

# ZERO SUICIDE IN TEXAS



February 2016



## New Guidelines for Depression Screening

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has issued new guidelines recommending that all adults ages 18 and older, including pregnant and postpartum women, be screened for depression in the primary care setting. This is an update to their 2009 report, which recommended screening for adults only when staff-assisted depression care supports are in place.

The USPSTF reviewed the current literature on depression screening and treatment in forming their guidelines. They found convincing evidence that screening in primary care settings improves the accurate identification of adults with depression. Further, they found that psychotherapy and/or medication continue to be effective methods of treating depression, and that referral for these services after a positive screen is critical.

With regards to pregnant and postpartum women, 23 studies indicated that the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EDPS) was effective in detecting major depressive disorder. Additionally, nine studies assessed the impact of screening and intervention for pregnant and postpartum women, and each found significant reductions in risk of depression at follow-up.

The USPSTF report provides continued support for a collaborative approach to prevention and treatment of depression in adults. Specifically, mental health professionals should be working in conjunction with primary-care providers to improve the overall quality and outcome of patient care.

To read the summary and full report by the USPSTF, click [here](#).

## Notable Recommendations

- Depression screenings in primary-care settings for **all** adults aged 18 and older
- Addition of screening for pregnant and postpartum women
- Support for a collaborative approach between primary care and mental health professionals needed for prevention and treatment of depression

## A Toolkit for Senior Centers

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Rates of suicides for people 65 years old and over have steadily increased over the past ten years. To help address this concerning trend, SAMHSA has published a toolkit for use by professionals working in senior centers. "Promoting Emotional Health and Preventing Suicide" offers strategies senior centers can use to incorporate suicide prevention and promote emotional health in their regular activities. It offers activities that help increase protective factors, support the well-being of older adults, and explain how to recognize the warning signs of suicide.

The toolkit is available to download for free through the SAMHSA store. Click [here](#) for the link.

## Upcoming Events



### DoD/VA Webinar on Suicide Prevention

On February 24, the Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Office and the Department of Veterans Affairs will host a webinar titled The Power of One: Maximizing a Public Health, Community-Based, and Holistic Approach to Suicide Prevention. [Registration](#) for this event is now open.

## What the data tells us



The American Association of Suicidology has made available a summary of national suicide statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics. The most current numbers are from 2014. The following reflect some of the findings:

- While suicide remains the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the U.S., suicide rates in general are up slightly, from 13.1% to 13.4%.
- The most significant increases in suicide rates from 2013 to 2014 were for white males (up 0.7% over the past year) and Native Americans (up 0.9% over the past year).
- The following age groups saw increases in rates of suicide by at least 0.5%: 15-24 year olds, 55-64 year olds, and 65 years old and over.
- Although Texas maintains rates of suicides below the national average (13.4%), 2014 saw an overall increase over 2013 (from 11.6% to 12.1%).

### Summary and Implications

Although rates of suicide in the United States remained about the same from 2013 to 2014, there were some small but important increases that warrant attention, including the Native American population, young adults, and older adults. Overall, suicide rates continue to trend upward direction, increasing steadily over the past 10 years. As such, continued research, advocacy work, training and education in the field of suicide prevention is needed.

You can access the most recent as well as past fact sheets [here](#). You can find a more comprehensive data review on suicidal thoughts and behaviors among adults in SAMHSA's 2015 Barometer report, [here](#).