

# Shared Learnings

## Implementing Suicide Identification and Management in Primary Care

### Program Overview

A social worker (LMSW/LCSW) was embedded within the primary care clinic at Family Health Network (FHN) to support the clinicians and primary care team by providing brief evidence-based behavioral health interventions, manage/ de-escalate mental health crisis, review and refer to longer term treatments based on the patient's needs. The social worker also provided education to the family and assisted patients with creating self-management goals (e.g. medication management, weight loss, depression, and anxiety).

**Start Date:** November 2018

**End Date:** Ongoing

**Target Population:** All patients who receive care at the FHN Cortland Health Center

### Program Goals



Increase staff understanding in addressing behavioral health and impact on physical health



Standardize workflows and processes once a patient responds positive for suicide ideation/ self-harm



Create and adopt safety plan for every patient with a positive suicide ideation and follow-up call next day

### Learnings



**Go SMALL** – Implementing small incremental changes helps to support the overall goal. FHN utilizes a “Red Flag” notification system on the patient exam room door when a patient responds positive for suicidal ideation. This may appear to be a small change to the workflow, but it is very impactful in a busy primary care health center. Once FHN successfully implemented the Red Flag Notification, the implementation team began to work on creating the patient safety plan, wraparound next day follow-up call, and workflows.



**Training & Education for all staff:** It is important to communicate and train all of your staff on the ‘Why’ behind the change. All team members and Providers must be actively trained to understand their roles and responsibilities. Once the team is aware of the processes and expectations, the transition will go much smoother. All care coordinators were trained in the Zero Suicide modules with the assistance from the LCSW. This helped to increase their understanding and comfort level when encountering, managing, and communicating with patients who are in a crisis or having suicidal thoughts. The modules also focus



**Hard wire processes and workflows:** Positive business values to the organization: creating/embedding different depression care and follow-up drop down options in the EMR. This helped to streamline the process and communication for Providers and the primary care team. Providers were then able to choose from a variety of follow-up options that were also trackable. Reports can easily be ran on options chosen; whereas when Providers document free text notes within the patient chart, reports cannot be ran on that. This also allowed us as a team to track and manage quality improvement programs based on the actual reported data.



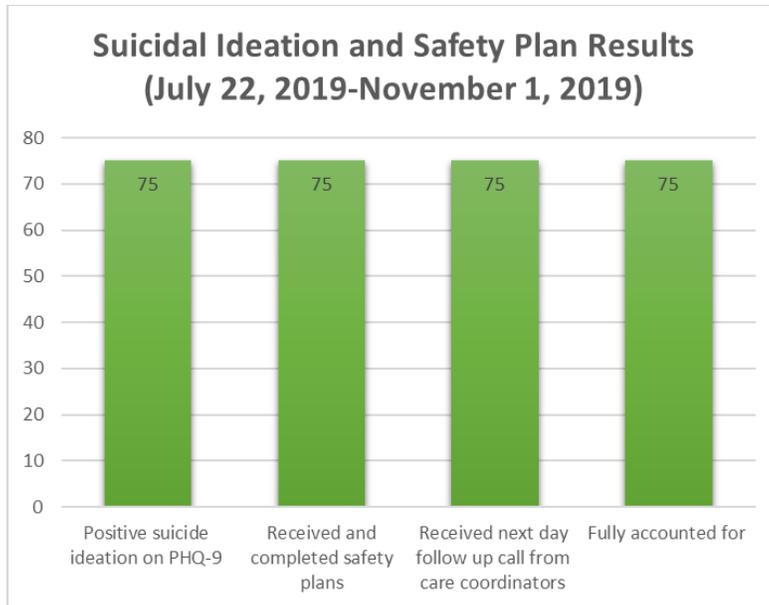
**Team/leadership Engagement & Empowerment:** The team should be well represented from across the disciplines, be part of the change and development, especially at the front line and day-to-day management. The team will be the biggest champions for the process improvements if engaged early and frequently.

# Shared Learnings

## Implementing Suicide Identification and Management in Primary Care

### Results

Cortland Health Center Primary Care Pilot Results:



PHQ Results	# of patients
Positive PHQ	783
PHQ-9 score of 10 or higher	331
PHQ-9 score of 20 or higher	26
Positive to Suicide Ideation on PHQ-9	75

100% of the patients who responded positive for suicide received: the follow up suicide risk assessment, safety plan and next day follow up call as outlined in the workflow and implementation.

### Organizational Profile

**Organization:** Family Health Network of Central New York, Inc.

**Website:** [familyhealthnetwork.org](http://familyhealthnetwork.org)

**Counties Served:** Cortland, Cayuga and surrounding counties

### Contact Information

**Bouakham Rosetti**, Project Manager  
Care Compass Network  
Email: [BRosetti@carecompassnetwork.org](mailto:BRosetti@carecompassnetwork.org)