What to do about warning signs:

Call the suicide hot line for the county that you’re in (on the next panel of this brochure) ASAP. Avoid leaving the person alone. Discourage use of alcohol or drugs. Try to get her or him away from anything that might cause self-harm if this can be done safely.

When to get emergency help:

Seek immediate help if someone is:

- Voicing/e-mailing/texting that he or she is thinking of suicide
- Working out a specific suicide plan giving when and how
- Seeking a way to harm herself or himself (e.g., pills, gun, etc.)

Any one of these signals very high risk and you should:

- Call the local crisis center now or
- Ask if he or she will go to the nearest Emergency Department now
- If above are not doable call 911 now

SE PA Crisis Centers (24/7)

- Berks County
  SAM, Inc. 877-236-4600
- Bucks County
  Lenape Valley Fdn 800-499-7455
- Chester County
  Valley Creek Crisis Ctr 877-918-2100
- Delaware County
  CCMC 610-447-7600
  Fitzgerald Mercy 610-237-4210
- Montgomery County
  MCES 610-279-6102
- Philadelphia County
  Northeast 215-831-2600
  Northwest 215-951-8300
  North 215-707-2577
  CC/South 215-829-5249
  West/SW 215-748-8525
The weeks after a psychiatric hospital stay are a period of very high suicide risk for persons with serious mental illness. Most recently hospitalized persons do not have thoughts of suicide but you need to know what to look for and do.

Risk may come from again facing overwhelming stressors, not following treatment plans, using alcohol or other substances, and losing the around the clock structure, supervision, and support given by the hospital staff.

Strong suicide risk occurs when a compelling intent to die and the capability for lethal self-harm come together. The desire to die may lift during hospitalization, but the capability for lethal self-harm remains. Past attempts, abuse, and trauma create a risk baseline. Feeling socially disconnected or that he or she is a burden to others adds to risk.

Before discharge every patient should:
- Be assessed for suicide risk
- Know suicide risk warning signs
- Have a personal safety plan
- Know what to do if they feel suicidal
- Have information on crisis services

Warning signs of suicide risk include:
- Feeling trapped, losing control
- Increasing alcohol/drug use
- Withdrawing from family/friends
- Anxiety/agitation/sleep problems
- Mood changes
- All or nothing, black/white thinking
- Giving away favored items
- Making final arrangements

Some protective factors:
These can deter suicidal thoughts.
- Believing in the value of life
- Having reasons for living
- Strong social connections and supports
- Hope for future—optimistic outlook
- Spiritual beliefs against suicide
- Managing anger and impulsivity
- Sobriety
- Feeling of personal control
- Sense of self-worth and self-esteem
- Willingness to get help

For those receiving mental health care, following their treatment plan by keeping appointments with their therapist or psychiatrist and taking medications as prescribed may block or help reduce the onset of suicidal thoughts.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION
www.montcocares.org