Prevention of Suicide

Practice 5. Suicide Prevention Austria (SUPRA)

Location: Austria

Summary

*Suicide Prevention Austria* began January 2017. The practice focuses on action programmes and policy.

The objectives of *Suicide Prevention Austria* were to coordinate suicide prevention in Austria at the national and regional levels, to ensure support for risk groups, to develop standards for access to means of suicide, to develop media support for suicide prevention, to integrate suicide prevention programmes into other health promotion activities, and to support research on suicide.

In 2012, the Austrian suicide prevention program SUPRA was published and the Gesundheit Österreich GmbH was assigned to support its implementation by the ministry of health. The program is a 70 page paper that was written by Austria’s leading experts. It describes a broad range of possible measures. However, the paper does not go into details on prioritization of measures, responsibility for implementation, recommended target goals or outcome indicators. In order to convince decision makers to foster suicide prevention in a federally structured country like Austria, all of this information is crucial, especially in times of limited resources. A double strategy was chosen for the implementation of SUPRA. In close collaboration with a panel of leading experts, 6 strategic and 18 operative goals were identified and more than 70 measures, target sizes, indicators, and responsibilities were described.

*Suicide Prevention Austria* has been evaluated or assessed. The measures associated with *Suicide Prevention Austria* are based on scientific evidence; implementation of SUPRA in the region of Styria has partly been evaluated during the last two years but has not be published at this time.

Website: [https://www.bmgf.gv.at/home/suizid](https://www.bmgf.gv.at/home/suizid)
Addressed priority areas
Suicide prevention

Lessons learned

What worked well & facilitators to implementation

- One important step was the implementation of the coordinating centre at the national public health institute. This institute is involved in all strategic developments in the Austrian health care system so this is a perfect place for the suicide prevention coordinating centre.
- Support from the University.
- The financing and the political support of the ministry of health and women and the minister respectively was extremely important.
- The involvement of all leading experts was another factor for success.

What did not work & barriers to implementation

- In 2013, it was aimed to implement SUPRA immediately without a concrete strategy for implementation. This did not work as the paper is not detailed.

Recommendations for future adopters of this practice

- Political and financial support through the ministry of health is crucial.
- Involve many experts and support collaboration between them.
- Use SMART definitions for the goals.
- Try to link suicide prevention to other ongoing strategic developments.
- Implement a coordinating centre at a strategically important place like the national public health institute.

Level of implementation: National

Responsible organization: Federal Ministry of Health and Women