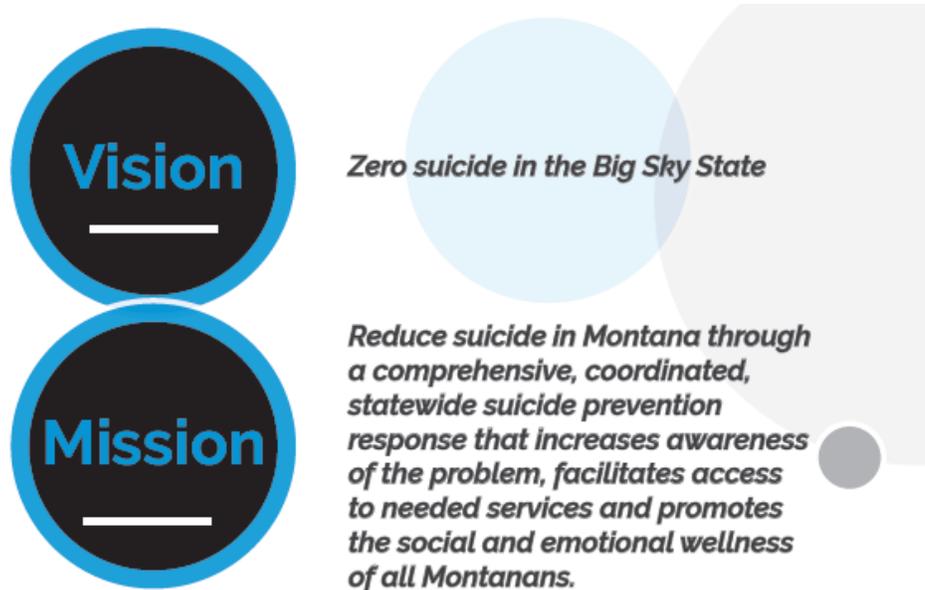


**Suicide  
Prevention  
Strategic  
Plan**



## Overview

The following goals, objectives, and strategies are designed to support a coordinated approach to reducing suicide in our state. A 2020-2021 action plan created with the input of key DPHHS stakeholders will track progress on the strategic activities of each of the five goals. DPHHS seeks to continue to build a strong suicide prevention infrastructure with key stakeholders and partners across the state and looks forward to sharing annual updates.

### Alignment to DPHHS Strategic Goals

The following plan outlines key strategies to reduce the suicide rate in Montana and aligns with DPHHS's 2019-2024 strategic plan in improving and protecting the health, well-being and self-reliance of all Montanans. The Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan correlates directly to DPHHS's goals to promote health equity and improve population health; strengthen the economic and social well-being of Montanans across the lifespan; ensure all children and youth achieve their highest potential; effectively engage stakeholders; and ensure core business services are efficient, innovative and transparent. The following Plan aligns with agency plans addressing behavioral health, such as the 2019-2023 State Health Improvement Plan, 2017-2019 Substance Use: Addressing Substance Use Disorder in Montana Strategic Plan, and the 2017-2019 Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Plan, to ensure agency-wide coordination, resource alignment, and increased crosswalk impact.

# Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

## Goal 1

Implement a suicide prevention program at the department based upon the best available evidence

### Objective 1.1

Dedicate core staff positions to carry out essential functions of DPHHS's suicide prevention efforts

#### Strategies

- 1.1.1 Establish an office of suicide prevention located within the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division (AMDD)
- 1.1.2 Continue support for the Native American Adult Zero Suicide Grant Manager<sup>1</sup>
- 1.1.3 Sustain statutory suicide prevention coordinator for the DPHHS Suicide Prevention Program

### Objective 1.2

Implement one-year suicide prevention action plan

#### Strategies

- 1.2.1 The DPHHS suicide prevention program will initiate suicide prevention action plan
- 1.2.2 Report on action plan progress and update the Montana Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan

