

# COUNSELING ON ACCESS TO LETHAL MEANS (CALM) PROGRAM

## THE PROGRAM BACKGROUND

APPROXIMATELY

# 70%

of military suicide deaths involve the use of firearms.



Having access to a firearm during a suicidal crisis increases the likelihood of a lethal suicide attempt.

If someone is at risk, help put time & distance between them and their gun. It's like holding on to a friend's car keys when they are drunk.



Putting time and distance between a suicidal person and a firearm may save a life. The odds of survival go up for three reasons:

1. A suicidal crisis is often brief.
2. Deadliness of an attempt often depends in part on the method.
3. 90% of those who attempt suicide and survive don't attempt suicide again.

If someone you know is at risk, help keep firearms away from them until they recover.

The Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) program is a means safety training for mental health care providers (clinical and non-clinical) to implement counseling strategies to help clients at risk for suicide and their families.

Means safety is an empirically based strategy shown to substantially reduce the number of suicide deaths.

### DEFENSE STRATEGY FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**1** Promote efforts within the Department of Defense to reduce access to lethal means among individuals with identified suicide risk.

**2** Ensure Military Healthcare providers and others who interact with Military Community personnel at risk for suicide, routinely assess for access to all lethal means.

## WHAT IS CALM TRAINING?

CALM Training = 1.5 - 2 Hour Workshop

### CALM TRAINING PROVIDES:

**Increased knowledge** about the association between access to lethal means and suicide, and the role of means safety in preventing suicide.

**Increased skills and confidence** to work with clients and their families to assess and reduce their access to lethal means.



### ACCESS CALM TRAINING:

Suicide Prevention Resource Center website:  
[www.sprc.org/resources-programs/calm-counseling-access-lethal-means](http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/calm-counseling-access-lethal-means)

### THE CALM TRAINING WORKSHOPS...

Workshop content was found to be acceptable and largely non-controversial by a state firearm coalition including representatives from gun manufacturers and gun owner groups.

#### SOURCES:

1. World Health Organization (2014). Preventing Suicide. A global imperative. Retrieved from: [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/suicide-prevention/world\\_report\\_2014/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/world_report_2014/en/).
2. Barber, C.W., & Miller, M.J. (2014). Reducing a suicidal person's access to lethal means of suicide: A research agenda. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 47(3 Suppl 2), S264-S274.
3. Johnson, R.M., Frank, E.M., Ciocca, M., & Barber, C.W. (2011). Training mental healthcare providers to reduce at-risk patients' access to lethal means of suicide: Evaluation of the CALM Project. *Archives of Suicide Research* (italicize), 15(3), 259-264.

