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Further training in suicide prevention activities

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The University of Oslo and the Suicide Research and Prevention Unit (Norwegian acronym SSFF) have long had plans to establish further training in suicide prevention activities. Both the Norwegian Board of Health and SSFF believe that such a training programme is needed. The Norwegian Board of Health has included this as a special item in the "Follow-up project – suicide prevention programme".

Starting in August this year the undersigned has been employed as an Educational Consultant, and the responsibilities have included planning further education. Preparations are well under way, and we estimate that we will commence activities in spring 2002.

As we are in the middle of the planning process it is difficult to provide specific and detailed information. We are nevertheless fairly certain that the framework will be approximately as outlined here:

The course, corresponding to 20 credits, will be part-time study over a period of two years. Each semester will have a number of week-long sessions. These will generally be held in Oslo, but we also intend to arrange some of the meetings regionally. This will allow us to draw on regional resources and also distribute travel expenses more evenly. In addition to the meetings Internet-based learning is planned.

For content, emphasis will be placed on a broad review of topics connected to the understanding of and attitudes to suicidal behaviour, the planning and implementation of various types of suicide prevention programmes, information distribution, guidance etc.

Students will be adults who are health and social care professionals with practical work experience. A number of the first students will most likely be professionals currently engaged in suicide prevention activities in one form or another, and who feel a need to improve their expertise. (This is, however, no requirement.) In effect this means students who have a great deal of knowledge on various levels. Bearing this in mind, we will use pedagogical methods that take this expertise into consideration.

SSFF is currently purchasing relevant literature so that our library will cover most aspects of the suicidology field.

Attending such a course of studies will entail expenses for each student, and we would urge that agreements be entered into with the employer to cover these expenses and also for the necessary leave of absence.

For further information please contact SSFF.

About the author:

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