

CENTRAL STATE HOSPITAL  
PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: SUICIDE PRECAUTIONS

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ANNUAL REVIEW MONTH: May

RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW: Chief Medical Officer

LAST REVISION DATE: May 2005

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The purpose of this procedure is to provide methods for ensuring optimal care and treatment for clients placed on suicide precautions.

Participants: Unit/Ward Employee(s)  
Attending Physician/Psychiatric  
O.D.  
Unit Director  
Charge Nurse  
Employee(s) Assigned  
(Suicide Precaution Duties)  
Division Medical Director

Unit/Ward Employee(s) Report changes in client's behavior and physical condition to supervisor and attending physician.

Attending Physician/  
Psychiatric O.D. 1. Examine client, issue order for suicide precautions, with restrictions deemed appropriate, and write progress note describing client's condition. (All suicide precautions clients are to be examined daily by a physician, and a progress note entered into the clinical record.)

2. Terminate suicide precautions as appropriate.

Unit Director 1. Ensure that adequate staff is available to provide supervision of suicidal clients and to carry out suicide precaution duties.

2. Ensure review by the Interdisciplinary Treatment Team if one-to-one observation is required beyond 72 hours.

Charge Nurse

1. Ensure that suicide precautions are implemented as ordered by physician and that assigned employee(s) carries out procedures as outlined below:
  - a. Talk with client often, offering support, encouragement and understanding.
  - b. Place the client where his/her face and extremities can be observed at all times.
  - c. Remove any harmful objects and clothing such as belts, ties, scissors, needles, knives, etc., from client's access.
  - d. Make frequent inspection of client's belongings for hidden articles that may be used for escape, harm to self and/or others.
  - e. Prevent client from receiving matches and other harmful objects.
  - f. Make sleeping arrangements for client so that he/she is easily visible at all times.
  - g. Accompany client to meals and bathroom. (Note: Test water temperatures to protect against scalding; control razor blades and other sharp objects to avoid injuries. Closely observe the client while he/she is shaving.)
  - h. Ensure proper control of matches, cigarette lighters, and cigarettes to avoid misuse of items. Ensure cigarettes are extinguished after smoking and that client does not have matches or cigarette lighter in his/her possession.
  - I. Assist employee administering medication to ensure medication is swallowed.
  - j. Observe client for any mood, behavioral or physical changes. If

any are noted, record in clinical record and report to supervisor and physician.

- k. Offer fluids frequently.
  - l. Make sure observation is not interrupted during shift change and/or when personnel are busily engaged in ward activities.
  - m. Observe and record eating habits.
  - n. Record observations and activities in progress notes at the change of each shift.
  - o. Complete form CSH-701, Observation Flow Sheet (Rev. 10/91), with documentation at least every fifteen (15) minutes or more often as specified by the physician.
- 2. Have employee(s) designated to implement suicide precautions and ensure employee(s) have received training in observation of suicidal clients.
  - 3. Ensure that sufficient employees are assigned so that client is observed at all times.

Employee(s)

Assigned to Client

Carry out all suicide precautions in accordance with this policy and procedure and always remain within arms reach and have eye contact with the client signed to your responsibility.

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**MONITORING**

Division Medical  
Director

Review all reports of clients placed on suicide precautions and recommend appropriate actions when indicated.

**Approved:**

**This procedure has been approved by the CMO and CEO on 5/05.**