

Post-Secondary Suicide Framework: *A Community-Informed Approach*

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Kevin Frieze

Assistant Dean of Students,
& Wellness

University of Alberta



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

Health

Debbie Bruckner

Senior Director, Student Wellness,
Access & Support

University of Calgary



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

Andrew Szeto

Director, Mental Health Strategy
University of Calgary

“Meaning-making is the only thing that allows for healing. And that meaning-making doesn’t mean we figure out why (it happened). Because we will never know why. The only thing we can do is the kind of things the students are doing ... trying to figure out how can we try to prevent this in the future...”

LaLonde, Michelle. (2019). Suicide on campus: Mourning and healing at Concordia University.

What we're going to talk about:

- 1. Who Needs a Framework**
- 2. Developing a Process & Plan**
- 3. Implementing the Framework**
- 4. Key Learnings and Next Steps**
- 5. Questions & Close**



Who Needs a Framework?

Overview: Alberta Post-Secondary Context

- ▶ **More than 260,000 students enrolled in post-secondary programs in Alberta**
- ▶ **2019 National College Health Assessment (NCHA)**
Self-reported data:
 - ▶ Canadian suicide rates are currently 11.5 per 100,000 people (30% of all suicides are people aged 15-39)
 - ▶ 16.4% of CA students seriously considered suicide anytime within the last twelve months (333,740 students based on 2015-16 Stats CA data)
 - ▶ 2.8% of CA students attempted suicide anytime within the last twelve months (56,980 students based on 2015-16 Stats CA data)

Who Needs a Suicide Prevention Framework?

- ▶ Holistic approach to suicide prevention
- ▶ Improving coordination of prevention, intervention & postvention efforts
- ▶ Acknowledging existing foundation of supports



Who Needs a Suicide Prevention Framework?

- ▶ Creating a dedicated space for suicide dialogue
- ▶ Available funding and resources
- ▶ Timing is everything
- ▶ Purpose of a Framework



Developing a Process & Plan



Planning a Framework

- ▶ Value Based: Because one life lost is one too many
- ▶ Existing mental health support
- ▶ Collaborative opportunities
- ▶ Integrating lived experience
- ▶ Existing Mental Health Strategy/Policy building caring campus community
 - ▶ Provides framework for this approach

Literature & Practice Review

- ▶ Emerging topic of conversation in Canadian post-secondary system
- ▶ Resources: CMHA, JED Foundation, Centre for Suicide Prevention, CAMH, MHCC
- ▶ Zero-suicide alliance & literature: Suicide Prevention Resource Centre, Washington, DC; UK
 - ▶ Georgia Tech: Tech Ends Suicide Together
 - ▶ St. Joseph's Hospital, London, Ontario
- ▶ And other sources....

Comprehensive Engagement

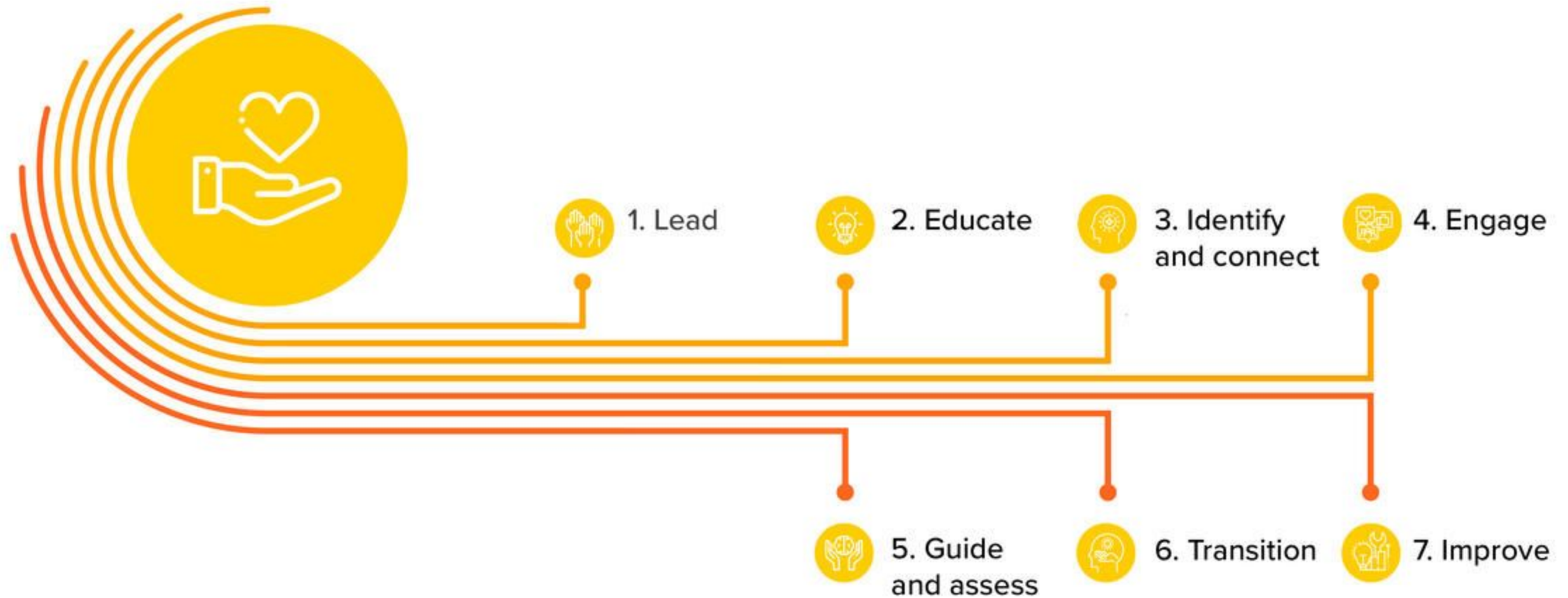
- ▶ Applying framework from community mental health & health care to post-secondary
 - ▶ Open System
 - ▶ Considering cultural differences
 - ▶ Considering regional differences
 - ▶ Access to partners
- ▶ Audiences & Stakeholders
 - ▶ Full & ongoing consultation



