Suicide Awareness and Prevention in Pediatrics

Course Development for Hospital Nurses
Suicide is the third leading cause of death for all children and adolescents ages 10-19 in the U.S.

Suicidal behaviors and ideation can go undetected, even from medical professionals.

Only 22% had seen a mental health provider, while 62% had seen a primary care provider in the previous year.
Indication for Change

• To address this issue and offer resources before an acute crisis, CMH is implementing a new tool to screen for suicide risk.

• The screening tool assesses risk and previous ideation or attempt and triggers a consult to psychology and social work.
Course Development

• Nurse Preparedness in Assessing Suicide Risk

• 1 CEU

• Many health professionals encounter patients with mental health needs. The goal of this course is to help staff nurses become more comfortable and prepared in asking patients questions related to mental health and suicide risk. By identifying those patients who are at risk for suicidal thoughts or behaviors, help and resources can be provided outpatient or inpatient, depending on severity, before an acute crisis.

• Identify the need for suicide risk screening
• Understand the importance of screening at every patient encounter
• Feel comfortable asking child and adolescent patients the screening questions
• Assure appropriate use of screening tool
• Identify the resources available if needed
## Pre-Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I feel comfortable taking care of a patient with mental illness.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking patients about mental health.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking patients about previous suicidal ideation.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking patients about previous suicide attempts.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking patients about current suicidal ideation.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking patients about a current suicide plan.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Resources are readily available and easily accessible to provide to patients.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CMH has adequate mental health resources.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASQ: Ask Suicide Screening Questions

1. In the past few weeks, have you wished you were dead?
2. In the past few weeks, have you felt that you or your family would be better off if you were dead?
3. In the past week, have you been having thoughts of killing yourself?
4. Have you ever tried to kill yourself?
5. If “yes” to any of the above, are you having thoughts of killing yourself right now?
Example Assignment

• A virtual world can be created to simulate the environment in which nurses work and the application of the tool with patients

  • Second Life
    • [http://secondlife.com/](http://secondlife.com/)

  • Sim City Medical Centre
Course Development

• Multidisciplinary team members

• Inpatient and outpatient resources

• CMH Education Department
References


Sullivant, S., Bettis, M., Briggs, K., & Winfrey, B. *Suicide prevention: Children and teens* [Powerpoint presentation]. (2016).