

AMBULATORY CLINICS

MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL FOR PATIENTS DISCLOSING SUICIDAL IDEATION

LEVEL 1: Suicidal Ideation without plan or intent

- Inform parent/guardian of patient's disclosure
- Complete Safety Plan in conjunction with parent/guardian (see protocol/worksheet)
- If needed and available, involve social worker. If you do not have an assigned social worker, [\[Insert local resource, if available\]](#)
- If patient does not currently have a mental health provider, refer for mental health treatment
- Schedule follow up appointment within 2 weeks with mental health provider or patient's PCP

LEVEL 2: Suicidal Ideation with plan but no intent

- Inform parent/guardian of patient's disclosure
- Complete Safety Plan in conjunction with parent/guardian (see protocol/worksheet)
- If needed, involve social worker. If you do not have an assigned social worker, [\[Insert local resource, if available\]](#)
- If patient does not currently have a mental health provider, refer for mental health treatment
- Schedule follow up appointment within 1 week with mental health provider or patient's PCP

LEVEL 3: Suicidal Ideation with plan and intent; or no intent but patient will not agree to safety plan

- Initiate immediate psychiatric hospitalization

STEPS TO PSYCHIATRICALY HOSPITALIZE A PATIENT:

- Consult with social worker if available; if you do not have an assigned social worker, [\[Insert local resource if available\]](#)
- Ensure environment is safe, assign a staff member to remain with patient, and [\[request security or other local resource if available\]](#) to be present in case of patient flight risk or aggression
- If patient is willing to be hospitalized and a supportive, responsible parent/guardian is present, parent/guardian may transport patient to inpatient facility. [\[Insert role here, ideally would be social worker if available\]](#) will contact facility first to check on beds/insurance and facilitate admission)
- If patient/parent is not agreeable to hospitalization or no supportive adult is present, contact [\[Local Sheriff's office\]](#) to initiate an emergency detention
- Follow up with inpatient psychiatric facility or ask parent/guardian to call you with an update to ensure patient was hospitalized. If patient's disposition remains unknown, consider contacting the patient's local police station and requesting a safety check to ensure patient's safety

SAFETY PLAN PROTOCOL (See Worksheet):

- Involve patient's parent/guardian, if available, in developing the safety plan
- Assist patient in identifying a support system—who can they talk to when upset?
- Elicit patient's verbal agreement that they will disclose suicidal thoughts to identified person(s) to obtain support, and/or encourage parent to check in routinely regarding patient's emotional state
- Give patient suicide resources and elicit agreement to use them if support person(s) not available
- Request that parent remove patient's access to all potentially dangerous objects
- Inform patient and parent/guardian to call 911 or go to nearest emergency room if patient develops a plan or discloses that suicidal behavior is imminent, and elicit patient and parent's agreement to do this
- Document safety plan in medical record