



Suicide Risk Assessment		Risk Rating	
Present Risk Factors	No (✓)	Yes (✓)	Notes
Currents thoughts of suicide <i>“How often do you think of killing yourself? Is it hard for you to get those thoughts of suicide out of your head?”</i>			
Suicide plan and method <i>“Have you thought about how you would kill yourself? When do you intend to do it?”</i>			
Availability <i>“Do you have access to the means to kill yourself?”</i>			
Rescue <i>“Would you try and kill yourself while alone or with others nearby?”</i>			
Previous attempts or threats of suicide <i>“Have you ever tried or threatened to kill yourself before?”</i>			
<i>Did it change the way you felt? Tell me about it?</i>			
Alcohol and drug use <i>“Do you think about or use alcohol and other drugs? How often? How much each time?”</i>			
Lack of social supports <i>“Is there anyone who really understands and cares about you and what you are experiencing?”</i>			
Loss of hope <i>“Do you have any hope that your life will get better?”</i>			

Based on the above information, estimate the current level of risk and the urgency for clinical intervention. (place an X on the scale below)

Low	Intermediate	High
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(from Australian Guidelines for general practitioners: Edwards and Pfaff, 1997)

The type of checklist which is recommended by the authors of this report is one where the various symptoms are clustered into categories of low, moderate and high risk. The advantage is that it does not assume a linear relationship between the number of risk factors present and the total risk. For instance, if the only expressed risk factor is that the young person is planning to hang him/herself and he/she has the means to do it, then this alone constitutes a serious risk.

The various risk factors for suicide have been classified into one of three broad categories in Table 1: Assessment of young people at risk of suicide (next page). It is recommended that counsellors use the table to assess the risk of suicide in young people who are referred to them.