

#### We are stronger when we speak up...





# What is Zero Suicide?

The Zero Suicide framework is defined by a system- wide, organizational commitment to safe suicide care in health and behavioral health care systems.





# 7 Elements of **ZEROS**uicide



# Zero Suicide as a Framework for Safer Suicide Care

**Seven Elements** 

Shown to significantly reduce loss to suicide in health and behavioural health care settings

Uses evidence-based screening and assessments for suicide risk

Uses evidence-based, suicide specific treatments for those at risk

Wraps people at risk and their families in safe care that keeps them connected

Person and familydirected through selfactualizing planning for safety

Addresses lethal means safety

Transitions people at risk safely from one level of care to the next



## All of this has been shown to be highly effective except that...

None of these evidence-based screens, assessments, or treatments were validated with Indigenous people

Many of our languages have no word for suicide

The word "suicide," or even talking about someone who took their own life is taboo in many of our Tribes because of the concepts of *Naming* and, in some Tribes, that of *Ghost Sickness* 

# No such thing as "Native Culture"

There are an estimated 574 Tribes, Villages, Bands, and Nations that are recognised by the US government

There are many Tribes, Villages, Bands, and Nations that are in the process of recognition and some are state recognized

Every one of these, with some "universal Indigenous truths," has their own language, healing ways, medicines, creation stories, dances, songs, regalia, beadwork & colours, etc.





Belief in and reverence for a power greater than ourselves (Great Spirit, Great Mystery, Creator, etc.)

Honouring of the land (Mother Earth, Father Sky, Grandmother Moon, Grandfather Sun, etc.)

Belief that everything has a spirit and that we're all related as a result

Honouring of those who went before us (the Ancestors)

Traditional medicines and healing ways that are many thousands of years old

Another Universal Indigenous Truth...

Many of us believe that what we do today impacts us seven generations into the future





There are layers upon layers of trauma that need to be acknowledged in order to do safe suicide care in Indian **Country** 



#### The Elders say...

## Our culture is our medicine



## Today, this *also* translates to...

# Our culture is a protective factor





Best and Promising
Practices for the
Implementation of Zero
Suicide in Indian Country

... is a companion toolkit to the original Zero Suicide Toolkit. The toolkit on the Zero Suicide website details each of the seven elements that make up the Zero Suicide framework for health and behavioural health care systems and should form the basis for anyone starting to learn about Zero Suicide. This companion toolkit serves as a specialization step for health systems in Indian Country who are looking for guidance on how to implement the Zero Suicide framework in culturally resonant ways.





#### TRAIN

Train staff to understand the unique physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of Indigenous people and feel comfortable and confident working with them, their families, and their Tribes.

#### **IDENTIFY**

Identify individuals at risk using evidence-based screening vetted by members of local Tribes and ensure those at risk are assessed by culturallyand suicide prevention-savvy clinicians.

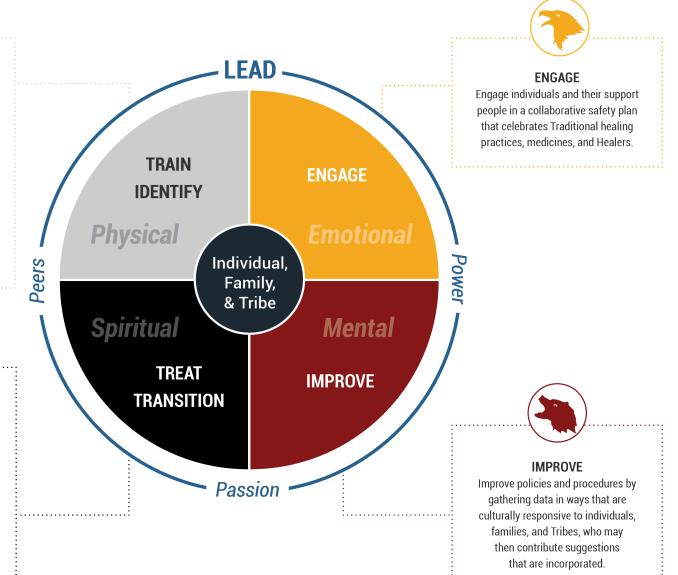


#### **TREAT**

Treat suicide thoughts and behaviors using evidence-based treatments that respect the norms of local Tribes and their Traditional Healers.

#### **TRANSITION**

Transition individuals through culturally appropriate levels of care that include Traditional Healers and multilingual and symbolically relevant caring contacts.



The Zero Suicide Toolkit for Indian Country offers suggestions to Tribally-owned and IHS led health systems on...

Creating implementation teams that include Tribal government, Elders, Traditional Medicine people, and youth, and why that is critical

Why a combination of Traditional and western medicine is often highly effective

How to frame the conversation around loss to reflect "life promotion" rather than "suicide prevention"

...and much more







#### Zero Suicide Outcome Story - Chickasaw Nation

• The goal from the outset has been to have uniform screening, assessment and treatment of persons at risk for suicide, no matter what access point of care is engaged within our services.





Best and Promising Practices for the Implementation of Zero Suicide in Indian Country

Zero Suicide Toolkit for Indian
Country

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### Wela'lioq

(thank you all)