



WHAT CHALLENGES DO HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ENCOUNTER WHEN CARING FOR A SUICIDAL PATIENT?

Caring for suicidal patients may be difficult if healthcare providers are not sure which strategy they should choose to treat these individuals. In this study, we reviewed academic literature that discussed any ethical issues that arose during the clinical care of patients who disclosed that they were suicidal.

Reference: Saigle, V., and Racine, E. (2018) Ethical challenges faced by healthcare professionals who care for suicidal patients: A scoping review. *Monash Bioethics Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40592-018-0076-z>.

WHO SHOULD READ THIS?

These results provide an overview of existing literature of problems encountered during the care of suicidal individuals and could be helpful to healthcare providers who work with these populations, researchers, hospital educators, and policymakers.



WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Medical professionals may be required to care for suicidal patients with varying needs, including those who are inpatients, outpatients, and those who are institutionalized. Varying perspectives within healthcare teams or across providers regarding their responsibility to prevent suicide or discomfort with the subject may impact care.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS DO?

We searched for articles in a scientific database used by researchers to find all publications that talked about ethics and suicide. After we found all of the articles on this topic, we read each one and extracted information about the types of problems experienced, which groups found them to be problems, and the solutions people proposed to address them.



WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS FIND?

We identified several problems faced by healthcare providers who work with suicidal patients. We categorized these according to issues arising in acute care settings, during the formation of therapeutic relationships with patients who were cared for over prolonged periods of times, and due to organizational factors.

WHAT NOW?

The issues faced by healthcare professionals who care for suicidal patients are complex. Our work identifies many avenues that could be explored in future research, clinical training, or institutional policies to understand the needs of healthcare professionals and develop solutions to remove some of this uncertainty.

