

Estimation scale for suicidal danger: New tools for action

CENTRE DE RÉADAPTATION
EN DÉPENDANCE DE MONTRÉAL

Institut universitaire



Outline

- Context and guiding principles for the development of the *Estimation scale*
- Validation of the *Estimation scale*
- Development of tools
- Presentation of the *Estimation scale for suicidal danger*
- Highlights of implementation

Context for development of the *Estimation scale for suicidal danger*

- Over a six month period in 2006, 4 clients in substance abuse treatment die by suicide at the *Centre de réadaptation en dépendance de Montréal-Institut Universitaire* (formerly *Centre Dollard-Cormier – Institut universitaire sur les dépendances*)
- Analysis of the events showed that the estimation of danger was based solely on the suicide plan and did not take into account other risk and protective factors

Guiding principles for development of the *Estimation scale for suicidal danger*

- Estimation must not be limited to suicidal planning
- Emphasis placed on proximal factors closely tied to suicidal acts
- Factors placed on a continuum from protection to danger
- Estimation must take into account symptoms of mental illness
- Scale must rely on and support clinical judgement in decision-making

Validation

- The scale must reflect research and the opinion of expert clinicians
 - Review of literature and existing scales and assessment tools
 - Review of best-practice guides
 - Consultation with experts and focus groups with experienced clinicians
- The scale respects the guidelines set out by the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSLP) in 2007

Development of tools

- Identification of variables
- Creation of prototypes
- Development of a scoring guide
- Focus groups and consultation with experts
- Tests with experts using clinical case studies

Objectives for the *Estimation scale for suicidal danger*

Support decision-making:

- Better estimate the danger of suicidal acts
- Identify opportunities and promising areas for intervention
- Structure and support treatment planning and the choice of services to be offered according to the level of danger

NB: The *Scale* can only be applied with clients

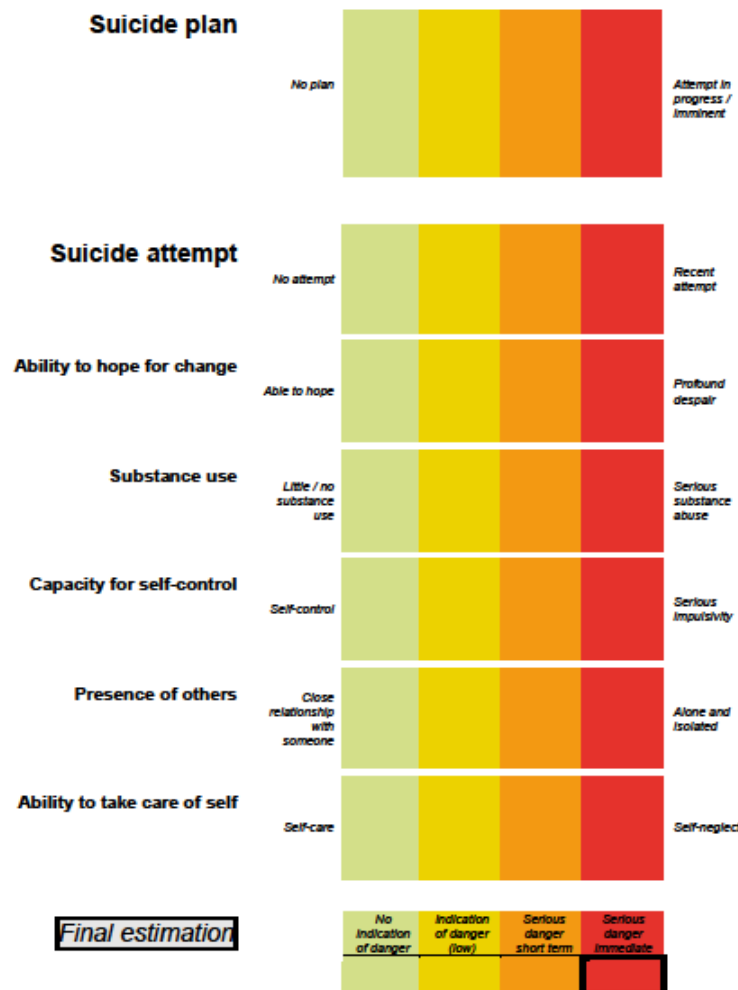
14 years of age and older

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

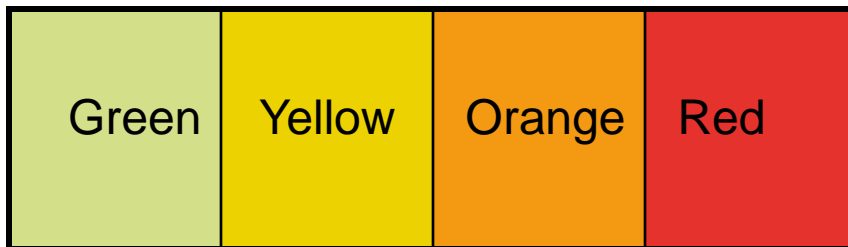
*To be used with the Scoring guide

Notes:

- Use of the *Estimation Scale* requires training
- The scale is accompanied by a scoring guide (available with training)
- The scale can only be applied with clients 14 years of age and older



4 colours



- Danger represented by colours rather than numbers
- Colours are already used in medical services, drug treatment, application of law P-38 (new: orange)
- Continuum from protection to risk
- Each of the criteria is evaluated

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Suicide plan

No plan



*Attempt in
progress/
imminent*

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Suicide attempt

*No
attempt*



*Recent
attempt*

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Ability to hope for change

*Able to
hope*



*Profound
despair*

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Substance use

*Little / no
substance
use*



*Serious
substance
abuse*

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Capacity for self-control



Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Presence of others

*Close
relationship
with
someone*



*Alone and
isolated*

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Ability to take care of self

Self-care



Self-neglect

Estimation scale for suicidal danger

Final estimation

No indication of danger	Indication of danger (low)	Serious danger short term	Serious danger imminent
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Highlights of implementation

- Recommended and recognized by the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services
- Accredited by the Quebec Association for Suicide Prevention
- Training recognized by the Quebec College of Psychologists
- More than 7000 mental health workers trained, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses and other professionals in public, private, and non-profit organizations

Recommended reading

Lavoie, B., Lecavalier, M., Angers, P., Houle, J. (2012).
Grille d'estimation de la dangerosité d'un passage à l'acte suicidaire : Fondements théoriques et pratiques. Centre Dollard-Cormier – Institut universitaire sur les dépendances et Suicide Action Montréal.

Available on the web site of Suicide Action Montreal:

<http://suicideactionmontreal.org/index.php?page=documentation>