

MEDIA RELEASE**Sept 21, 2026****Every Life Matters: CK Public Health Encourages Those in Crisis to Reach Out for Help**

CK Public Health is reminding residents that deaths related to suicide are preventable and that support is available for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis.

Speaking at the recent Chatham-Kent Board of Health meeting, Dr. Shanker Nesathurai, Medical Officer of Health for CK Public Health, highlighted the stigma surrounding suicide and stressed the importance of reducing that stigma.

"One of the most important messages we can share with someone who is struggling is that they matter," Dr. Nesathurai said. "They are loved, they are wanted, and the world would be a lesser place without them."

Deaths related to suicide are a significant public health issue in Chatham Kent. Across Ontario, approximately 1,500 people die by suicide each year, a number that significantly exceeds deaths resulting from motor vehicle collisions. In Chatham-Kent, approximately 150 people have died by suicide over the past decade.

Dr. Nesathurai emphasized that suicide is preventable and highlighted the importance of open conversations, timely support, and reducing barriers to care.

Dr. Nesathurai also noted that many suicide attempts are impulsive. The evidence shows that limiting access to means of self-harm, including firearms, unauthorized medications, and high-risk locations, can save lives by creating time and space for intervention and support.

CK Public Health remains committed to promoting mental wellness, reducing stigma, and supporting evidence-based approaches that protect lives.

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