

Suicide Prevention: Ethical Issues for Attorneys and other Justice System Professionals

Program Description

Policy Research Associates, Inc., a national leader in the field of research and training on mental health issues within the justice systems, in partnership with the University of Rochester's Center for the Study and Prevention of Suicide, a leading research center in the field, has collaborated on the development of a suicide prevention training curriculum for attorneys and other justice system professionals. *Suicide Prevention: Ethical Issues for Attorneys and Other Justice System Professionals* focuses on ethical issues, identification of risk, and prevention of suicide in people who are in contact with the court system.

Overview

Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States. Individuals with mental illness and those experiencing significant life stressors are at an increased risk of suicide – approximately 90% of successful suicides have symptoms of a psychiatric disorder. Individuals with mental illness are over-represented in the criminal justice system, and justice involvement itself is a significant life stressor. As a key processing point, courts are in contact with tens of thousands of high risk individuals each year. Attorneys and court officers may be in a unique position to identify those at imminent risk and to prevent suicide.

Objectives

Suicide Prevention: Ethical Issues for Attorneys and Other Justice System Professionals taps this professional group as a resource in preventing suicide in adult men and women. Court involvement and the preceding events can be significant life stressors that can increase suicide risk. Equally as important, these individuals are unlikely to be receiving services aimed at reducing risk. Attorneys and other justice system professionals routinely interact with untreated individuals at above average risk for suicide at a time of elevated stress. This training addresses ethical issues related to making appropriate and judicious referrals to qualified mental health professionals for further assessment, increases awareness of risk factors, and provides a practical model for taking action.

Purpose

For attorneys and other justice system professionals, to provide:

- A forum to examine the ethical issues in making referrals
- Information to better identify suicide risk
- An opportunity to improve skills for talking with the individuals about suicide
- Guidance regarding taking appropriate action

Description of Training

Suicide Prevention: Ethical Issues for Attorneys and Other Justice System Professionals is available through LawLine.com as *Attorney Client Privilege and the Suicidal Client*. 1.5 continuing education units in Ethics are available in AZ, CA, IL, MO, ND, NY, PA, TN, and TX.

For More Information Contact:

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