

Making a Loved One's Hospital Stay and Discharge Safer

What You Need to Know

What is Inpatient Suicide?

SUICIDALITY

IS THE MOST COMMON REASON FOR inpatient psychiatric hospitalization across the United States

INPATIENT SUICIDE

OCCURS WHEN A PERSON takes his or her own life at a hospital or healthcare facility



ON AVERAGE, INPATIENT SUICIDE OCCURS

SIX TIMES PER DAY

EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR



6

PATIENTS
DAY

42

PATIENTS
WEEK

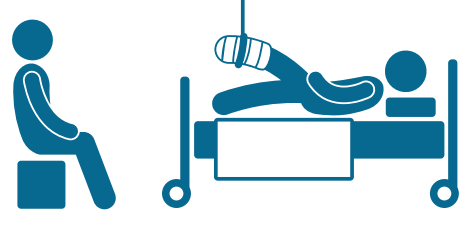
168

PATIENTS
MONTH

2,016

PATIENTS
YEAR

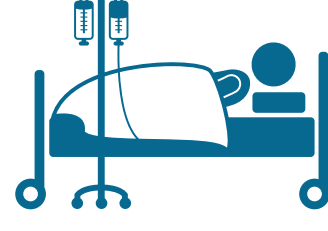
Why Does Inpatient Suicide Happen?



IMPROPER
SUICIDE WATCH



BROKEN
SAFETY RULES



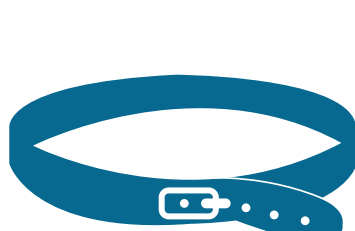
UNSAFE
ENVIRONMENTS



POORLY TRAINED
STAFF MEMBERS



INADEQUATE POLICIES
regarding dangerous
contraband (such as
shoelaces and belts)



UNDERSTAFFED
HOSPITALS

Preventing Inpatient Suicide: 15 Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Loved Ones



STEP 1.

Make sure hospital staff knows **exactly what your loved one has said** about suicide and any steps taken to die by suicide. **Don't be so sure the hospital will ask.**



STEP 2.

Ask who will be assessing your loved one and their qualifications to do so. The life of your loved one is in their hands. Don't be afraid to be proactive.



STEP 3.

Tell the staff you want to **be part of the treatment team**. If there is a decision about your loved one's care, your opinion counts.



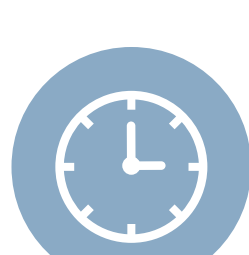
STEP 4.

Make sure your loved one signs a waiver of confidentiality. That way you can be informed by staff what your loved one says about suicide. Pressing for a discharge can be a risk factor for suicide.



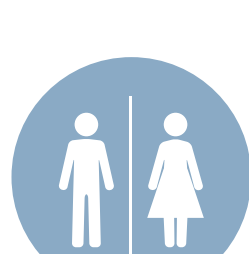
STEP 5.

Determine how often the psychiatrist will visit your loved one and **ask for brief updates** from the psychiatrist after each visit.



STEP 6.

Determine what level of observation your loved one will be on. Don't be afraid to remind staff that 15 minutes will not be enough to prevent a suicide.



STEP 7.

Ask if there is a bathroom door inside a patient's room. This is where patients **most often hang themselves** using a sheet or clothing over the door.



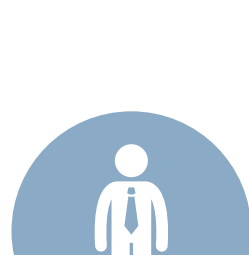
STEP 8.

Ask how often your loved one will be properly assessed for suicidal thinking and how staff monitors for behavioral signs and symptoms of suicide.



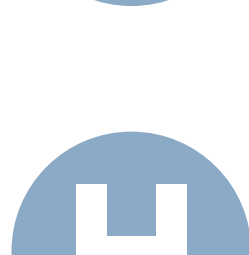
STEP 9.

Discuss all changes to suicide watch protection with staff members. Your opinion matters when it comes to the safety of a loved one.



STEP 10.

If a staff member acts rude to you, speak to their supervisor immediately. Staff-patient relationships are a risk factor for suicide.



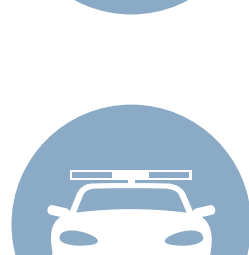
STEP 11.

Find out how many suicides have occurred in the hospital over the past five years and emergency procedures the hospital has in place to prevent inpatient suicide.



STEP 12.

Make sure you are part of the discharge process. If you don't feel a loved one is ready for discharge, speak up.



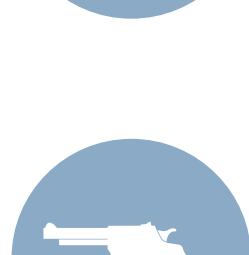
STEP 13.

If staff insists on discharging a loved one, speak to the CEO of the hospital. If all else fails, call 911 to report your loved one is suicidal and being discharged against your will.



STEP 14.

Make sure your loved one's transition to outpatient care is smooth and immediate. Post-discharge is a dangerous and high-risk time for suicide attempts.



STEP 15.

Make sure all guns are removed from your home, your car, your relatives' and friends' homes and cars, and anywhere else a gun may be hidden in your house or apartment.

Take a stand against

NEGLIGENT HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND HOSPITALS.

A suicide attorney can help obtain the compensation you deserve if you've lost a loved one due to inpatient suicide.

Contact the

THE LAW OFFICES OF SKIP SIMPSON
Attorneys and Counselors

today at **214-618-8222**
for a free case consultation.