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**DOH, UH, PARTNERS JOIN FORCES TO PREVENT SUICIDE
THROUGH CONNECTION**

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HONOLULU — The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) is proud to join forces with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH) and other state, local, military, public and private sector partners to advance the 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and Federal Action Plan by answering the call to care, connect and collaborate with traditional and non-traditional partners. The goal is to reach the population disproportionately affected by suicide and suicide attempts across the state: men, rural communities, minorities and essential workers including farmers and first responders.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of fatal injuries for Hawai'i residents. On average, almost four people die from suicide every week. A total of 1,051 residents died from suicide from 2019 to 2023. More than 76% of individuals in Hawai'i who died by suicide were men. Men ages 20 to 59 years old had the highest risk for suicide death. Females ages 15 to 19 years old had the highest risk for suicide attempt. Both suicide and suicide attempts have lasting emotional, mental and physical health and economic impacts.

The Culturally-Based Community Connections for Resilience (CCCR) project, funded by the Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Minority Health aims to create a sustainable and collaborative peer-mentor network among Hawai'i's essential workers to reduce suicide and suicide risks by bolstering social connectedness and relationship building.

“It may seem suicide is a lone event — it is not,” said Professor Thao Le, principal investigator for CCCR. “A major reason though is feeling alone. We need a course correction and can only do this when we create conditions for connections, internally and externally, across all levels and all sectors.”

“Passive suicide is a slow and silent killer in the Emergency Medical Services profession,” said Mark Kunimune, paramedic faculty emeritus and partner of CCCR. “Having a program such as this one can begin to make a huge difference.”

“Suicide can be preventable, but effective suicide prevention needs partners across the state from different sectors and disciplines to care, connect and collaborate,” said Renee Yu, suicide prevention coordinator for DOH Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch (EMSIPSB). “CCCR and initiatives like CCCR brought to our state by our amazing suicide prevention partners are saving lives and families.”

If you are struggling, resources are available. Help is just a call, text or chat away.

Resources:

- [Hawai'i CARES 988](#) is a free crisis, mental health and substance use call center. Locally trained and qualified clinical and crisis call center staff provide supportive counseling and screening for urgent or emergent mental health or substance use needs, recommendations for behavioral health assessments, services and crisis interventions. Call or text 988 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- To learn more about suicide prevention in Hawai'i, participate in **free, anonymous [online suicide prevention training](#)**.
- The [Hawai'i Poison Center](#) provides help for poisoning emergencies. Call 1-800-222-1222. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Hawai'i Chapter brings people together from all backgrounds.
- Visit [Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Taskforce website](#) for local resources.

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