SUICIDE PREVENTION TOP TEN TIPS

1. Three-quarters of people who die by suicide have not had recent contact with secondary mental health services.

2. The majority of mental illness is frequently unrecognised in primary care patients who die by suicide (may not be the obvious person e.g. post natal Mum, older male patient)

3. There are clear markers of suicide risk we can look for, including frequent consultations, increasingly frequent consultation and non attendance, multiple psychotropic drugs, and specific drug combinations such as benzodiazepines with antidepressants (maybe these could be red flag markers on notes?)

4. There are effective treatments for depression and we should be following the NICE guidance on depression, which has been linked with falling patient suicide rates: [http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/depression](http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/depression)

5. Everyone who presents with depression or anxiety should be assessed and treated and have rapid access to support and treatment, either primary care based, such as through Improving Access to Psychological Therapies, or secondary care.

6. Care planning is important. We can use other appointments such as health checks or repeat medication requests to review patients and check their mental health?

7. GPs should be aware of their local pathways for referral for people needing urgent psychiatric assessment- crisis care pathway.

8. For people who don't access help through their GP, we need to make sure people know alternatives are available e.g. internet based support such as silver cloud, buddy app and big white wall, Samaritans

9. Remember alcohol and drug use. There is a strong association between suicide and self harm and excessive alcohol intake.

10. Knowledge and learning for the whole practice. A number of training programmes relevant to suicide prevention are in use across England (ASIST, Safetalk, Connecting with People, Mental Health First Aid, STORM) but there are also eLearning modules and other online resources available. GP practices should ensure all staff members have undertaken some learning about suicide prevention [http://www.rcgp.org.uk/professional-development/online-learning/ole/suicide-prevention.aspx](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/professional-development/online-learning/ole/suicide-prevention.aspx)
eLearning module on RCGP website- free to members and non members
Resources

Reading Well Agency: Books on Prescription
Reading Well Books on Prescription helps you manage your well-being using self-help reading. The scheme is endorsed by health professionals, including the Royal College of General Practitioners, and is supported by public libraries.
http://reading-well.org.uk/resources/527

Patient information leaflets

http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/problemsdisorders/feelingoverwhelmed.aspx

http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/problemsdisorders/feelingonthetedge.aspx
For people feeling acutely distressed and may self harm. There are also Urdu and Polish translations.

http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/suicidalfeelings/about-suicidal-feelings/#.VUEVnW9_hUQ
Explains what suicidal feelings are, including possible causes and how you can learn to cope.

Sources of immediate support in a crisis for people who are distressed, are experiencing suicidal thoughts or who self-harm and their families

PAPYRUS HOPELineUK: Tel: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon to Fri 10am - 5pm and 7pm - 10pm & Weekends 2pm - 5pm). PAPYRUS aims to prevent young people taking their own lives. A professionally staffed helpline provides support, practical advice and information both to young people worried about themselves, and to anyone concerned that a young person may harm themselves. Web: papyrus-uk.org

Samaritans: Tel: 08457 90 90 90 (24/7); email: jo@samaritans.org
A 24/7 helpline service which gives you a safe space where you can talk about what is happening, how you are feeling, and how to find your own way forward.
References

Depression in adults: The treatment and management of depression in adults, NICE 2009

NCISH, Suicide in primary care in England 2002-2011: www.bbmh.manchester.ac.uk/cmhr/research/centreforsuicideprevention/nci/reports/SuicideprimarycareEngland02to11summary