Central Michigan
District Health Department
Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities

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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local News Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: World Mental Health Day

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World Mental Health Day, October 10, 2019
Suicide Prevention

The 2019 World Mental Health Day campaign aims to increase the awareness of the public health significance of suicide and suicide attempts and to reduce the rate of suicide throughout the world. Every year, nearly 800,000 people take their own life and many more people attempt suicide. Every suicide is a tragedy that affects families, communities and entire countries and has long-lasting effects on the people left behind.

While the link between suicide and mental disorders is well established, many suicides happen impulsively in moments of crisis with a breakdown in the ability to deal with life stresses, such as financial problems, relationship break-up or chronic pain and illness. Suicide rates are also high amongst vulnerable groups who experience discrimination. By far, the strongest risk factor for suicide is a previous suicide attempt. Suicides are preventable. There are a number of measures that can be taken to prevent suicide and suicide attempts. These include:

- reducing access to the means of suicide;
- reporting by media in a responsible way;
- introducing alcohol policies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;
- early identification, treatment and care of people with mental and substance use disorders, chronic pain and acute emotional distress;
- training of non-specialized health workers in the assessment and management of suicidal behavior;
- follow-up care for people who attempted suicide and provision of community support.

Stigma surrounding mental disorders and suicide makes it difficult for people to seek the help they need. The prevention of suicide has not been adequately addressed due to a lack of awareness of suicide as a major public health problem and the fact that it is taboo in many societies to openly discuss it. Raising community

awareness and breaking down the stigma is important for countries to make progress in preventing suicide.

Suicide is a complex issue and, therefore, suicide prevention efforts require coordination and collaboration among multiple sectors of society. These efforts must be comprehensive and integrated as no single approach alone can make an impact on an issue as complex as suicide.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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To request an interview, please visit our website (cmdhd.org) and fill out the Media Interview Request Form.

Sources: World Health Organization (http://www.who.int); World Federation of Mental Health (https://wfmh.global).