### Objective 1.3

Coordinate and integrate DPHHS's suicide prevention activities through the Suicide Prevention Program, encouraging cross-department collaboration and integration of programs across funding sources

#### Strategies

- 1.3.1 Improve communication and coordination across branches, divisions, and programs to better collaborate on suicide prevention efforts

### Objective 1.4

Provide policy recommendations based on published data, best practices, and state-specific data analysis to DPHHS (as the lead agency) with an eye towards state law and/or policies where relevant

#### Strategies

- 1.4.1 Establish a link between AMDD Division leadership and DPHHS data experts to ensure a comprehensive approach to evidence-based practices and metrics

## Goal 2

Develop a comprehensive communication plan

### Objective 2.1

Research effective suicide prevention messaging and explore resources to create and disseminate public awareness messaging

#### Strategies

---

<sup>1</sup> Montana Native Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019)

- 2.1.1 Develop a communication plan regarding suicide prevention efforts<sup>2</sup>
- 2.1.2 Identify key stakeholder groups and a plan for outreach with targeted messaging strategies<sup>3</sup>
- 2.1.3 Explore use of existing public facing platforms to disseminate suicide prevention messaging and resources<sup>4</sup>

**Objective 2.2**

Direct resources towards identifying and implementing evidence-based strategies to prevent lethal means through messaging for target groups

**Strategies**

- 2.2.1 Work with substance abuse prevention experts to continue to promote safe storage and disposal of prescription medications<sup>56</sup>
- 2.2.2 Partner with subject matter experts to hold focus groups and study how to message best practice strategies, including lethal means restriction when necessary for high risk individuals experiencing acute suicidality

## Goal 3

Identify and use available resources needed to guide state, tribal, county, and local efforts, including crisis response efforts<sup>7</sup>

**Objective 3.1**

Oversee an overall suicide prevention training plan for prevention and intervention trainings within communities

**Strategies**

- 3.1.1 Create, disseminate, and monitor an updated online toolkit resource with self-guided online educational resources for providers and residents
- 3.1.2 Deliver a coordinated state-provided train the trainer system to include: QPR, ASSIST, suicide safer care, CSSRS, and Safety Planning trainings to healthcare and behavioral health programs in Montana’s university system<sup>8</sup>

**Objective 3.2**

Strengthen the crisis response system infrastructure in Montana

**Strategies**

- 3.2.1 Maintain and strengthen the suicide crisis response infrastructure in Montana through support of the two regional State Suicide Prevention Lifelines and statewide crisis texting services through the National Crisis Text Line.
- 3.2.2 Support the development of an effective and comprehensive crisis response infrastructure in local communities that diverts individuals experiencing behavioral health crises to appropriate level of care<sup>9</sup>
- 3.2.3 Expand use of and coverage for peer support services in mental health, substance

<sup>2</sup> Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019), Priority Action Step 1.3

<sup>3</sup> Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019), Priority Action Step 1.2

<sup>4</sup> Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019), Priority Action Step 2.4 and 2.5

<sup>5</sup> Montana State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) (2020) Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Prevention and Health Promotion Strategies

<sup>6</sup> Addressing Substance Use Disorder in Montana Strategic Plan (SUD) (2019), Focus Area 2: Prevention and Education, Action #2

<sup>7</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Prevention and Health Promotion Strategies

<sup>8</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Clinical Strategies

<sup>9</sup> SUD (2019) Focus Area 3: Enforcement

- use, and crisis response systems<sup>1011</sup>
- 3.2.4 Support the use of Mental Health First Aid, Crisis Intervention Training, and other evidence-based Crisis interventions for additional law enforcement officials, first responders, and hospital ER staff<sup>12</sup>
- 3.2.5 Support and promote the utilization of the resource and referral system as a tool for referrals from crisis services to other state, county, and local services

### **Objective 3.3**

Embed expectations for suicide prevention within relevant state-funded contracts

#### **Strategies**

- 3.3.1 Support health systems in incorporating a systematic approach to provide suicide safer care

