



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Tuscarawas County Health Department

News Release—For Immediate Release 5/20/26

Contacts: Natalie Bollon, Executive Director, ADAMHS Board, 330-364-6488

“Tuscarawas County Leaders Provide Update to Suicide Prevention Efforts”

NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO — In March 2025, Tuscarawas County leaders announced a coordinated effort to address rising suicide rates after 21 county residents died by suicide in 2024. At that time, Tuscarawas County’s suicide rate exceeded the state average, with 22.9 suicide deaths per 100,000 residents compared to Ohio’s rate of 15.5 per 100,000. For reference, the Healthy People 2030 national target for suicide deaths is 12.8 or fewer per 100,000 population.

County officials are encouraged to report that suicide deaths among Tuscarawas County residents decreased to 18 in 2025.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and serves as an important opportunity to provide an update on local suicide prevention initiatives and encourage continued community involvement. Through the efforts of county leaders, partner organizations, and volunteers during 2025, the following projects were accomplished:

- Sixty community members completed “Question, Persuade, Refer” (QPR) suicide prevention gatekeeper training. QPR equips individuals who are not mental health professionals with the skills to recognize suicide warning signs and connect individuals with appropriate resources and support.
- Five local professionals attended the Stark Suicide Symposium to learn evidence-based prevention strategies from national experts.
- Nearly 400 suicide prevention mailers were distributed through the Tuscarawas County Courthouse to families experiencing domestic challenges.
- Hundreds of 988 Crisis Lifeline and ManTherapy.org educational materials were distributed at local events and organizations throughout the county.

The Tuscarawas County Suicide Prevention Task Force continues to work closely with the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation and Life Side Ohio to expand prevention efforts through 2026 and beyond. Current initiatives include developing partnerships with firearm

retailers, shooting ranges, and hunting organizations to promote suicide prevention awareness and responsible firearm safety messaging.

“While we are encouraged to see a slight decline in suicide deaths over the past year, 18 deaths are still far too many,” explained Natalie Bollon, Executive Director of the ADAMHS Board of Tuscarawas and Carroll Counties. “We remain committed to leading countywide efforts focused on awareness, prevention, and access to care. Partnerships with healthcare providers are helping identify individuals at risk earlier, and plans are underway to host an expanded suicide prevention event later this year. If you or someone you know is struggling, help is available by calling 988 or 330-343-1811, or by visiting Rapid Care Behavioral Health in New Philadelphia.”

Tuscarawas County Health Commissioner Katie Seward emphasized the importance of continued prevention efforts and understanding local trends. “For as long as suicide continues to impact our families, friends, coworkers, and neighbors, our work must continue,” Seward said. “Of the 18 suicide deaths among Tuscarawas County residents in 2025, 17 involved males and one involved a female. Contributing factors identified included recent domestic or relationship-related challenges in 39% of cases, a recent serious or declining health diagnosis in 28% of cases, and 72% of suicide deaths occurring among individuals aged 50 and older.”

Tuscarawas County Coroner and Tuscarawas County Health Department Medical Director Dr. Jeff Cameron noted that suicide remains a significant public health concern. “In recent years, my office has continued to see a growing number of suicide deaths involving men,” Cameron said. “As a community, we must continue reaching out to those around us and reinforce that seeking help is a sign of strength. Every life matters.”

Current suicide prevention initiatives in Tuscarawas County include the following:

- **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Trainings:** Community members are encouraged to participate in QPR suicide prevention training. The training teaches participants three simple steps that may help save a life. Sessions are approximately two hours long and offered free of charge. Businesses and organizations interested in hosting a training may contact the ADAMHS Board at 330-364-6488
- **ManTherapy.org:** ManTherapy.org offers a free, approachable online resource designed to support men experiencing anxiety, depression, stress, or suicidal thoughts. Promotional materials for the program have been distributed throughout Tuscarawas County, and additional resources are available through the ADAMHS Board.
- **Suicide Prevention Task Force:** The ADAMHS Board and Empower Tusc continue to collaborate with community organizations through the Tuscarawas County Suicide

Prevention Task Force. Four focused subcommittees are addressing identified local trends, including suicide deaths among men aged 50 and older, firearm-related suicides, suicide deaths associated with relationship or domestic issues, and suicide deaths involving individuals with life-altering health diagnoses.

For more information about suicide prevention efforts in Tuscarawas County or to learn how you can help, call the ADAMHS Board at 330-364-6488.

###