

## The Connection

N.E.W. MENTAL HEALTH

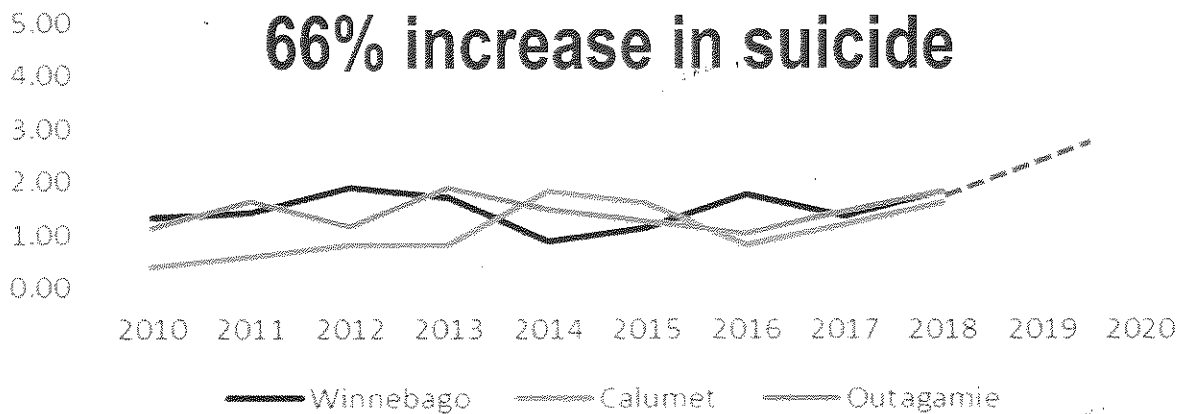
TO: Members of the Speaker's Task Force on Suicide Prevention

FROM: N.E.W. Mental Health Connection and the Zero Suicide Coalition of Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet Counties

DATE: June 17, 2019

**In Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet counties, the suicide rate has been increasing. The suicide rate is forecasted to continue increasing in all three counties if nothing is improved.**

### Total suicides per 10,000 Population Winnebago, Calumet, and Outagamie Counties



#### Recommendations from the Zero Suicide Coalition of Winnebago, Calumet, and Outagamie Counties:

1. Suicide prevention requires data driven efforts coordinated and sustained by a strong state infrastructure to produce robust and effective prevention strategies.
  - A standardized suicide death investigation form for coroners/medical examiners and law enforcement across the state is critical to collect comprehensive data to inform state and local prevention strategies.
  - Local suicide death reviews are crucial to assess local data to develop suicide prevention strategies that are specific to a community.
  - A strong state-level suicide prevention coordinator is needed with authority to advise and support local review teams. This would function similarly to the Wisconsin Child Death Review program (Keeping Kids Alive in Wisconsin).

2. Provide training and tools for schools and youth-serving organizations to teach resiliency, identify mental health concerns in the youth they serve and provide warm transitions for youth experiencing mental health crisis.
3. Mandate that all county mental health and substance use agencies implement the Zero Suicide Framework: [zerosuicide.sprc.org](http://zerosuicide.sprc.org)
4. Standardize reimbursement for mental health providers. There are currently different reimbursement rates depending on the location in the state, which leads to a shortage of mental health providers in rural areas.
5. Require Zero Suicide training for licensure, including for Counselors, Psychologists, substance use professionals, social workers, nurses, and physicians.

Thank you for your work on this important topic. Should you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact Beth Clay, Executive Director of the N.E.W. Mental Health Connection, at (920) 720-3770 or [beth@newmentalhealthconnection.org](mailto:beth@newmentalhealthconnection.org), or Sue Jungen, Co-Chair of the Zero Suicide Coalition of Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet Counties and National Zero Suicide Faculty, at 920-858-1143 or [sue.jungen@outlook.com](mailto:sue.jungen@outlook.com).

Sincerely,

Beth Clay (N.E.W. Mental Health Connection); Sue Jungen (Zero Suicide Coalition); Debbie Peters (Community for Hope); Cindy Reffke (Prevent Suicide Fox Cities); Jen Parsons and Wendy Neyhard (Samaritan Counseling Center); Lynnsey Erickson, Teresa Paulus, and Cheryl Laabs (Winnebago County Health Department); Connie Schaefer and Wanda Rieth (Calumet County Public Health); Heidi Keating (Outagamie County Public Health); Jenny Watts (Ascension); Cindy Czarnik-Neimeyer, (Catalpa Health/Appleton Schools); and Celia J. Gardner (Catholic Charities)

