

September 21, 2023



**Optum Maryland
PROVIDER NEWSLETTER**



Governor Wes Moore [proclaimed](#) September Recovery Month in Maryland.

Recovery Month is a national observance to raise awareness about substance use, promote evidence-based treatment and practices, support the recovery community, and honor providers and communities who make recovery in all its forms possible.

This year, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is promoting a [new video](#) featuring Secretary Laura Herrera Scott on how healthcare providers are essential in addressing the overdose crisis — specifically by prescribing buprenorphine for patients with opioid use disorders. [Learn more](#) from Maryland Addiction Consultation Service.

Further information about recovery, and recovery support, can be found on the [SAMHSA website](#).



September is Suicide Prevention Month— a time to raise awareness and discuss this highly stigmatized topic. In addition to shifting public perception, we use this month to spread hope and vital information to people affected by suicide.

Nationally, suicide is the 12th leading cause of death. Since the pandemic, many communities have seen an increase in suicide.

- Older adults (85+) have the highest rates of suicide, [according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).
- Older men (75+) have the highest rates of suicide compared to other age groups.
- Suicide was the [13th leading cause of death among veterans](#)
- Among youth:
 - Suicide was the second leading cause of death [for ages 10-14 in 2020](#).
 - The national suicide rate for Black youth ages 10-19 [increased by 78%](#) from 2000 to 2020.
 - 17% of LGBTQ youth ages 13-17 attempted suicide in 2022, [according to The Trevor Project](#)

These are only a few of the reasons why it's important to take part in promoting ***Suicide Prevention Awareness Month***. Please view and share the resources highlighted below to encourage discussions with your community.



Resources

The Office of Suicide Prevention released the [2023 Suicide Prevention Month Toolkit: Connecting to Hope](#). This year's toolkit includes:

- A calendar of events, key data points
- Warning signs
- Responsible communication guidance
- Safety planning
- Lethal means and firearms safety information
- Social media campaign materials
- The toolkit also spotlights available training

Over the last year, the Office of Suicide Prevention offered 11 trainings to 1,231 individuals. Trainings for the general public are being expanded during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, including [Mental Health First Aid](#) and training with [The Trevor Project](#).

The [previously announced Trevor Project partnership, Caring Out Loud](#), is one of four data-driven campaigns that spotlight and elevate suicide prevention and mental health promotion for historically underserved and excluded groups:

- Black youth
- LGBTQ+ youth
- Native American populations, and;
- Athletes

Each campaign is undertaken in partnership with grassroots organizations that serve these communities.

The office is currently developing a separate toolkit specifically for Maryland K-12 public and private schools with suicide prevention, intervention and postvention guidance for teachers, administrators, parents and students, slated for release this fall.

The [“It’s Okay to Talk About Suicide”](#) infographics, produced by www.nami.org provides important facts and statistics about suicide to help guide conversations.



Events and Training Opportunities

Thursday, September 28

In support of Suicide Prevention Month, the department's Behavioral Health Administration announced the ["Together We Care" Summit](#), a day-long, in-person event dedicated to discussing suicide prevention, intervention and postvention strategies, as well as best practices and resources, with a focus on collaboration and partnership across the state.

This summit will bring together a group of diverse stakeholders — including survivors, family and community members, educators and mental health and healthcare providers — who are committed to elevating education on suicide risk factors and response.

Representatives from all of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions, suicide prevention coalitions, veterans' affairs partners and the Maryland National Guard will be in attendance. The event will include a keynote speaker, breakout rooms and networking.

The **"Together We Care" Summit** — hosted in partnership with the Behavioral Health Administration's Office of Suicide Prevention and the Central East Mental Health Technology Transfer Center — will take place Thursday, September 28, 2023, at the Martin's Crosswinds in Prince George's County.

Wednesday, October 4

Providers are encouraged to join the **35th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference** on October 4, 2023.

- This virtual event, featuring Keynote Speaker Richard G. Tedeschi, Ph.D., is an opportunity to learn about special topics in suicide prevention.
- 5.75 CEUs are available for psychologists, counselors and social workers.
- Register here: <https://rb.gy/ol8m7>



The following services are available for individuals who are experiencing crisis:

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text **988** or chat 988lifeline.org to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

The Optum Crisis Line is available 24/7 and can be reached at:

(800) 888-1965, TTY 711.

The **Trevor Project Suicide Prevention Hotline** Provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth under 25 years of age. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

Call toll-free: **1-866-488-7386** 24 hours, seven days a week.