Quality Safety Planning

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Who Can Do a Safety Plan?
Safety Planning

- Is a clinical intervention
- Should take some time!
- Should be interactive
- Stored in a place where it can be accessed, like patient portal
- Is not perfunctory
Some Key Symptoms /Questions

- **Depression:** “In the past few weeks, have you felt so sad or depressed that it makes it hard to do the things you would like to do?”
- **Anxiety:** “In the past few weeks, have you felt so worried that it makes it hard to do the things you would like to do or that you feel constantly agitated/on-edge?”
- **Impulsivity/Recklessness:** “Do you often act without thinking?”
- **Hopelessness:** “In the past few weeks, have you felt hopeless, like things would never get better?”
- **Anhedonia:** “In the past few weeks, have you felt like you couldn't enjoy the things that usually make you happy?”
- **Isolation:** “Have you been keeping yourself more than usual?”
- **Irritability:** “In the past few weeks, have you been feeling more irritable or grouchier than usual?”
- **Substance and alcohol use:** “In the past few weeks, have you used drugs or alcohol excessively or more than usual?” **If yes, ask:** “What? How much? Has this caused any legal problems or problems with more people in your life?”
- **Sleep pattern:** “In the past few weeks, have you had trouble falling asleep or found yourself waking up in the middle of the night or earlier than usual in the morning?”
- **Appetite:** “In the past few weeks, have you noticed changes in your appetite? Have you been less hungry or more hungry than usual?”
- **Other concerns:** “Recently, have there been any concerning changes in how you are thinking or feeling? Or changes in your mood that we haven't discussed?”
• A Safety Plan provides a blueprint for coping when suicidal thoughts and feelings are overwhelming.

• Safety planning involves identifying strategies the person can use independently, supportive people and environments, and emergency resources.

• Compassion, empathy, and nonjudgment are essential during the safety planning process.
Safety Plan

NowMattersNow.org Emotional Fire Safety Plan

Select boxes that fit for you. Add your own. Form is based on research and advice from those who have been there. Visit nowmattersnow.org/safety-plan for instructions (coming soon). Do not distribute. ©2018 All Rights Reserved (V 18.05.27)

Direct advice for overwhelming urges to kill self or use opioids

- Shut it down —
  Sleep (no overdosing). Can’t sleep? Cold shower or face in ice-water (30 seconds and repeat). This is a reset button. It slows everything way down.

- No Important Decisions —
  Especially deciding to die. Do not panic. Ignore thoughts that you don’t care if you die. Stop drugs and alcohol.

- Make Eye Contact —
  A difficult but powerful pain reliever. Look in their eyes and say “Can you help me get out of my head?” Try video chat. Keep trying until you find someone.

Things I Know How To do for Suicidal Thoughts and Urges to Use (practice outside of crisis situations)

- Visit NowMattersNow.org (guided strategies)
- Paced Breathing (make exhale longer than inhale)
- Call/Text Crisis Line or A-Team Member (see below)
- “This makes sense: I’m stressed and/or in pain”
- “I want to feel better, not suicide or use opioids”
- Distraction:

- Opposite Action (act exactly opposite to an urge)
- Mindfulness (choose what to pay attention to)
- Mindfulness of Current Emotion (feel emotions in body)
- “I can manage this pain for this moment”
- Notice thoughts, but don’t get in bed with them

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What Do We Look For In A Quality Safety Plan?
Patient Safety Plan Template

Step 1: Warning signs (thoughts, images, mood, situation, behavior) that a crisis may be developing:
1. 
2. 
3. 

Step 2: Internal coping strategies – Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person (relaxation technique, physical activity):
1. 
2. 
3. 

Step 3: People and social settings that provide distraction:
1. Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
2. Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
3. Place ____________________________ 4. Place ____________________________

Step 4: People whom I can ask for help:
1. Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
2. Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
3. Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________

Step 5: Professionals or agencies I can contact during a crisis:
1. Clinician Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
   Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # ____________________________
2. Clinician Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
   Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # ____________________________
3. Local Urgent Care Services
   Urgent Care Services Address ____________________________
   Urgent Care Services Phone ____________________________
4. Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Step 6: Making the environment safe:
1. 
2. 

The one thing that is most important to me and worth living for is:
Some Key Questions

• What are your ‘red flags’ that indicate that you’re having a hard time?

• What activities have you done in the past to distract yourself from suicidal or difficult thoughts?"

• Who could you contact to take your mind off of your thoughts? What places or activities with people may distract you?”
Personal Contacts

• Write them all down - even if it's someone they speak with everyday
• Include phone numbers
• Call and contact individuals
• Quality safety plans include phone contacts
Activities

• Need to be personal
• Need to be specific, detailed
• Why this activity, what about this activity
• Can this activity happen at all times?
• Can this activity happen right away?
• Can this activity happen 365 days a year 24 hours a day
Be Creative

- Walmart
- Patient portals

What would need to happen to keep you safe?
How can we keep you from dying by suicide?
Lethal Means Restriction

• Temporary
• Matter of Fact
• Standard Practice
• Safety Approach (Public Health!)
• Preferred method is important to know and note
• How much medication is in your home? (neighbors, family)

• Medication boxes, family, individual wrapping, “pill packs”

• Gun locks, boxes, family or surrender for holding

• The time to talk to the pharmacy is now ........
If We Were To Keep You From Dying By Suicide Today What Would We Have Done?

- Individuals have thought about this, often easier to “look back”
- Be creative
- What are some of the ways you have kept people safe?