



SUICIDE DISCHARGE SAFETY PLAN

STEP 1: Warning Signs: (thoughts, images, thinking process, mood, and/or behaviors)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 2. Internal coping strategies – Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 3: People and social settings that provide distraction:

1. Name _____ Phone _____
2. Name _____ Phone _____
3. Name _____ Phone _____

STEP 4: People whom I can ask for help:

1. Name _____ Phone _____
2. Name _____ Phone _____
3. Name _____ Phone _____

STEP 5: Professionals or agencies I can contact during a crisis:

1. Clinician Name _____ Phone _____
Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # _____
2. Clinician Name _____ Phone _____
Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # _____
3. Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) En Espanol: 1-888-628- 9454
24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741-741
4. Local Emergency Service _____
Emergency Service Address _____
Emergency Services Phone _____

STEP 6: Making the Environment Safe:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Discharge Safety Plan Instructions

*A safety plan is a prioritized written list of coping strategies and sources of support patients can use who have been deemed to be at risk for suicide. Patients can use these strategies before or during a suicidal crisis. The plan is **brief**, is in the **patient's own words**, and is **easy** to read.*

If after a complete medical evaluation and comprehensive risk assessment the physician has determined the patient can safely be discharged, complete the discharge safety plan with the patient and family (if present) prior to discharge.

STEP 1:

- Assist the patient and family **identify warning signs**
 - Ask: "How will you know when the safety plan should be used?"
 - Ask: "What do you experience when you start to think about suicide or feel extremely depressed?"
 - List warning signs (thoughts, images, thinking process, mood, and/or behaviors) using the patient's own words

STEP 2:

- Assist patient to **identify internal coping strategies**
 - Ask: "What can you do, on your own, if you become suicidal again, to help yourself not to act on your thoughts or urges?"
 - Assess likelihood of use: Ask: "How likely do you think you would be able to do this step during a time of crisis?"
 - If doubt about use is expressed, ask: "What might stand in the way of you thinking of these activities or doing them if you think of them?"
 - Use a collaborative, problem solving approach to address potential roadblocks and ID alternative coping strategies.

STEP 3:

- Assist patient to **identify social contacts** who may distract patient during a crisis
- Instruct patients to use Step 3 if Step 2 does not resolve crisis or lower risk.
 - Ask: "Who or what social settings help you take your mind off your problems at least for a little while? "Who helps you feel better when you socialize with them?"
 - Ask for safe places they can go to be around people (i.e. coffee shop, movies, etc.)
 - Ask patient to list several people and social settings in case the first option is unavailable.
 - Remember in this step the goal is distraction from suicidal thoughts and feelings.

STEP 4:

- Assist patient to **identify family member or friends who may offer help** during a crisis
- Instruct patients to use Step 4 if Step 3 does not resolve crisis or lower risk.
 - Ask: "Among your family or friends, who do you think you could contact for help during a crisis?" or "Who is supportive of you and who do you feel that you can talk with when you're under stress?"

- Ask patients to list several people, in case one contact is unreachable. Prioritize the list. In this step, unlike the previous step, patients reveal they are in crisis to others.

STEP 5:

- Assist the patient **identify Professional and Agencies to contact for help**
- Instruct the patient to use Step 5 if Step 4 does not resolve crisis or lower risk.
 - Ask: “Who are the mental health professionals that we should identify to be on your safety plan?” and “Are there other health care providers?”
 - List names, numbers and/or locations of clinicians, local urgent care services.

STEP 6:

- Assist the patient to **identify how to make their environment safe**
 - Ask patient which means they would consider using during a suicidal crisis.
 - Ask: “Do you own a firearm, such as a gun or rifle?” and “What other means do you have access to and may use to attempt to kill yourself?”
 - Collaboratively identify ways to secure or limit access to lethal means: Ask: “How can we go about developing a plan to limit your access to these means?”

Additional Steps:

- Assess the likelihood the patient will engage during each step; ID potential obstacles, and problem solve with the patient. Document in the patient’s medical record.
- Make a copy of the discharge safety plan and place in the patient’s medical record and provide the original to the patient at discharge.