

A STUDY ON CHRONIC PAIN, FINANCIAL STRESS, AND SUICIDAL THOUGHTS



Kate LaForge, MPH
Medical Sociology Ph.D. Student
kate.laforge@ucsf.edu



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Project overview

Background

- Rates of death by suicide in the US have increased 35% in the last twenty years¹
- People with chronic pain have about twice the risk of dying by suicide compared to those without chronic pain²
- Stress³ and job loss⁴ can contribute to risk of suicidality



Project
overview



Interviews



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Research aims

- To explore how chronic pain and financial stress influence suicidal thoughts.
- Identify and describe experiences, feelings, and ways of coping with financial stress, chronic pain, and suicidal thoughts.
- Build a conceptual model.



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overview



Interviews



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Why this study?

- Suicide research often focuses on individual level risk factors and neglects the socioeconomic context people live within⁵
- There is no qualitative research exploring the intersection of chronic pain, financial stress, and suicidal thoughts



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overview



Interviews



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Study team: Kate

- Interviews, analysis, and dissemination will be led by Kate LaForge:
 - PhD student in Medical Sociology at UCSF
 - Background in public health
 - Crisis Text Counselor
 - Big fan of cats, playing guitar, dance, and running around outside
 - Born and raised in Kansas



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Interviews



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Study team: Advisors

- Dr. Howard Pinderhughes, UCSF, sociologist with 25+ years of experience researching community violence and trauma
- Dr. Tony Yang, UCSF, board certified psychiatrist with 10+ years researching depression and suicide
- Colleagues at Comagine Health, mental health care providers across Oregon, and classmates at UCSF



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Interviews



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Interviews

Logistics

- Aim to interview ~25 people experiencing suicidal thoughts, chronic pain, and financial stress
- Data collection began in early 2022
- Will analyze data using constructivist grounded theory⁶



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Interviews



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Participant involvement

- One interview via phone or Zoom
- \$30 gift card to Amazon or Walmart which can be sent via email, text, or mail
- Interview guide will cover:
 - Chronic pain
 - Suicidal thoughts
 - Financial stress and work



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Interviews



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Eligibility

- Included if participants:
 - Have chronic pain
 - Suicidal thoughts within past 2 years
 - Experience financial stress
 - Have a healthcare provider
 - Live in Oregon
 - 18+
- Excluded if participants:
 - Are currently experiencing serious suicidal thoughts
 - Have been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons in the past 30 days



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Interviews



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Participant safety

- Previous research on suicide tell us that asking about suicide does NOT increase intent⁷
- Participants will be required to have a health care provider and provide their contact info
- Participants will be followed up with 1 day and 3 days after the interview (optional)
- Interview guide will include strength-based questions throughout and at the end to return participant to neutral ground⁸



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Interviews



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Participant respect

- Participants will be offered opportunities to become involved in suicide prevention efforts via research or advocacy
- Participants will be offered to receive all future dissemination materials
- Participants will be treated non-judgmentally and their privacy and autonomy will be prioritized
- Communication will be guided by participant preference



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Interviews



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Sharing results

- Publish an academic article in a sociology journal
- Create and disseminate a one-pager with study results
- Submit to present at a local conference
- Present at local community meetings



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Interviews



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Next steps

Interested in participating or helping with recruitment??

- I'm looking for participants!
- Interested in helping me recruit? This could involve:
 - Telling others about the study by word of mouth
 - Posting the study on a website
 - Including study flyer in a newsletter



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Interviews



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Let's talk!



Phone/text:
760-853-1543



Email:
kate.laforge@ucsf.edu

All conversations confidential.

References

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- 3.Chang, S. S., Stuckler, D., Yip, P., & Gunnell, D. (2013). Impact of 2008 global economic crisis on suicide: time trend study in 54 countries. *Bmj*, 347.
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