

To: All Providers
From: PerformCare
Date: September 2026
Subject: Suicide Prevention #31: Evidence-Based Care and Liability Risk Reduction

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a time to reaffirm the importance of using approaches specifically designed to identify, treat, and reduce suicidal thoughts and behaviors. For clinicians, suicide prevention is strengthened when care includes evidence-based, suicide-specific models that provide structure, consistency, and clear clinical direction. Models such as Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Suicide Prevention (CBT-SP), and the Zero Suicide framework focus directly on suicide risk, safety planning, follow-up, and documentation. Training resources such as Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR) can further support clinician confidence and consistency in recognizing, assessing, and responding to suicide risk.

Why Suicide-Specific Models Matter

When a suicide death occurs, care is often reviewed to determine whether risk was identified, addressed, followed up on, and clearly documented. While no model can eliminate risk or guarantee protection from liability, using an evidence-based, suicide-specific model can strengthen the defensibility of clinical care by showing that the clinician followed a recognized, structured, and research-informed approach.

- Structure: Guides assessment, intervention, safety planning, and follow-up.
- Consistency: Supports a more reliable standard of care across providers and settings.
- Documentation: Helps demonstrate what was assessed, discussed, planned, and clinically decided.

This September, clinicians are encouraged to consider how suicide-specific models of care, supported by training such as AMSR, are reflected in daily practice. Following recognized approaches, documenting clinical reasoning, and using sound judgment together strengthen client safety, quality of care, and professional practice.

References

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Zero Suicide. (n.d.). Treat: Utilize evidence-based treatments that focus explicitly on reducing suicide risk. Education Development Center.

Education Development Center. (n.d.). Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk Training.