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From: McKeon, Richard (SAMHSA/CMHS)

Sent: Friday, March 02, 2012 06:00 PM

To: Robinson, Maryann (SAMHSA/CMHS)

Cc: Mathews-Younes, Anne (SAMHSA/CMHS)

Subject: RE: RESPONSE FROM Fran, Melissa, April to Maureen's Concern Regarding CCP Guidance for Assessment and Referral Tools

Would be happy to discuss with you but here are a couple of key facts. Training is critical but what degree you have is not. The Lifeline crisis centers frequently utilize trained volunteers working under the supervision of a mental health professional. Conversely, the mental health professions don't routinely provide training in suicide risk assessment, management etc. Studies that have compared professionals and para-professionals have typically not shown a difference.

So the key is to carefully think through what you are asking staff of whatever background to do, make sure that there are clear protocols for them and that they are trained. I would be happy to look at the specific assessment and referral tools if you wish to give you a sense of whether suicide prevention experts would regard them as adequate, and would also be happy to consult regarding the issue of suicide screening, assessment, management and decision making in your program.

Richard