



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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Zero Suicide Texas Leadership Statement

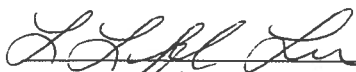
Zero Suicides in Texas (ZEST) is a commitment among Texas' primary public health agencies to thoughtfully and systematically change the way we think about suicide prevention. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) have undertaken the goal of advancing and actualizing patient safety for individuals receiving care through its public mental health system. No longer will we think of prevention as fewer deaths, but rather no deaths.

Zero Suicide provides a framework of guidelines, recommendations and best practices for health and behavioral health care systems based on the notion that all suicide deaths for people under care are preventable. The core dimensions of zero suicide include:

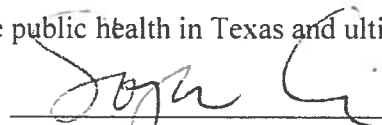
- Creating a leadership-driven, safety-oriented culture that commits to dramatically reducing suicide among people under care and includes suicide attempt and loss survivors in leadership and planning roles
- Systematically identifying and assessing suicide risk levels among people at risk
- Ensuring every person has a pathway to care that is both timely and adequate to meet their needs
- Developing a competent, confident, and caring workforce
- Using effective, evidence-based care, including collaborative safety planning, restriction of lethal means, and effective treatment of suicidality
- Continuing contact and support, especially after acute care
- Applying a data-driven quality improvement approach to inform system changes that will lead to improved patient outcomes and better care for those at risk

Through the ZEST initiative, Texas will improve identification, treatment and support services for high risk Texans by creating Suicide Safe Care Centers within the public mental health system; expand and coordinate these best practice suicide prevention activities with organizations and community partners to create Suicide Safe Care Communities; and implement research-informed training and communications efforts to create a Suicide Safe Care State.

By taking on this challenge, DSHS and HHSC will improve public health in Texas and ultimately save lives.



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