



Proposed Suicide Prevention Products for the DEOMI Assessment to Solutions Website



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INTRODUCTION

- The rate of suicides in the military has been on the rise since 2004. (Ref. 1)
- Historically, military personnel suicide rates have been lower than civilian rates. (Ref. 2)
- Recent reports show military suicide rates have increased, surpassing suicide rates of the U.S. civilian population. (Ref. 2)
- The Department of Defense (DoD) has made efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of mental health services. (Ref. 3)
- The DoD and Veteran's Affairs are devising new ways to combat the rising rate of suicides in the military. (Ref. 1)
- The goal is to give commanders and military personnel the proper tools to assess and help identify individuals at-risk.

PURPOSE

- To develop a series of suicide prevention products for the DEOMI Assessment to Solutions website.

MATERIALS USED

- DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey Sample Test (DEOCS)
- Current Assessment to Solutions materials as examples (i.e., Sexual Harassment)
- 2014 DoD Quarterly Suicide Report

PRODUCT GOALS

- Products are meant to circulate across all branches of the DoD and will be available online.
- Creation of the Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet
- Creation of the Suicide Prevention Short Presentation

METHODS

| Product | Construction | Product | Construction |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Review structure of existing DEOMI Fact Sheets. (2) Read current available literature on suicide and suicide prevention efforts in the military. (3) Craft working definitions. (4) Include DoD Directive policy concerning suicide prevention. (5) Supply correct contact information. (6) Submit for approval and make changes based on feedback from superiors. | Suicide Prevention Short Presentation for commanders | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Review structure of existing DEOMI Fact Sheets. (2) Read current available literature on suicide and suicide prevention efforts in the military. (3) Establish appropriate headings and subsections. (4) Include relevant information from suicide-outreach or clinical websites. (5) Identify protective factors, warning signs, and combative factors. |

RESULTS

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
Assessment to Solutions

SUICIDE PREVENTION
For the factor suicide prevention, the DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) helps provide a greater understanding between organizational settings and suicide support resources and suicide risk. The DoD Directive 6490.14 policy is to:

"(A) Take substantial efforts to reduce suicide; (B) Require the Military Services to foster a command climate that: 1. Encourages personnel to seek help and build resilience; 2. Insures awareness about behavioral health and reduces stigma [...]; and 3. Protects the privacy of the personnel seeking or desiring treatment relating to suicide."

Suicide prevention includes promoting total fitness and providing continuous access to supportive services and behavioral healthcare. It is accomplished by remaining observant, communicating, learning the warning signs, creating emergency plans, and providing quality behavioral healthcare.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUICIDE PREVENTION?
Note: See associated PowerPoint presentation for resources.
Suicide continues to be a problem in the military. Many are afraid to ask for help, do not want to be perceived as weak, or are unaware that help is available. Suicide Prevention is important because it helps soldiers and superiors identify behaviors in others that may be at risk. It also encourages those that may be struggling to seek help.

LEADERS CAN PROMOTE SUICIDE PREVENTION
Note: These recommendations represent best practices as identified by leaders and EO/EEO subject matter experts in the field and fleet.

Listen – genuinely pay attention to someone else's problems or concerns and reserve judgement
Educate – become familiar with all of the warning signs and behavioral shifts
Advice – seek advice from a leader, supervisor, licensed counselor or psychologist, or possibly a spiritual leader
Decide – determine if a Mental Health Care Provider is needed
Emergency Plan – create an emergency plan so a person knows what to do should they feel an impulse to harm themselves.
Remove – take away any weapons or harmful substances immediately
Support – encourage the individual to seek help

If you or someone else is in need, contact the Military Crisis Line/National Suicide Prevention Hotline immediately:
Call 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1) Text 838255 Email anonymously: www.MilitaryCrisis.net

FUTURE PRODUCTS

- The suicide prevention Terminal Learning Objective (TLO) and all of the Enabling Learning Objectives (ELO) have been approved for an eLearning Lesson.

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| <p>Suicide Prevention</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Cues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preoccupation with death – Using vague phrases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "... going on a long trip" • "... wanting to get out" • "... you won't have to worry about me anymore" • Behavioral shifts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Acting reckless or careless to the point of self-harm – Being violent or destructive |
| <p>Combating Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarize yourself with the warning signs – Ask questions and talk to the person directly • Listen and offer support – Take what they say seriously • Be proactive and take action – Remove any weapons or harmful substances – Make an emergency safety plan together • Encourage them to seek professional help | <p>Warning Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of Depression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Withdrawing socially – Ignoring personal hygiene – Feelings of failure and/or sadness – Loss of interest in daily activities – Sense of worthlessness or desperation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Writing a will – Saying goodbyes to close family and friends – Trying to secure access to tools that could be used for self-harm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Firearms or pills • Traumatic life events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Death of a close friend or relative – Job loss – Relationship failure – Returning from a combat zone | <p>Promoting Contentment and Mental Well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening protective factors, resilience, happiness and life satisfaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Placing heavier emphasis on the value of life and individual self-worth – Stressing the importance of mental health and wellness, specifically seeking help from professionals – Strong positive relationship with friends, family, co-workers, organization, and their significant other |

- TLO and ELOs will be used to develop an expanded eLearning Lesson.
- All products will be edited, reviewed, and approved for use on the DEOMI Assessments to Solutions website.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Establishing concrete definitions for DEOCS to then be incorporated into products.
- Designing eLearning Lesson, keeping in line with current formats.
- Creating subsections for eLearning Lesson.
- Writing quizzes that will be placed throughout the lesson.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

DISCLAIMER: The opinions and viewpoints expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect endorsement of the DoD or DEOMI. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Elizabeth Culhane and LT Erica Harris.