

Primary Care Provider,

Research shows that many people visit their primary care physician, rather than a mental health provider, for mental health problems. Studies also show that it is very common for people who complete suicide to visit their primary care physician within one month of their death. Primary care providers are uniquely positioned to provide care that reduces the number of suicides and the suffering they cause in our rural communities. Yet primary care providers receive little reimbursement, support, and guidance for their suicide prevention efforts and face multiple systemic barriers, such as inadequate mental health services in their community.

Montana has one of the highest rates of suicide in the nation. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, with the assistance of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), is offering a toolkit to primary care providers around the State of Montana in our efforts to reduce the incidence of suicide in our state.

The purpose of the Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Rural Primary Care Providers is to bring best practices in suicide prevention to rural primary care and to offer physicians, patients, and rural communities the tools and support they need.

Toolkit Overview

In response to the clear need to support suicide prevention in rural primary care, WICHE and SPRC have collaborated with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services to develop a toolkit.

Toolkit Contents include:

- 1) Suicide prevention **primer** for providers
- 2) Tool for creating an **office protocol** regarding suicidal patients
- 3) **Crisis response planning tools** for at-risk patients
- 4) Suicidal patient **treatment tracking log** and user's guide
- 5) Suicide **risk assessment pocket cards**
- 6) **Community education materials**: suicide prevention posters,
- 7) Suicide prevention **resource list** for providers and steps to hospitalize a patient

The toolkit is being made available to you at **no cost**. For further information, please contact Karl Rosston, LCSW, Montana Suicide Prevention Coordinator, at (406) 444-3349 or by email at krosston@mt.gov