Working Group to Develop Framework

- ▶ Determine audience
- ▶ Establish initial small task force to build comprehensive, quality assurance approach to suicide prevention
- ▶ Establish values and goals
- ▶ Develop common vocabulary for working group
- ▶ Deliberative consultation

Working Towards Zero



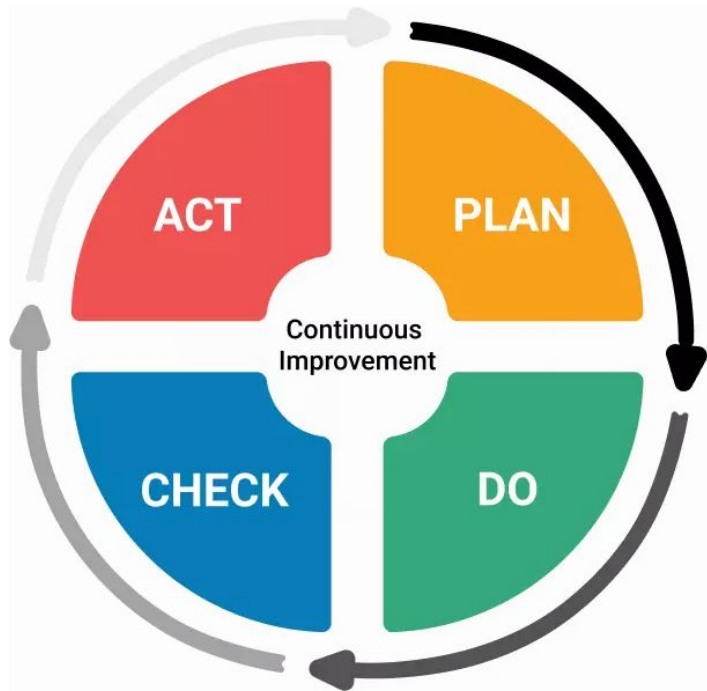
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/suicide-awareness-and-prevention>

Transition to Implementation

- ▶ Renew strategic umbrella
- ▶ Maintain Partnerships: social service, regional, internal groups
- ▶ Keep consultation open

Implementing the Framework

Plan, Do, Check, Act



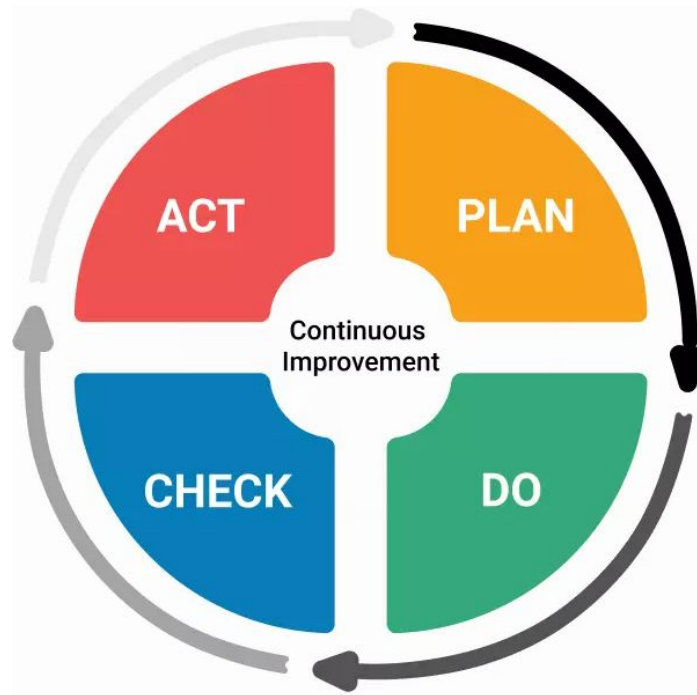
- ▶ Identify priorities/goals
- ▶ Advisory committee
 - ▶ Diverse approaches
 - ▶ Working groups/subcommittees
- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Identify other opportunities
 - ▶ Leverage existing projects/initiatives
 - ▶ Funding

Connecting with the Community

- ▶ Connecting with AHS resources and health care system
- ▶ Community partners
 - ▶ CMHA
 - ▶ CSP
 - ▶ Distress Centre

Plan, Do, Check, Act

- ▶ Evaluation
 - ▶ Engagement of the community
- ▶ Returning to consultation
- ▶ Adapting learnings
- ▶ Changing context

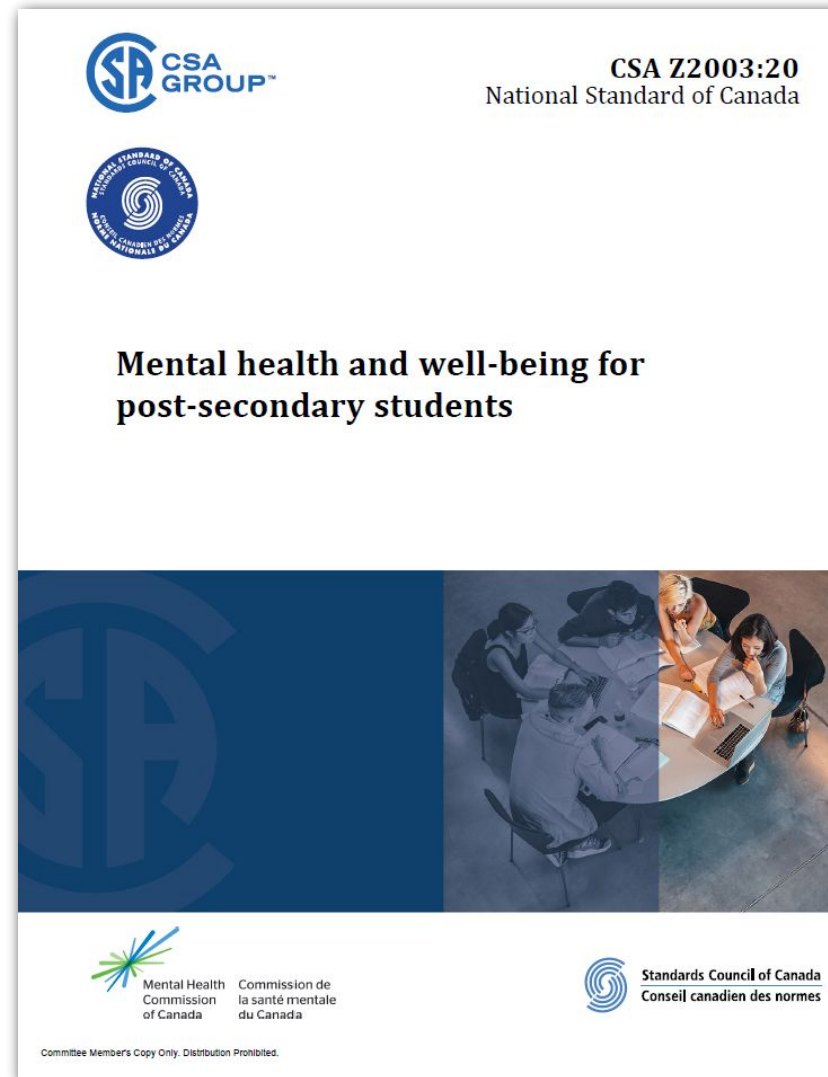


Additional Considerations

- ▶ Triangulating from other sources of information to inform priorities, actions, adjustments
- ▶ Cultural considerations
- ▶ Alignment with Indigenous ways of knowing

National Standard For Post-Secondary Students

- ▶ How does your the what you are doing to address Suicide Awareness and Prevention integrate/support/align with the National Standard or existing MH framework?



Key Learnings & Next Steps

Community Collaboration



- ▶ Student leaders
- ▶ Faculty, Staff and service providers
- ▶ Office of the Registrar
- ▶ Human Resources
- ▶ Greater community services

It takes a community to support a
COMMUNITY!

Questions?



Andrew Szeto
aszeto@ucalgary.ca

Kevin Frieese
frieese@ualberta.ca

Debbie Bruckner
dbruckne@ucalgary.ca

Resources

- ▶ Read the UAlberta Suicide Prevention Framework:
<https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/suicide-prevention>
- ▶ Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP):
www.suicideprevention.ca
- ▶ Canadian Mental Health Association (national and local chapters):
www.cmha.ca
- ▶ Suicide Prevention Resource Centre (including curated library):
www.sprc.org including Suicide Toolkit for Schools

Resources (con't)

- ▶ Higher Education Mental Health Alliance: <https://hemha.org/>
 - ▶ [Postvention: A Guide for Response to Suicide on College Campuses](#)
- ▶ Canadian Psychiatric Association Media Guidelines for Reporting on Suicide: http://bit.ly/PA_Guidelines
- ▶ QPR Suicide Triage Training: www.qprinstitute.com
- ▶ Mental Health Commission of Canada:
https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2019-03/suicide_loss_toolkit_eng.pdf