Hope by CAMH: An app-based approach to Suicide Safety Planning

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camh

HIROC

Background

- Best practice strategies for suicide prevention include:
  - Safety Planning[1]
  - Access to information for suicide helplines[2,3]
  - Public education[2]
- Barriers exist with pen-and-paper safety planning:
  - Lack of portability[4] and accessibility[4]
  - Difficulty locating or misplaced plans[4,5]
- Safety planning through smartphone apps is a feasible strategy due to accessibility[6]
- Integration of mental health apps into patient and provider workflows remains a largely unexplored area of practice[7]

Learning objectives: To (1) introduce the Hope by CAMH app, and discuss its (2) development, and (3) integration into care
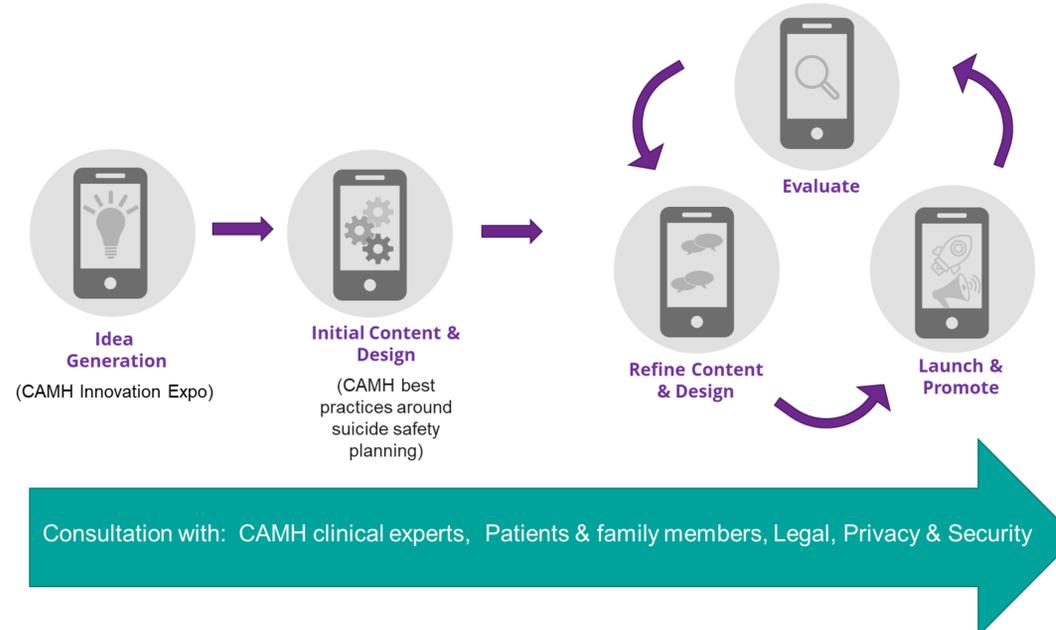
Hope by CAMH app
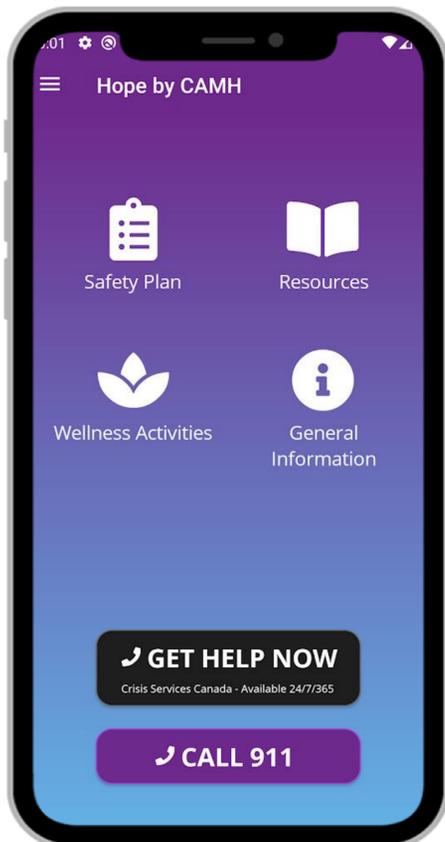
- Create a personalized safety plan (with the option to e-mail this safety plan to a health provider or loved ones)
- Access crisis resources
- Practice wellness activities
- Learn about suicide risk factors
- Obtain information for family and loved ones

Visit: https://www.camh.ca/hopebycamhapp

Or Scan QR code above

Development process

Idea Generation (CAMH Innovation Expo)

Initial Content & Design (CAMH best practices around suicide safety planning)

Evaluate

Refine Content & Design

Launch & Promote

Consultation with: CAMH clinical experts, Patients & family members, Legal, Privacy & Security

Impact

6000+ downloads

4486 page views

"It's an amazing idea and also brings back the idea of patient empowerment...Sometimes you feel hopeless and lonely, your doctors are far away, and you're in the zone. Having a little thing to remind you on your phone that you're not feeling good, or that you are feeling good – it puts the ball in the patient's court. Being able to check on yourself and to be reminded of ways to manage your own mental health is always a good thing."
- CAMH patient advisor

Integrating Hope by CAMH into clinical care

Act | Plan | Study | Do
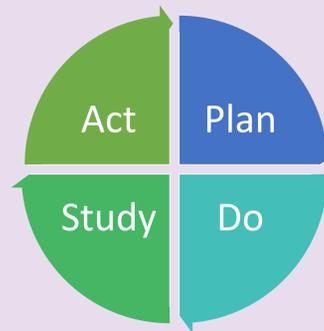
What does it look like?
- Developing educational materials including an app user guide, patient- facing posters, draft script for recommending the app
- Holding one (or more) app onboarding sessions
- Being available to support clinicians where and when needed (e.g. technical questions), and gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative data from clinicians and patients

Lessons Learned:
- Secure formal executive team sponsorship
- Co-design implementation with clinic staff to ensure seamless integration into workflow
- Prioritize clinical areas that have the capacity to prepare for and engage in implementation of new initiatives

Enablers of implementation:
- Interprofessional approach to design and use of the app
- Support from clinical leadership
- Availability of educational resources
- Seamless integration into workflow

Challenges to consider:
- Changes to clinic workload due to COVID-19
- Competing initiatives and/or priorities
- Lack of awareness about the initiative amongst clinicians

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