



Board of County Commissioners

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MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioner Announces Health Department's QPR Training For Suicide Prevention

Hunterdon County Commissioner, Shaun Van Doren, announced at the recent board meeting that the County Health Department is now providing a free suicide prevention program for volunteers and agencies throughout the county entitled, "Question, Persuade, Refer" (or QPR, for short).

Commissioner Van Doren, who also serves as the liaison to the Health Department said, "QPR is an evidence-based program that provides skilled-based training, while raising the awareness of suicide prevention and warning signs. Training from this program may serve to provide strategies to help save lives.

Raising awareness about suicide and knowing the facts, could help dispel the many myths and misconceptions that surround mental health. Offering awareness regarding warning signs, can be the first step in intervention."

QPR Gatekeepers help is designed to create a community safety net; first by recognizing a person who is potentially at risk for suicide, by asking the tough **Question** and then **Persuade** the individual to seek help. Finally, **Refer** an at-risk person to a professional for evaluation and care. All these steps are believed to form a chain reaction that could help prevent someone from self-harm.

QPR Gatekeeper training is being offered by members of the Public Health Nursing staff to the County's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers, with anticipated sessions to be offered to more internal staff and health care partners.

Commissioner Van Doren shared in closing, "Additional details about the QPR program and other Health Department initiatives can be found in the recently published, Health Department summer newsletter that is available on the Health Department's website: www.co.hunterdon.nj.us"