

Suicide prevention

implementation strategy guide

This guide is designed to help people identify implementation strategies to address common barriers and leverage enablers in suicide prevention.

The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) can help to identify factors that impact implementation. Recent scoping and systematic reviews have used this framework to identify what impacts the implementation of suicide prevention approaches.^{1,2}

The table on the following page takes the common factors that affect suicide prevention implementation and links them to recommended implementation strategies. The recommended strategies were identified in the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) project, and the CRIF-ERIC Matching Tool was used to create this guide.

Terminology

Suicide prevention comes in many shapes and sizes. Approaches may be clinical, involve policy, advocacy or legislation, training, community supports, research or non-clinical programs and services. Throughout this guide, we refer to:

- **Approach** – this is the thing being implemented, for example, the intervention, program, project, policy, service or innovation.
- **Implementation** – is what we do to implement the thing. Implementation strategies are what we do to help people or places do the thing.
- **Setting** – this is the setting where the thing is implemented, for example, workplace, school, hospital or region.

Common factors that impact that implementation of suicide prevention approaches include factors related to:

- the setting where the approach is implemented
- the external system the setting is in
- the approach itself; and
- the implementation process.

1. Krishnamoorthy, S., Mathieu, S., Armstrong, G., Ross, V., Francis, J., Reifels, L., & Kőlves, K. (2024). Implementation of Complex Suicide Prevention Interventions: Insights into Barriers, Facilitators and Lessons Learned. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13811118.2024.2368127>

2. Kasal A, Táborská R, Juríková L, Grabenhofer-Eggerth A, Pichler M, Gruber B, Tomášková H, Niederkrotenthaler T. Facilitators and barriers to implementation of suicide prevention interventions: Scoping review. *Glob Ment Health (Camb)*. 2023 Mar 13;10:e15. doi: 10.1017/gmh.2023.9. PMID: 37854412; PMCID: PMC10579684

Factors impacting implementation

Recommended implementation strategies

Setting characteristics , for example, the layout, technology systems, data storage, staff responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess readiness to implement and identify any barriers or enablers• Assess the current setting and adapt it if needed• Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders• Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation
Shared values, beliefs and norms , for example, being person-centred, valuing continuous improvement, using data to inform practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek feedback on the implementation effort• Engage with the target audience of the approach• Conduct a needs assessment• Utilise facilitation to support interpersonal relationships• Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation• Support end-users to be actively involved• Assess readiness to implement and identify any barriers or enablers• Recruit or train leaders for the change effort• Form or join networks to foster a collaborative learning environment• Tailor implementation strategies to address barriers and leverage enablers• Work with local stakeholders to develop a consensus on a problem• Create advisory boards and work groups with key stakeholders• Support the people implementing the approach
Access to resources , for example, funding, space, materials and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply for funding to support the approach• Assess the current setting and adapt it if needed• Fund innovation to motivate providers to implement change• Partner with organisations that have the required resources
Access to knowledge and information , for example, guidance, training, skills, capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate stakeholders on the approach• Develop educational materials to support stakeholders to learn about the approach• Form or join networks to foster a collaborative learning environment• Conduct ongoing training on the approach• Capture and share local knowledge on implementation in other settings• Organise training to educate people delivering the approach
Partnerships and connections , for example, networks, research institutes, professional organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders• Partner with universities or research institutes• Create and maintain high-quality working relationships and networks• Visit another setting where a similar approach has been implemented• Create advisory boards and work groups with key stakeholders• Form or join networks to foster a collaborative learning environment• Partner with organisations that have the required resources
Pressures with competing approaches , for example, integrating with existing projects, competing with other organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incentivise adopting and implementing the approach• Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation• Increase the demand for the approach• Work with local stakeholders to develop a consensus on a problem• Find early adopters of the approach and learn from their experiences• Involve existing governance structures• Engage with the target audience of the approach• Inform influential people of the approach

<p>Relative advantage of the approach, for example, it is better than the current policy or practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation • Conduct a needs assessment • Implement small tests of change • Incentivise adopting and implementing the approach • Inform influential people of the approach
<p>Adaptability of the approach, for example, it can be modified, tailored or refined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how the approach can be tailored to meet local needs • Capture and share local knowledge on implementation in other settings • Conduct a needs assessment • Tailor implementation strategies to address barriers and leverage enablers • Assess readiness to implement and identify any barriers or enablers • Work with local stakeholders to develop a consensus on a problem • Utilise facilitation to support interpersonal relationships • Find early adopters of the approach and learn from their experiences
<p>Complexity of the approach, for example, it is complicated in scope, number of connections or steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a formal blueprint for implementation • Identify how the approach can be tailored to meet local needs • Implement small tests of change • Conduct ongoing training on the approach • Form or join networks to foster a collaborative learning environment • Assess readiness to implement and identify any barriers or enablers • Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation • Capture and share local knowledge on implementation in other settings • Model or simulate the change before implementing the approach • Tailor implementation strategies to address barriers and leverage enablers
<p>Design of the approach, for example, it is well-designed, packaged, assembled and presented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how the approach can be tailored to meet local needs • Develop educational materials to support stakeholders to learn about the approach • Monitor outcomes for quality assurance and improvement • Seek feedback on the implementation effort • Work with local stakeholders to develop a consensus on a problem
<p>Cost of the approach, for example, it is affordable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for funding to support the approach • Incentivise adopting and implementing the approach • Partner with organisations that have the required resources • Make it easier to charge for the approach, if appropriate • Fund innovation to motivate providers to implement change
<p>Engaging delivers, for example, people are engaged to deliver the approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people dedicated to supporting implementation • Work with local stakeholders to develop a consensus on a problem • Assess readiness to implement and identify any barriers or enablers • Form or join networks to foster a collaborative learning environment • Inform influential people of the approach • Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders • Involve existing governance structures • Create advisory boards and work groups with key stakeholders
<p>Involving people with lived experience, for example, the approach is co-designed or collaborative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with the target audience of the approach • Support end-users to be actively involved • Work with the target audience to support implementation uptake • Seek feedback on the implementation effort • Use mass media to reach large numbers of people to share the approach • Create advisory boards and work groups with key stakeholders • Develop educational materials to support stakeholders to learn about the innovation