

Data-driven Suicide Prevention: Enhancing EAP and Insurer Behavioral Health Program Effectiveness

In today's fast-paced, high-pressure world, mental health has emerged as a critical public health concern. Suicide, now the 11th leading cause of death in the United States, continues to be a major concern. After a brief decline in 2019 and 2020, suicide rates rose in 2021, with an average of 132 suicides per day—a 5% increase. The situation worsened in 2022, with an additional 3% increase, bringing the average to 135 suicides per day. By 2023, over 50,000 Americans died by suicide, marking the highest number on record. These concerning statistics underscore the importance of integrating targeted suicide prevention strategies into all behavioral health initiatives.

While Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and behavioral health benefits from commercial and public insurers provide support for individuals facing mental health challenges, these organizations can further strengthen suicide prevention efforts by implementing data-driven systems that proactively manage and mitigate suicide risk, including:

- **Early identification**—Preventing crises before they escalate is critical. Utilizing predictive analytics, organizations can identify early warning signs and intervene promptly.
- **Ongoing assessment**—Continuous mental health monitoring allows care to be adjusted and personalized as needs evolve.
- **Proactive outreach**—At-risk individuals often don't seek help on their own. Through population engagement

tactics, such as targeted emails, app notifications and direct outreach by care managers trained in suicide prevention, organizations can ensure timely support reaches those in need.

- **24/7 supportive care**—Round-the clock access to support is vital for effective suicide prevention. On-demand resources like digital tools for mental health and wellbeing, educational materials, safety plans, hotlines, crisis text lines and direct connections to mental health professionals provide individuals with the help they need, whenever they need it.
- **Specialized care management**—Licensed clinicians trained in mental health services and evidence-based practices have the expertise to deliver essential support to at-risk individuals, including designing individualized care plans to enhance protective factors, such as building social support networks and improving problem-solving skills and using ongoing remote monitoring to adjust and personalize interventions as needs evolve.
- **Sub-specialty networks**—Access to clinicians specializing in mental health conditions ensures at-risk individuals receive the focused care they need. Also, subspecialty medical clinics and primary care providers should screen for mental health conditions. Some physical health conditions (e.g., traumatic brain injury and cancer), can carry a risk of suicide.
- **Outcomes and data-driven approach**—Using data to measure the effectiveness of suicide prevention programs allows organizations to continuously refine their strategies, ensure efficient use of resources and better target interventions.

Integrating data-driven targeted suicide prevention and risk management strategies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of EAP programs and behavioral health benefits provided by private and public insurers. Early detection of warning signs and timely interventions can reduce the risk of

suicide, save lives and foster a healthier, more resilient society.

Learn how Magellan Healthcare's data-driven approach is helping organizations safeguard lives [here](#).

Sources:

- [CDC](#)
- [CDC](#)
- [NBC News](#)