention. The training will consist of both the standard training for the intervention itself and a “train-the-trainer” component.

This training will take place in Austin. 2-3 attendees per ZEST site are encouraged to attend. Sites need to e-mail [bonnie.evans@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:bonnie.evans@austin.utexas.edu) by *February 1* with the names and titles of attendees to reserve their spaces.

### **Collaborative Assessment & Management of Suicidality (CAMS) online training**

Please e-mail Bonnie at [bonnie.evans@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:bonnie.evans@austin.utexas.edu) with the total number of staff who will be participating in the online CAMS training, and their names and e-mail addresses. This training is targeted to providers who may work with individuals to treat suicidality, generally requiring about 12 contacts with the individual.

### **Webinar: Exploring the Impact of Suicide Prevention Research in Health Care Settings**

Wednesday, Feb. 11 1:00-2:00 pm

Health care settings provide an important opportunity for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Speakers will address research that is being conducted in health care settings, explain the known impact the research has had, and identify needed research and practice going forward.

Please follow this link to register:

<http://edc.adobeconnect.com/e4dss8djbjd/event/registration.html>.