

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline—Older Adults Survey

Introduction

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national resource that connects people of all ages who are experiencing mental distress with support. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) offers 24/7 call, text, and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal thoughts, substance use, mental health crises, and any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline if they are worried about a friend, family member, or loved one who may need crisis support.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has partnered with Public Sector Consultants, a Lansing-based research firm, to gather input on the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline from adults aged 60 and older. Our goal is to hear your experiences, recommendations, and concerns to ensure that Michigan's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline call centers are prepared to better support older adults. It is especially important to MDHHS that the diverse experiences of Michigan's older adults are carefully considered and incorporated into Michigan's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline outreach and education efforts. Your time, experience, feedback, and perspectives are valued and appreciated.

Discussing and reliving mental and behavioral health crises is challenging. If during or after taking the survey you feel in need of support, please call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988 to receive anonymous support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This service is free to everyone and will still be accessible if you choose not to participate in the survey.

Please know that anything you share in the survey will remain anonymous and will be combined with answers from other individuals taking the survey, so individual respondents cannot be identified.

Thank you for your time—your input ensures the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a more connected, capable, and useful resource for people in our communities.

Directions

You can either take this survey online using the QR code, by typing in this link (**<https://bit.ly/988Survey>**), or by returning this paper copy.

Please fill in the circles for your answers completely. This is a two-sided survey—please flip each page over to fill in all the questions. The survey should take about ten minutes to complete and closes Friday, August 16, 2024.



Survey Questions

1. This survey is intended for adults aged 60 and older. How old are you?

- ☐ a. 60–69
- ☐ b. 70–79
- ☐ c. 80–89
- ☐ d. 90 or older

2. Which county do you live in?

3. Have you ever struggled with your mental health? Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

- ☐ a. Yes
- ☐ b. No
- ☐ c. I don't know

If no, you have not struggled with your mental health, skip to question 6.

4. If yes, you have struggled with your mental health, how do you seek mental health support?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ a. Call a helpline
- ☐ b. Talk to a trusted friend or family member
- ☐ c. Connect with a care provider
- ☐ d. Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ e. I have not sought mental health support

5. If yes, you have struggled with your mental health, what gets in the way of you reaching out for help? **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ a. I feel afraid or ashamed
- ☐ b. I am not sure reaching out will help
- ☐ c. I had a bad experience previously
- ☐ d. Reaching out has taken too long in the past
- ☐ e. I don't know how to find someone to talk to
- ☐ f. Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ g. I was able to reach out for help without any issues

6. Have you ever contacted a crisis line for yourself or someone else? A crisis line is a phone number people can call to get immediate telephone counseling by trained specialists.

- ☐ a. Yes, for myself
- ☐ b. Yes, for someone else
- ☐ c. No, I have not contacted a crisis line

If **no**, you have not contacted a crisis line, skip to question 11.

7. If **yes**, you have contacted a crisis line, which crisis line did you contact?

8. If **yes**, you have contacted a crisis line, did you receive the help you needed?

- ☐ a. Yes, for myself
- ☐ b. No
- ☐ c. I don't know

9. What, if anything, could have been done to provide a better experience?

10. If **yes, you have contacted a crisis line**, did you receive the help you needed?

- ☐ a. Yes
- ☐ b. No
- ☐ c. I don't know

11. Have you ever heard or seen information about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

- ☐ a. Yes
- ☐ b. No
- ☐ c. I don't know

If **no, you have not seen information about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**, skip to question 13.

12. If yes, you have heard or seen information about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, where have you heard or seen information about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ a. Social media
- ☐ b. News story
- ☐ c. Television ad
- ☐ d. Radio
- ☐ e. Friends or family
- ☐ f. Work
- ☐ g. Community center
- ☐ h. Local business
- ☐ i. School
- ☐ j. Medical setting (doctor's office, urgent care, etc.)
- ☐ k. Other (please describe): _____

13. Please indicate your likelihood of contacting a crisis line like the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline under the following circumstances:

| | Not at all likely | Not very likely | Somewhat likely | Very likely |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. How likely would you be to contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline if you were experiencing a mental health crisis like deep depression, sadness, loneliness, anxious thoughts, substance use, or thoughts of suicide? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. How likely would you be to contact a crisis line like the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline if someone else you knew was experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

14. What concerns might you have that would prevent you from calling the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ a. I would prefer to speak to someone I know
- ☐ b. I would prefer to speak to someone in person
- ☐ c. I am unsure how to express what I am feeling
- ☐ d. I do not want to worry anyone I speak with
- ☐ e. I do not have a private location where I can speak with someone
- ☐ f. I worry the information I share may not be anonymous
- ☐ g. I am concerned the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline staff may not understand older adults
- ☐ h. I feel there are not resources to refer me to that are available in my community
- ☐ i. I worry I may not find the resources/referrals useful
- ☐ j. I feel that the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a service for others, not people like me
- ☐ k. Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ l. I would not have any concerns

15. What would be important to you when reaching out to a mental health crisis line?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ a. Empathetic listening
- ☐ b. Speaking to someone who understands the experiences of older adults
- ☐ c. Receiving referrals to age- and culturally appropriate resources
- ☐ d. Being connected to useful resources
- ☐ e. Anonymity
- ☐ f. Receiving follow-up after the call
- ☐ g. Being offered tools and/or coping mechanisms
- ☐ h. Knowing I can call again if needed
- ☐ i. Reassurance that it is okay that I called
- ☐ j. Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ k. Unsure

16. If you call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, what would you expect to occur before the call is over? **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ a. Being in a more positive mental state
- ☐ b. Feeling more supported than before the call
- ☐ c. Feeling relief at being able to express my concerns
- ☐ d. Having access to additional resources
- ☐ e. Having next steps identified to handle future crisis situations
- ☐ f. Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ g. Unsure

17. Are there any resources or recommendations for how to better support older adults that you think we should share with 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline team members?

Thank you for your trust and your time. Your feedback has been vital in helping us ensure that Michigan's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline staff can provide highly effective and tailored support to older adults. All answers will remain anonymous and will be combined with other responses. If you have any questions, please reach out to Public Sector Consultants at elammers@publicsectorconsultants.com.

We understand that answering this survey may have stirred unexpected emotions. If you need support, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is always available by dialing 988.