Firearm Injury Prevention for First Responders

First responders have a unique opportunity to address firearm safety in scenarios where there is a high risk for firearm injury, including responding to situations involving individuals with thoughts of harming themselves or those in an altered mental state (including substance use, psychosis, dementia), violent situations, or situations that involve children.

After identifying patients at high risk for firearm injury, there is an opportunity to ask about firearms in their homes to help prevent injury.

Between 2019 and 2020, firearm deaths by suicide increased by 22%. Between 2019 and 2020, firearm deaths by homicide increased by 136%.

Remember: Determine if there is a high risk for firearm injury in emergency calls. Ask the patient or others in the situation if they would be willing to explore options of preventing firearm injury. Brainstorm options with the patient and help them with follow-through.

Ways to Help and Resources

**FIRST, DETERMINE IF THE PATIENT IS THE HIGH RISK.**

**OPTION #1**
Ensure safe storage devices for the firearm(s). Examples of safe storage include cable locks, trigger locks, gun safes, and lockboxes.

**OPTION #2**
Make sure firearm(s) are temporarily stored at another location during the coping process after a stressful event.

**REFER PATIENT TO RESOURCES**

**SPRINGFIELD CRISIS RESOURCES**
- Burrell Center Crisis Line: 1-800-494-7355
- Text Crisis Line: 741-741
- NAMI SW Missouri Warm Line: 1-877-535-4357

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Sources: Massachusetts Medical Society