

Suicide Prevention Implementation Plan

Annual Report

Recommendation

That the December 4, 2019, Citizen Services report CR_7699, be received for information.

Executive Summary

Implementation of the activities outlined in Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton 2018-2021 is underway and the plan is well-positioned to meet its objectives by the end of 2021.

The City of Edmonton continues to engage more than 45 community partners and their ongoing commitment has been vital to the implementation of the plan. Partners include Alberta Health Services, Government of Alberta, United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, Canadian Mental Health Association-Edmonton Region, Edmonton Police Service, Fire Rescue Services, post-secondary institutions and many other community partners.

In 2019, highlights include the launch of the public awareness campaign “11 of Us” on September 10, 2019, by the Living Hope Collaborative. Analytics for the first month of the campaign indicate frequent website visits and engagement with the content. Also of note is the use of the suicide prevention training framework that is building community capacity to respond effectively to those at risk of suicide.

Report

Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton 2018-2021 (Attachment 1) is an evidence-based plan that outlines the specific activities, leads, timelines, and funding requirements to achieve outcomes associated with the three goals identified in the Edmonton Suicide Prevention Strategy approved by City Council in September 2016.

The development of Living Hope was informed by research, stakeholder consultation and the expertise of a multi-sectoral implementation planning committee. The plan has three goals:

- To provide awareness and education that promotes positive mental health, reduces the stigma of suicide and provides an understanding of how to help someone considering suicide.
- To ensure the whole continuum of services - prevention, intervention, postvention - is fully accessible.
- To address the needs of higher-risk populations.

Implementation of the plan began in September 2018 and all of the priority actions are currently underway. Completion of the actions will take place throughout the three year implementation period.

The plan has already begun to enhance community capacity to respond more effectively to suicide as more than 300 individuals have completed suicide prevention and related training. Analytics from the 11 of Us website shows that more than five thousand people have visited the site which can contribute to greater awareness of the warning signs and how to be of assistance. Additionally, there is increased engagement of higher risk groups, including men and first responders, in planning activities that are protective against suicide.

Many community partners have contributed to the implementation of the activities in the plan. Additional resources have been provided by key organizations including Alberta Health Services, which funds a position to work on the plan, and Alberta Health, which funds the Roots of Hope partnership. The City of Edmonton funding supports implementation of the actions, project management and ongoing strategic support.

Implementation Team

Implementation of the plan has involved those serving higher-risk populations, including first responders such as Edmonton Police Service, Fire Rescue Services and Emergency Medical Services. There are also committee members representing the indigenous community from the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, the Red Road Healing Society, and the Alberta Health Services' Indigenous Health Program. LGBTQ2S+ organizations are represented by the University of Alberta's Institute for Sexual Minority Studies & Services.

Year One Highlights

Public awareness campaign

On September 10, 2019, the "11 of Us" public awareness campaign was launched by the Living Hope Collaborative. The goal of the campaign is to reduce stigma and educate the public about recognizing and supporting someone considering suicide through a variety of mediums. As of October 16, 2019, 5,778 users had visited the campaign's website 6,853 times.

Training and capacity building

A range of sponsored training opportunities has been made available for the community.

Several partner organizations organized collaborative activities and events intended to increase community capacity, including: the 2019 Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention Conference, Mysterious Barricades, a Headstrong Summit for LGBTQ2S+ youth, An Evening to Remember: Honouring Lives Lost to Suicide and the Edmonton Police Services Commemorative Sign Post.

Administration is also working with the City of Edmonton Youth Council to consider opportunities for integrating the Youth Council's activities promoting mental health into the implementation plan.

Expansion of men's support services

A partnership between Administration and Momentum Walk-in Counselling Society allowed for the expansion of the Anchor Men's Evening Drop-in Group.

Administration provided seed funding for Men's Sheds and convened a planning committee to host a men's forum. Both actions are intended to increase social connectedness and healthy coping strategies for men.

Evaluation

An external consultant developed an evaluation plan which Administration will use to measure progress, determine the extent to which the plan is implemented as intended, and the degree to which outcomes are achieved.

Operating funds for convening committees

Four community-based implementation team committees have been convened. They represent the participation of 45 community agencies, organizations and individuals with lived experience.

Administration secured \$300,000 from Alberta Health to support activities aligned with Roots of Hope, a national suicide prevention project convened by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Participation in this project also includes a national research and evaluation Community of Practice and other collaborative activities.

Anticipated highlights for 2020 include training an additional 700-900 community members in how to respond effectively to suicide as well as engaging physicians and nurses in specialized training. Other priorities for Living Hope include hosting a forum concerned with improving men's well-being, a suicide prevention Headstrong Summit for LGBTQ2S+ youth and exploring suicide prevention options for City infrastructure, like LRT crossings and bridges.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome: Edmonton is a safe city			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmonton is a safe city	Number of deaths by suicide in Edmonton	2018: N/A 2017: 196 2016: 183	Downward trend in suicide rate and attempted suicide-related emergency department visits within five years
	Number of attempted suicide-related emergency department visits	2018: 2,452 2017: 2,630 2016: 2,365	Downward trend in suicide rate and attempted suicide-related emergency department visits within five years
Edmontonians have increased awareness and knowledge of mental health issues and its connection to suicide.	Percentage of Edmontonians who have seen, heard or read any media or advertising messages about suicide in Edmonton <i>Source: Public Awareness Survey</i>	Baseline (pre-campaign survey): 42 percent	Upward trend based on the percentage of respondents

Attachments

1. Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton

Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- K Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor