

Reliance on Suicide Risk Assessments May Increase Suicide Deaths

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Due to COVID-19, mental health advocates are predicting that "suicide is likely to become a more pressing concern as the pandemic spreads and has longer-term effects on the general population, the economy, and vulnerable groups". One solution being offered up is remote suicide risk assessments. [1]



Each year an average of 44,965 people commit suicide in the United States making it the 10th leading cause of death for Americans.

However, these advocates are ignoring the fact that a study of the past 40 years of [suicide risk assessment](#) research suggests that not only do these assessments not help but may actually cause harm by increasing the risk of suicide. [2,3]

“

Parents need to not only know the risks associated with psychiatric drugs but also that they have the right in Florida to refuse psychological screening and drugging of their child.”

Diane Stein, president of CCHR Florida

Each year an average of 44,965 people commit suicide in the United States making it the 10th leading cause of death for Americans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide deaths were more than double those due to homicides in 2015, which means that for every murder reported in the news, there were at least 2 other deaths that occurred due to suicide. [4,5,6]

Additionally, suicide is the second-leading cause of death in young people in the US today and once again suicide risk assessment is often touted as the answer but experts

in the field have repeatedly concluded that there is not any one scale that can predict who will commit suicide to any useful degree. [7,8]

Suicide risk assessments, screenings, school mental health programs and more funding are often presented as the solutions to suicides rates and now with the current pandemic calls for more screenings are louder than ever, but according to the Florida chapter of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), a mental health watchdog organization, these so-called solutions are contributing to the problem.

Citing an article published in Scientific American which reported that a study of the past 40 years of suicide risk assessment research suggests that not only do these assessments not help but may actually cause harm by increasing the risk of suicide, CCHR believes that the misguided reliance on screenings, assessments and psychiatric drugs is clouding the search for real answers. [2]

“Why are suicide risk assessments still being used almost 10 years after the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommended that ‘assessment tools’ not be used?” asked Diane Stein, President of CCHR Florida. [9]

In addition to the risks when it comes to evaluating suicide through the use of unworkable assessments and screenings, CCHR is also alerting parents about the side effects of the drugs commonly prescribed when a child is labeled as mentally ill; side effects which include [suicidal ideation](#). [10]

According to the FDA, all [antidepressant](#) drugs have an increased risk of suicidal thinking and



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.



The Citizens Commission on Human Rights is a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the eradication of abuses committed under the guise of mental health.

behavior, known as suicidality, in young adults aged 18 to 24 during initial treatment (generally the first one to two months). The FDA warning includes Zoloft (sertraline), Paxil (paroxetine), Lexapro (escitalopram), and other antidepressants. [11]

"Parents need to not only know the risks associated with these drugs but also that they have the right in Florida to refuse psychological screening and drugging of their child," said Stein. [12]

To learn more about parental rights, suicide and psychiatric drug side effects please contact CCHR at 800-782-2878 or visit the center in downtown Clearwater at 109 N. Fort Harrison Ave.

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: "Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the 'free world' tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of 'mental health,'" he wrote in March 1969. For more information please visit www.cchrflorida.org.

Sources:

[1] Suicide risk and prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic - [thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(20\)30171-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(20)30171-1/fulltext)

[2] Suicide Risk Assessment Doesn't Work <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/suicide-risk-assessment-doesnt-work/>

[3] Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Cohort Studies of Suicide Risk Assessment among Psychiatric Patients: Heterogeneity in Results and Lack of Improvement over Time



The Antidepressant: Suicide Link Ten Years Post Black Box Warning



NBC News reported on April 22, 2018 that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) findings show that suicides in the U.S. are at the highest level in "almost three decades".

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0156322>

[4] SUICIDE FACTS <https://save.org/about-suicide/suicide-facts/>

[5] Suicide Statistics <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/suicide-statistics/>

[6] Suicide is a Leading Cause of Death in the United States

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>

[7] Suicide is a Leading Cause of Death in the United States

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>

[8] A review of suicide risk assessment instruments and approaches

<https://mhc.cpn.org/doi/full/10.9740/mhc.2015.09.216>

[9] National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. <https://www.nice.org.uk/donotdo/do-not-use-risk-assessment-tools-and-scales-to-predict-future-suicide-or-repetition-of-selfharm>

[10] Why You Should Pay Attention to Black Box Warnings on Medication

By Michael Bihari, MD Fact checked by Shereen Lehman, MS Updated on March 01, 2020

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/black-box-warnings-1124107>

[11] Ibid.

[12] Parental Rights <https://www.cchrflorida.org/parental-rights/>

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