

Implementing Caring Contacts for Suicide Prevention in Non-Mental Health Settings







U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative

Promoting the uptake of suicide prevention strategies across VA

The goal of this QUERI-VISN Partnered Implementation Initiative is to implement and evaluate Caring Contacts—an evidence-based suicide prevention intervention—in emergency department and urgent care settings to reach Veterans who may not engage with mental health services. In partnership with the VA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and 9 VISNs, this initiative has supported **over 80 VA frontline staff** in delivering Caring Contacts to **3,400+ Veterans**.

Implementing Caring Contacts in 23 sites across 9 VISNs

-  Suicide rates for Veterans are higher than the general population and suicide prevention is a high priority for VA.
-  Most suicide deaths occur within 30 days after discharge from the hospital or emergency department, making this an important time period and setting to target.
-  Caring Contacts consists of sending brief, non-demanding expressions of care and concern.
-  Caring Contacts was adapted for Veterans and the VA emergency department setting and is being scaled up and spread in 23 sites across 9 VISNs.

“I appreciate them sending the cards out though to check on me because, you know, I have several suicide attempts. That made me feel good, that hey, I’m being thought about.”

Dear [Mr./Ms. Lastname]

It was an honor to serve you in the emergency department. We are here for you. Should you need anything, please contact us.

Jenny Smith, RN and Your Emergency Department Team
555-867-5309



Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System | 4300 W 7th St. 118/LR CC | Little Rock, AR 72205



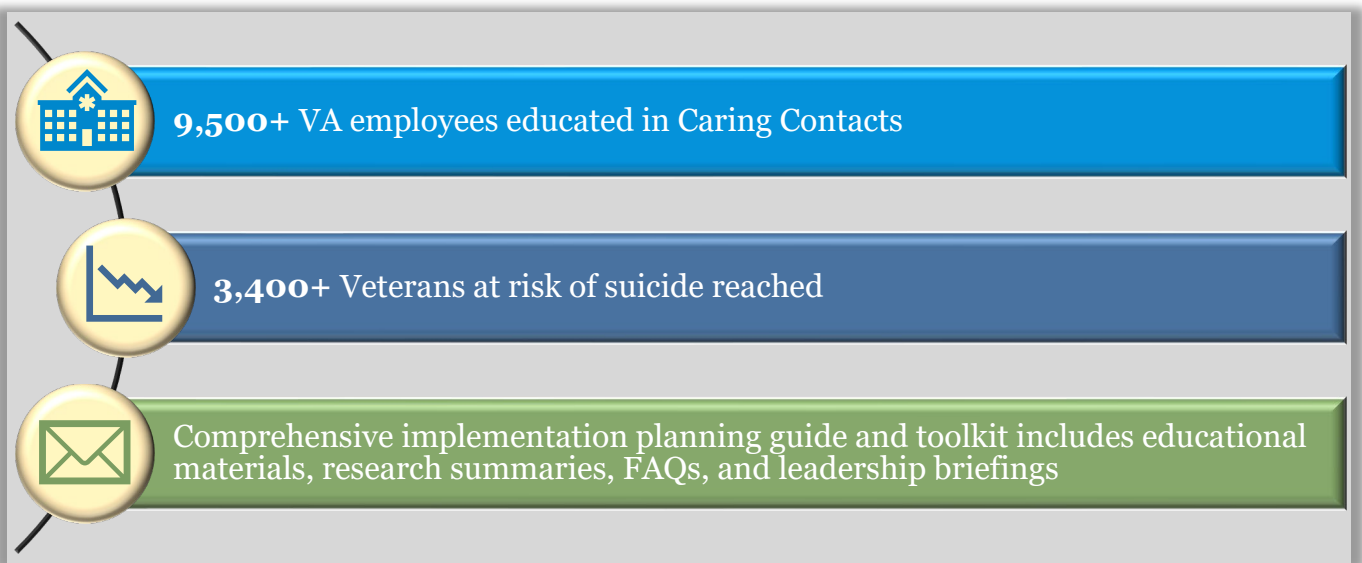
Supporting implementation efforts using established strategies

The implementation approach and evaluation are guided by the Integrated Promoting Action on Research Implementation in Health Services (i-PARIHS) framework. Implementation facilitation, an evidence-based implementation strategy, is supporting the uptake of Caring Contacts across VA.

External facilitators are working with site champions at 23 VA Medical Centers across VISNs 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 16, 19, 22, and 23. Facilitation is being provided in a stepped wedge design to allow all sites to participate, maximize available facilitators, and allow for comparisons.

Months	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15-16	17-18	19-20	21-22	23-24
Wave 1	Facilitation		Stepdown									
Wave 2	Waiting Period	Facilitation			Stepdown							
Wave 3	Waiting Period			Facilitation			Stepdown					
Wave 4	Waiting Period					Facilitation			Stepdown			

Supporting VA employees with evidence-based tools



For more information, check out:
<http://vaww.mirecc.va.gov/caringcontacts/index.asp>

If you would like to learn more or partner with us, please contact our Program Coordinator, Susan Jegley at susan.jegley@va.gov.

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