## **Goal 4**

### **Build a multi-faceted, lifespan approach to suicide prevention**

#### **Objective 4.1**

Support efforts to ensure a systematic approach to provide suicide safer care by partnering with healthcare and behavioral health programs in Montana's university settings

#### **Strategies**

- 4.1.1 Support initiatives that encourage the development of integrated behavioral healthcare models across Montana, creating "no wrong door" access to individuals with behavioral health concerns<sup>13</sup>
- 4.1.2 Encourage medical community to use universal depression and anxiety screening, SUD screening, risk assessment, safety planning, lethal means counseling, and follow up<sup>1415</sup>

#### **Objective 4.2**

Build capacity within the public health system to prevent suicide in Montana

#### **Strategies**

- 4.2.1 Provide suicide safer care training to health professionals
- 4.2.2 Support and promote the resource and referral system as a tool to provide linkage to behavioral health services as it is integrated into public health, community-based organizations, and coalitions across the state<sup>16</sup>

#### **Objective 4.3**

Develop and support suicide prevention programs to address suicide prevention with at-risk groups in Montana<sup>17</sup>

#### **Strategies**

- 4.3.1 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for Service Members, Veterans, and Military Families (SMVF)

<sup>10</sup> SHIP (2020) Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Clinical Strategies

<sup>11</sup> SUD (2019), Focus Area 4: Family and Community Resources

<sup>12</sup> SUD (2019), Focus Area 4: Family and Community Resources

<sup>13</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Clinical Strategies

<sup>14</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Clinical Strategies

<sup>15</sup> SUD (2019), Focus Area 5: Treatment

<sup>16</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Clinical Strategies

<sup>17</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Health Equity Strategies

- 4.3.2 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for Native Americans<sup>18</sup>
- 4.3.3 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for youth<sup>19</sup>
- 4.3.4 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for middle-aged white males
- 4.3.5 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for older adults
- 4.3.6 Develop and support suicide prevention programs for LGBTQ+

### Objective 4.4

Establish policies, model practices, and develop resources in preparation for post-suicide response (postvention), including in the event of a suicide cluster

#### Strategies

- 4.4.1 Conduct gap analysis and build out postvention services and resources
- 4.4.2 Review existing crisis response infrastructure and models in communities to leverage and develop response teams for postvention (e.g., school crisis response model, FICMR teams, and regional emergency preparedness programs)

### Objective 4.5

Establish a Suicide Prevention Task Force at the state level and receive feedback on actions taken to-date and the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan

#### Strategies

- 4.5.1 Establish a Suicide Prevention Task Force with representation from a diverse group of suicide prevention experts
- 4.5.2 Convene Task Force at the end of 2020 to review progress and receive feedback on action plan and assess strategic plan

## Goal 5

Support high quality, privacy-protected suicide morbidity and mortality data collection and analysis

### Objective 5.1

Increase the use of data to understand the problem of suicide and effectively target interventions<sup>20</sup>

#### Strategies

- 5.1.1 Improve surveillance for suicide and suicide risk factors through the new federal National Violent Death Reporting System (MT-VDRS) with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>21</sup>
- 5.1.2 Analyze existing population-level data to ascertain specific risk factors for suicide in order to better target evidence-based practices for suicide prevention

### Objective 5.2

Establish a system for using and communicating data

#### Strategies

- 5.2.1 DPHHS Office of Epidemiology and Scientific Support (OESS) to compile an annual data report (available 8/31/2021) on suicide morbidity and mortality in Montana based on data sets available from MT-VDRS and identify recommendations

<sup>18</sup> Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019)

<sup>19</sup> Native American Youth Suicide Reduction Strategic Plan (2017-2019), Priority Action Step 1.4

<sup>20</sup> SUD (2019), Focus Area 1: Partnerships

<sup>21</sup> SHIP (2020), Priority Area 1: Behavioral Health, Policy Strategies