

FOA: Grants to Implement Zero Suicide in Health Systems

OVERVIEW

On January 30th, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services released a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for Grants to Implement Zero Suicide in Health Systems.

The Zero Suicide model is a comprehensive, multi-setting approach to suicide prevention in health systems (which may include primary care or behavioral health care networks) for individuals 25 years of age or older. The program is designed to raise awareness of suicide, establish referral processes, and improve care and outcomes for individuals at risk for suicide. Over \$7 million in total funding will be awarded to eligible organizations that implement the Zero Suicide model throughout their organization or system.

The full FOA is available [here](#). Applications are due on March 30th.

FUNDING

Up to \$400,000 annually will be awarded to community-based primary care organizations, behavioral health care organizations, or emergency departments and up to \$700,000 annually will be awarded to states and territories through this program. SAMHSA estimates funding between 10 and 17 awards.

Funding restrictions are as follows:

- No more than 20 percent of the annual award may be used for data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment, including incentives for participating in the required data collection follow-up;
- No more than \$75,000 over the total performance period may be used to support minor alternation and renovation activities;
- No amount of funding may be used to support the construction, expansion, or major alteration and renovation of facilities.

Awarded organizations should take advantage of third-party payer and other revenue from providing services to the extent possible. Grant funds awarded through this program should be used only for services to individuals who are not covered by public or commercial health insurance, individuals for whom coverage has been formally determined to be unaffordable, or for services that are not sufficiently covered by an individual's health insurance plan. Awarded organizations are expected to facilitate the health insurance application and enrollment process for eligible uninsured clients.

Contracts are expected to last for five years beginning on August 30th.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for funding include:

- Community-based primary care organizations;
- Behavioral health care organizations; and
- Emergency departments.

Applicants must meet the following three requirements:

- A provider organization for direct client (e.g., mental health, behavioral health) services appropriate to the grant must be involved in the proposed project. The provider may be the applicant or another organization committed to the project and more than one provider organization may be involved;
- Each health and behavioral healthcare organization must have at least two years of experience providing relevant services; and
- Each health and behavioral healthcare organization must comply with all applicable local and state licensing, accreditation, and certification requirements.

Awarded organizations must hire a Project Director and an Evaluator for the program at a minimum of 0.5 FTE for each position. Both positions will require prior approval by SAMHSA.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

Awarded organizations must use program funding to:

- Screen all individuals receiving care for suicidal thoughts and behaviors;
- Conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of individuals identified at risk for suicide, and ensure reassessment as appropriate;
- Implement effective, evidence-based treatments that specifically treat suicidal ideation and behaviors with clinical staff who are trained to provide direct treatment in suicide prevention and evaluate individual outcomes throughout the treatment process;
- Transform health systems to include a leadership-driven, safety-oriented culture committed to dramatically reducing suicide among people under care, and to accept and embed the Zero Suicide model within their agencies;
- Train the health care workforce in suicide prevention evidence-based, best-practice services relevant to their position, including the identification, assessment, management and treatment, and evaluation of individuals throughout the overall process;
- Ensure that the most appropriate treatment and support is provided, including brief intervention and follow-up from crisis, respite and residential care, and partial or full hospitalization;
- Develop a Suicide Care Management Plan for every individual identified as at-risk of suicide and continuously monitor the individual's progress through their electronic health record or other data management system and adjust treatment as necessary;
- Work with Veterans Health Administration and community-based outpatient clinics, state department of veteran affairs, and national SAMHSA and Veterans Administration (VA) suicide prevention resources to engage and intervene with veterans at risk for suicide but not currently receiving VA services, including veterans contacting local Lifeline crisis centers, sub-acute crisis services, and community emergency departments; and
- Develop and implement a plan that assures attention to preventing suicide among those receiving treatment for serious mental illness (SMI), such as severe major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder, and for services designed for those with SMI, such as assertive community treatment and assisted outpatient treatment.

Applicants should consult with their State Medicaid office regarding the sustainability of Zero Suicide activities, particularly care transition services. Awarded organizations must also develop a behavioral health disparities impact statement no later than 60 days after receiving an award.

APPLICATION

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Population of Focus and Statement of Need (10 points)
- Proposed Implementation Approach (30 points)
- Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice (25 points)
- Staff and Organizational Experience (15 points)
- Data Collection and Performance Measurement (20 points)

Awards will be distributed based on the above criteria, the availability of funds, and an equitable distribution of funding by geographic area, population need, and program size.

Timeline

Applications must be submitted by March 30th.

Questions should be submitted to Savannah Kidd at savannah.kidd@samhsa.hhs.gov and Brandon Johnson at brandon.johnson@samhsa.hhs.gov for program and eligibility questions, Corey Sullivan at FOACMHS@samhsa.hhs.gov for fiscal and budget issues, and Gabriela Porter at gabriela.porter@samhsa.hhs.gov for review process and application status questions.