

## **Behavioral Health Symposium: Addressing Suicide Prevention – A Community Approach**

**Date: April 17, 2025**

**Location: St. Luke's Hospital – Sacred Heart Campus, Allentown, PA**

### **Event Overview:**

This symposium brought together behavioral health leaders, crisis system stakeholders, and community partners to focus on suicide prevention through collaboration, data-sharing, and evidence-based care. The event included interactive discussions, data presentations, and a panel of experts, underscoring the region's commitment to reducing suicide risk through a unified community approach.

Note: The full slide deck is shared with the minutes.

### **Opening Remarks:**

Tom Walker (Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania) opened the symposium by recapping the October 2024 event, "Leading the Charge," and highlighting how today's focus on suicide prevention builds upon that foundation.

Dr. Christopher Squillaro (Magellan Medical Director) emphasized the urgency of aligning systems of care and leveraging collective expertise to reduce suicide risk.

### **Keynote Presentation:**

A joint keynote by Steven Ross (PA DHS) and Kara Kessel (Children's Bureau) outlined the Commonwealth's crisis system transformation, including the vision for Crisis Walk-In Centers and regulatory reforms. Local task force leaders—Robyn Barbosa, Sue Wandalowski, Vicky Conte, and Sue Lettera—presented county-specific suicide prevention efforts in Lehigh and Northampton, showcasing public health approaches and cross-sector collaboration.

### Local Commitments Highlighted:

- Bethlehem Health Bureau and Street Outreach of Lehigh County both pledged QPR training for all staff by end of 2025.
- Bethlehem Police Department committed to QPR certification across its entire force.

### **Magellan Data Presentation: Hope Connections – Suicide Risk Assessment Insights**

Dr. Squillaro, Dana Lombardi, and Kori Detwiler reviewed trends in suicide risk screenings using the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), highlighting follow-up gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Interactive “Pair & Share” activities allowed attendees to explore real-world strategies for enhancing post-discharge care.

### **Panel Discussion: Enhancing Crisis Response & Community Partnerships**

Moderated by Steven Ross and Kara Kessel, panelists discussed workforce challenges, law enforcement coordination, and crisis system navigation. Panelists included Chief Michelle Kotts, Jim Presto, Maggie Murphy, Lisa Cozzi, and Chelsea Jones.

Emerging themes included:

- Promoting QPR across all levels of care
- Strengthening warm handoffs and discharge planning
- Expanding access to walk-in crisis services in the Lehigh Valley
- Continued development of Project RED for co-occurring populations

### **CAMS Care Implementation & Training Initiative**

Kevin Crowley (CAMS Care) provided an overview of the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS) framework and its integration with existing services. Participants were encouraged to explore the model’s utility in both outpatient and crisis settings.

### **Magellan’s CAMS Care RFI & Education Day Announcement**

Magellan announced a Request for Information (RFI) seeking provider interest in CAMS Care training slots. The initiative aims to certify:

- 50 providers in Year 1
- An additional 200 clinicians over four years
- Special focus will be placed on CAMS for Teens and adoption across community-based levels of care.
- CAMS Education Day is scheduled for June 2, 2025.

Details and RFI link:

[magellanofpa.com/documents/2025/04/042225\\_camsrfiforthampton.pdf/](https://magellanofpa.com/documents/2025/04/042225_camsrfiforthampton.pdf/)

Education Day registration details:

Location: Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 (CIU20), 6 Danforth Dr, Easton, PA 18045

Morning Program: 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Morning Event Registration: [HERE.](#)

Afternoon Program: 1:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. Event Registration: [HERE.](#)

