

To: All Providers
From: PerformCare
Date: September 2, 2024
Subject: Suicide Prevention Memo # 19: 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention

This month, PerformCare would like to provide a brief and broad overview of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, as a detailed review exceeds the scope of this educational effort. The Biden Administration, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released this strategy on April 23rd of 2024. The strategy was developed by what is referred to as a “whole government workgroup”. It was developed and supported by multiple government entities, such as the CDC, the Action Alliance, SAMHSA, SPRC, NIMH, and officials from the US Department of Health and Human Services, to name a few top leading contributors. It is the first time since 2012 that a strategy of its kind has been developed. The 2024 strategy is noted to be the first to utilize a whole government approach. The purpose of this communication is to raise awareness and provide resources, as no specific directives have been given at the state and local levels.

The 2024 National Strategy builds upon the prior 2012 plan by incorporating many advancements in the field that have occurred since that time. Some examples of these advancements were noted to include addressing topics such as health equity, concerns specifically connected to youth, substance use, and social determinants of health. The strategy provides a detailed breakdown on epidemiology related to suicide for a number of demographics, which is an excellent resource when searching for up-to-date data. The plan is organized into what is termed the four strategic directions. Goals are embedded within each of the strategic directions. These “directions” are termed Community- Based Suicide Prevention, Treatment and Crisis Services, Surveillance, Quality Improvement, and Research and Health Equity. While the plan is organized in this manner, they are not so distinct in that many topics overlap across the various directives. The first directive places a focus on primary prevention efforts. It serves as great resource organized into goals and direction on how to build a community infrastructure for prevention on various levels. The Treatment and Crisis Services directive provides useful information on current accepted suicide treatment protocol for “key settings”, including but not limited to risk assessment and safety planning, developing internal policies and procedures around addressing suicide treatment, and access to care. The Surveillance, Quality Improvement and Research direction stresses the importance of enhancing data collection to ensure it is current and accurate. This directive emphasizes the need for ongoing surveillance of many suicide topics and research on current trends, including but not limited to suicide and social media and substance use being examples cited for

importance. The last directive is Health Equity in Suicide Prevention. This directive provides direction on how to embed equity into all aspects of suicide prevention at the different levels and includes a focus on social determinants of health. To accompany the National Strategy there is a federal action plan. This plan provides action steps for the federal government to implement the plan for the first three years after the strategy was released. As noted, there are several resources for various entities to implement the strategy at various levels.

To access the 2024 National Strategy, go to:

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/national-strategy-suicide-prevention.pdf>

References

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Washington, DC: HHS, April 2024.