

Title (English)

Beyond the Basics: Advanced Suicide Assessment and Prevention Strategies in Practice

Title (Spanish)

Más allá de lo Básico: Evaluación Avanzada de la Conducta Suicida y Estrategias Prácticas de Prevención

Language:

Course to be held in English and Spanish (3 hours per course)

Course directors

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Description of the course

Suicidal behavior, recognized as a prevalent psychiatric emergency, necessitates a profound understanding and advanced strategies for effective prevention. Nevertheless, prevention is possible, especially in cases associated with mental disorders.

Timely recognition and a thorough evaluation are crucial for accurately assessing suicide risk, laying the foundation for effective prevention. A reliable assessment of risk necessitates a multifaceted approach accounting for the various risk factors, such as intent, previous attempts, underlying conditions, etc.

Many different strategies and tools exist today for suicide risk assessment, the navigation of which might be challenging but nevertheless essential. Despite the extensive study of these tools from a psychometric perspective, which provides information for example on sensitivity and specificity, many of these tools remain insufficient from a clinical perspective due to low precision. Additionally, they add little to what is already known from a standard clinical interview.

At the same time, mental health professionals and especially psychiatrist require reliable and precise tools to estimate the risk of future suicidal behavior. Such tools are necessary to enhance clinical practice, for example allocate resources effectively by prioritizing those in urgent need of help. Additionally, these instruments also serve to support clinical judgment, a factor that could be crucial in potential legal scenarios.

Conclusively, the knowledge about the advantages and limitations of existing suicide risk assessment tools is crucial for clinical decision-making and providing quality care. The current course provides this knowledge by discussing advanced strategies for suicide prevention from the perspective of everyday clinical practice.

Keywords: suicide, risk factors, prevention, treatment,

Learning objectives

- Explore the epidemiology and multifaceted risk factors contributing to suicidal behavior.
- Become familiar with the major dimensions of assessment when evaluating suicide risk in clinical practice.
- Gain knowledge about the currently used suicide risk assessment strategies.
- Be able to provide a critical analysis on the benefits and limitations of existing suicide risk assessment methods.
- Familiarize yourself with the management of acute suicidality and treatment of suicidal behaviour.

Teaching methods

Interactive talks, collaborative learning via discussions with participants, Q&A session

Schedule (3 hours)

Brief introduction of course and participants	15m
Epidemiology and risk factors	30m
Suicide risk assessment: risk evaluation vs. suicide prediction	25m
Management of acute suicidality	25m
Treatment of suicidal behavior	25m
Clinical vignette	45m
Q&A	15m