



FAST FACTS

General/Why we are doing this:

September is suicide prevention month, and today September 17th is the second annual National Physician Suicide Awareness day. The primary purpose of the event is to create a day to commemorate colleagues lost to suicide and to raise awareness about the issue internally and externally by shedding a light on it. Through this, we hope that we will lessen the stigma for physicians and all other clinicians to speak about their struggles either privately or openly - and seek help.

Just as we are not alone in our struggles, since launching this initiative, we have garnered the support of >30 national and international organizations who are each participating with coordinated social media campaigns and preparing resources for their own members. It is our hope to get more organizations on-board from all provider groups and different specialties since this is an issue that transcends.

Physicians

- Historical data suggest 300 to 400 doctors die by suicide each year, however that number is likely underestimated
- A better statistic is that physicians die by suicide at a rate that is more than double the general population
- Female physicians are more likely to die by suicide than men with a rate of 2.27:1.41
- How many physicians per specialty is unknown as well as per-state remains unknown
- In some states physicians who seek mental health assistance may be asked to report mental health issues with licensing and credentialing which often decreases help seeking behaviors
- Burnout is rampant the specialties most affected being critical care, neurology, family medicine, OB/Gyn, IM, and EM .

Resident:

- Resident death by suicide is less frequent than the general population.
- Overall suicide is the #2 cause of resident death. #1 cause of death in male and #2 cause of death in female residents.
- The greatest proportion of residents that died by suicide are PGY1s.
- Academic quarter 1 and 3 have the highest number of resident suicide deaths

RN:

- Some data suggests that up to 85% of nurses have experienced bullying at some point in their career.
- Nurses are 23% more likely to die by suicide than women in general and 4x greater than the population in general

NP/PA:

- Very little data, however some data to suggest burnout is present in PAs

EMT:

- A recent survey of 4,000 first responders found that 6.6 percent had attempted suicide, which is more than 10 times the rate in the general population and has prompted more research into the issue.
- Suicides among first responders, often driven by emotional strain in a culture that long has discouraged showing weakness, are too common, according to organizations that track the deaths.

Take Home Messages:

- Know where you can go for help, or where to refer a colleague/friend
- For every one person who dies by suicide, 280 others have thought about it
- “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about”
 - If something seems off with your colleague, ask, “Are you ok?”
- Remember that we are responsible for the next generation of clinicians