

Global Health Risk Paper: Suicide

Student's Name

Institution Affiliation

Course

Instructor

Due Date

Introduction/overview of the health issue and the prevalence in the United States and worldwide

Suicide is defined as an act of taking one's own life or death that results from an injurious behavior that is self-directed to die. Suicide is a major public health concern that often has long-lasting effects on families and communities affected. In the United States, it was ranked as the tenth leading cause of death in the US overall and as the third leading cause of death for individuals between 15 and 29 years globally. According to WHO, approximately 800,000 suicide deaths occur every year while there are several more who attempt suicide. Although it occurs throughout lifespan, suicide was found to be the third leading cause of death among individuals between 15 and 29 years worldwide in 2016. Low and middle-income countries were the most affected and approximately 79% of the suicide deaths were occurred in these countries in 2016, (World Health Organization, 2021).

In 2018, suicide was ranked as the tenth leading cause of death in the US, claiming over 48,000 lives, which were two and half times the number of deaths due to homicide, 18,800. It was the second leading cause of death among individuals aged between 15 and 29 years and the fourth leading cause of death among those aged 25-34 years. On average 130 suicides occur daily, and firearms account for 30.3% of all suicide deaths. In 2018, the age-adjusted suicide rate was 13.80 per 100,000 individuals, and males who died from suicide were 1.47 times more than females. White aged white men are the most affected by suicide and accounted for 49.3% of suicide deaths in 2018. (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021)

Contributing factors

Several factors can increase the chances of an individual committing suicide. Mental disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, personality disorders, and

schizophrenia have been identified as the most common factors, however, approximately 50% of those who commit suicide do not have an existing mental disorder at that time. Other factors that contribute to suicide include substance abuse disorder, a diagnosis with a chronic illness or terminal diseases such as cancer, childhood abuse/trauma or continued exposure to abuse, incarceration and social isolation, family history of suicide, low levels of job satisfaction, or loss of a job, lack of access to mental health services and access to lethal means such as firearms and drugs, (Stone et al., 2018).

Signs and symptoms

Some of the signs that a person is contemplating suicide include severe sadness and moodiness, hopelessness; the person talks of feeling hopeless, alone or trapped, withdrawal from social activities and friends, a sudden change in personality or appearance, sleep problems such as sleeping too much or too little, making preparations such as giving away personal possessions, visiting family members, buying weapons or lethal drugs such as firearms, researching or talking about suicide, and engaging in dangerous or reckless behavior... (Stone et al., 2018)

Prevention strategies

Suicide can be prevented by developing the right strategies to help individuals cope appropriately. Strategies that can help prevent suicide include strengthening economic support for families and individuals to ensure that individuals can meet their economic needs, creating a protective environment by reducing access to lethal weapons such as firearms for individuals at risk of suicide, and developing community based policies to limit access to drugs and alcohol, teaching problem solving and coping skills in schools and after in community education programs, creating community programs and institutions that focus on identifying and supporting

individuals at risk of committing suicide, promoting connectedness by organizing frequent social gatherings and community events and strengthening access to mental health care in the community by increasing insurance coverage of mental health conditions and increasing the number of mental health providers in areas with shortages, (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Advanced practice nursing role and management strategies

Advanced nurse practitioners play a critical role in the assessment, prevention, and management of suicide patients given that 83% of individuals who commit suicide had visited a care provider one year before the suicide and 50% had made a visit to a health provider 30 days before committing suicide. Advance nurse practitioner roles include screening patients to identify those who are at risk of committing suicide, providing patients with the necessary coping skills and recommending the patient to a psychiatrist, collaborating with other care providers to develop the best treatment plan, and advocating for policies that will make the community a safer place to promote mental well-being. (Veltman & Adams, 2020).

Medical/Pharmacological management and Diagnostic tests

For individuals with mental disorders, pharmacologic intervention with psychiatric drugs can help minimize suicide ideation. For example, drugs such as lithium have been shown to reduce suicide ideation in a patient with bipolar disorder. Other drugs including ketamine, antidepressants, and clonidine are effective in reducing suicidal ideation in a patient with mental disorders and can thus be used. Diagnostic testing for suicide includes testing for suicidal ideation and other tests to determine underlying medical and mental conditions which are then used to predict the likelihood of committing suicide. (D'Nevo et al., 2019).

Follow-up care

Follow-up care for patients at risk of committing suicide includes regular medical check-ups and therapies to determine the patients' recovery from suicide ideation and progress on other underlying conditions such as mental disorders as well as the participation of the patient in social activities, (Nelson & Adams, 2020).

Conclusion

Suicide is a major public health challenge that causes approximately 800,000 deaths annually in the world. In the US it is ranked as the tenth leading cause of death and as the third leading cause of death globally for individuals between 15 and 29 years. While several factors can contribute to suicide mental health disorders including depression are the most common factors that contribute to suicide. suicide can however be prevented by putting in place the right strategies that facilitate the development of a healthy and supportive environment to support individuals at risk of committing suicide.

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