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CN Guidance Screens More Than 14,000 Long Islanders for Suicide Risk, Connecting Nearly 1,400 to Specialized Care

HICKSVILLE, NY – Through its *Zero Suicide* program, CN Guidance has screened more than 14,000 adults receiving behavioral health services since 2023, helping identify nearly 1,400 individuals at risk for suicide and connect them to specialized support and intervention. The evidence-based initiative integrates suicide screening, assessment, safety planning, treatment, and staff training into routine behavioral healthcare to improve outcomes and strengthen suicide prevention efforts across Long Island.

Now entering its fourth year, the program is part of the **New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) Suicide Prevention Center's Zero Suicide initiative**, funded by the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**, with additional support from the **Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene (RFMH)**.

Suicide remains a critical public health concern and is the second leading cause of death among individuals ages 10 to 34. Yet behavioral health providers often face significant challenges in delivering consistent suicide prevention services, including workforce shortages, high caseloads, and limited resources. The Zero Suicide initiative was created to address these barriers by implementing evidence-based practices that reduce suicide ideation, attempts, and deaths while establishing a statewide standard of care for behavioral health providers.

Through its Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), CN Guidance has integrated the Zero Suicide framework into its everyday practices, ensuring that individuals receiving services are routinely screened for suicide risk and connected to appropriate levels of care when concerns are identified.

Key elements of the Zero Suicide framework include:

- Suicide care-specific training for staff based on their role and level of patient interaction
- Universal suicide risk screening for individuals receiving CCBHC services
- Comprehensive suicide risk assessments for individuals identified as at risk
- Enrollment in specialized suicide care pathways based on an individual's level of risk
- Structured follow-up support after discharge from an acute care setting
- Universal education about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

"Suicidal thoughts and behaviors often go unnoticed unless providers intentionally ask the right questions," said **Lindsay Ragona, Program Director at CN Guidance**. "By routinely screening every individual receiving services, we've been able to identify nearly 1,400 people at risk and connect them with timely, evidence-based interventions that can reduce risk, increase safety, and offer hope."

"Screening more than 14,000 individuals and identifying nearly 1,400 people at risk demonstrates why proactive suicide prevention is so critical," said **Jeffrey Friedman, CEO of CN Guidance**. "We are deeply grateful to our funding partners for making this work possible and helping ensure that individuals in our community receive support before a crisis becomes a tragedy."

For more than 50 years, CN Guidance has been one of Long Island's leading providers of mental health and substance use treatment services, operating more than 60 programs and employing more than 400 professionals. The organization partners with healthcare systems, schools, government agencies, and community organizations to support individuals and families affected by behavioral health challenges.

For more information about CN Guidance and its programs, visit **www.cnguidance.org** or call **516-822-6111.**

About CN Guidance and Counseling Services: *Serving children and adults with mental and emotional disorders since 1972, CN Guidance delivers NY-State licensed mental health and substance use treatment services to individuals and families, working in partnership with county government and other community services. With deep, localized knowledge of Nassau County and Suffolk County communities, a 24/7 crisis center, mobile fleet, telehealth capabilities, and a NY State Integrated Outpatient Services license, CN Guidance maintains an exemplary track record of delivering outreach and high-quality behavioral healthcare to more than 25,000 individuals per year. For more information, visit https://cnguidance.org/*