

American Association of Suicidology Releases Statement to FCC on Crisis Contact Centers

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES, March 14, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) encourages crisis contact centers to take a proactive role in contacting the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

and sharing their experiences surrounding funding difficulties. This is in the context of the FCC's ongoing fact-finding process regarding the sustainable development of a national, three-digit phone number for crisis intervention services (referred to as n11). AAS also encourages the FCC to include all crisis contact centers in the United States in this process.



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Travis Atkinson, Crisis Systems Consultant at TBD Solutions

Crisis intervention services are gravely underfunded and undervalued. Cost comparisons between regions are made difficult or impossible due to costs borne by local donors and volunteers. As we move from a regional to a national model, crisis intervention services must be funded at a scale representative of peak demand. The cost of crisis services in the US is tightly localized and largely borne by local donors and funders and the work of volunteers. Funding largely comes from local sources, individual and private donors, not the federal government or other national organizations.

The AAS Crisis Centers Division recommends that any cost estimates for crisis services clearly state there is no universally agreed-upon method for estimating the cost of services. Furthermore, all estimates should always include a fair-market value estimate of any hidden costs including, but not limited to, in-kind, skilled/unskilled volunteer and other uncompensated labor and/or donated products/services. As the nation's largest and oldest accreditation body, AAS supports a national conversation about this issue among the more than 700 crisis call centers and national stakeholders.

“Building a quality crisis services continuum starts with understanding the quality and quantity of crisis services across the United States--what we have, what's working, and how we can improve it,” said Travis Atkinson, Crisis Systems Consultant at [TBD Solutions](#) and co-chair of the AAS Crisis Center Committee. “Having accurate and comprehensive information supports sound decision making, and access to data within the behavioral health landscape is no exception.”

The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) and its Crisis Center Committee, in partnership with TBD Solutions, have collaboratively worked to enhance the understanding of the landscape of crisis intervention services in the United States.

Over the course of the last year, since the founding of AAS's Crisis Center Committee, its members have worked tirelessly to provide a more comprehensive view of the crisis center landscape. With the help of extensive member volunteer labor, the development of a database of over 700 crisis centers is underway. The goal of such work is to be able to ensure quality and

timely care to those in a suicidal crisis or who are in need of immediate, emotional support by effectively providing those establishing crisis services infrastructure with appropriate and relevant information.

"As AAS's Crisis Centers Division Chair, I'm encouraged by better investment into our current crisis service system and want to see it instituted in a sustainable way with as much contribution from the crisis centers community as possible," shares Amelia Lehto.

For the Media: Responsible reporting on suicide, including stories of hope and resilience, can prevent more suicides. Please visit the [Suicide Reporting Recommendations](#) for more information.

About AAS: Founded in 1968 by Edwin S. Shneidman, PhD, AAS promotes suicide as a research discipline, public awareness programs, public education and training for professionals and volunteers. The membership of AAS includes mental health and public health professionals, researchers, suicide prevention and crisis intervention centers, school districts, crisis center volunteers, survivors of suicide loss, attempt survivors, and a variety of lay persons who have in interest in suicide prevention. You can learn more about AAS at www.suicidology.org and www.aas365.org.

Colleen Creighton
American Association of Suicidology
202-237-2280
[email us here](#)

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