

# «Special» Suicide Prevention Newsletter

## Gaspe Peninsula and Magdalen Islands

April 2020, no 4

At this time of global pandemic our prevention community of practice in public health has chosen to issue a "Special" Suicide Prevention Newsletter.

Although stress and anxiety are normal reactions, it is important to minimize the repercussions in the current context.

### ❖ **The Coronavirus COVID-19 Disease**

The current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is a particular and rare situation. It can affect people physically, but also psychologically.

In this type of contexte, it is very important to take care of one's mental health, because in this situation many people will experience stress, anxiety and depressive reactions. The Stress, Anxiety and Depression sheet associated with the COVID-19 coronavirus disease from the Government of Quebec is a tool to better recognize these emotions (we have attached it to the mailing). You can also visit the following website : [www. coronavirus.qc.ca](http://www.coronavirus.qc.ca), for more information.

### **Ways to improve the situation and to minimize the repercussions in your daily life :**

- Stay informed but avoid information overload (use reliable sources of information);
- Rely on how you usually adapt to difficult situations (most people have their personal resources and mental strength to adapt);
- Take care of yourself (be attentive to your feelings and reactions, voice them to someone you trust, practice healthy living habits, allow yourself life's little pleasures, etc.);
- At the end of each day, note three things that went well (proven effective against burnout and allows reprogramming of the brain);
- Avoid using catastrophic language (because the words we use can exacerbate emotions, for example: "it's interesting or strange" have less anxious impact than "it's horrible, terrible or dreadful");
- Allow yourself to laugh, humor is a natural defense.

If several reactions and symptoms persist in time and get considerably worse whether physically, psychologically, emotionally or behavioural, and that your personal resources no longer allow you to manage your daily concerns, then it may be beneficial to seek help.

### **Resources available on the Internet:**

- Government of Québec coronavirus (COVID-19) information website : <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/>
- Ministry of Health and Social Services : [www.msss.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca)

### **Resources available by phone:**

- Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux of your locality (CISSS, CLSC, GMF)
- The Government of Québec COVID-19 information line: 1 877 644-4545
- Psychosocial telephone consultation service : Info-Social 811
- Health telephone consultation service : Info-Santé 811
- Suicide prevention helpline : 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)
- The Government of Canada's coronavirus information line COVID-19 : 1-833-784-4397
- Doctor and pharmacist

Let's stop focusing on what this pandemic is making us lose but, let's rather consider what we can learn, explore and gain from this imposed change of pace, while respecting the guidelines and directives of the Quebec Public Health.

### **❖ Suicide statistics**

In collaboration with the National Institute of Public Health of Quebec (INSPQ) and the Office of the Coroner, the AQPS presented the most recent data on suicide in Quebec, which attracted the attention of many media. According to provisional data for the year 2017, the suicide rate is still slightly decreasing, mainly among men, while it is stable among women. A total of 1,045 people have lost their lives in Quebec. Of this number, 75% are men.

« For the first time, the INSPQ has made public the number of hospitalizations for attempted suicide in Quebec from 2007 to 2018. Unlike the downward trends in suicide rates, the rates of hospitalizations due to attempted suicide are on the rise. Additional work needs to be done to improve our understanding of the phenomenon ».

To improve prevention, we must be concerned with all suicidal behaviors. It is known that someone who has attempted suicide in the past is at higher risk of taking action (is a person more vulnerable to suicide and becomes an "at risk individual").

### **❖ Launch of the new postvention program**

The new ***Postvention program : being prepared to act in the event of a suicide*** was launched on February 5<sup>th</sup> ; 2020. The purpose of this program is to support the administrators of institutions and organizations that must react to a suicide or who wish to be prepared, act appropriately and limit the impacts of a suicide. To effectively tackle the problem of suicide, actions must be taken on several fronts: **prevention, intervention and postvention.**

Postvention actions promote a return to normality for the affected environment, reduce the individual suffering of those affected and reduce the risk of a ripple effect in the community. The new program aims to equip and strengthen organizations in their capacity to act and foster the sense of security.

You can consult this program (in English) on the following website: [www.agps.info](http://www.agps.info).

An environment or organization that needs support following a suicide can contact the suicide prevention helpline 1-877-APPELLE (277-3553), the telephone consultation line: Info-Social - 811 or the local CLSC.

The prevention of suicide and the mental health of Gaspesians and Madelinots are at the heart of our concerns. Together we will get through this crisis, we wish you a beautiful spring and thank you for your involvement in suicide prevention.

The Gaspé Peninsula – Magdalen Islands prevention community of practice in public health:

**Côte-de-Gaspé** : Helsa-Émilie Langlois (418 368-2349, poste 4004)

**Rocher-Percé** : Christine Sauvageau (418 689-6696, poste 5052)

**Baie-des-Chaleurs (Avignon)** : Valérie Day (418 364-7064, poste 1461)

**Baie-des-Chaleurs (Bonaventure)** : Nancy Gédéon (418 752-2572, poste 1188)

**Haute-Gaspésie** : Émilie Truchon-Villeneuve (418 763-2261, poste 2775)

**Magdalen Islands** : Esther Arseneau-Forest (418 986-2121, poste 8504)

---

*Need help for you or a loved one:*

*Suicide prevention helpline: 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)*

*Info-Social (811)*

---

