

Section 4 - Post-Suicidal Episode Follow-Up (SPP-F)

This step is often overlooked and often, people with ID or ASD do not wish to re-discuss a MAAS episode once it is over. Many professionals are also reluctant to revisit the question, often concerned about provoking a recurrence of suicidal ideations.

However, it is important to follow-up within an appropriate period of time for the situation, for several reasons:

- A MAAS episode can last longer than it appears after the initial expression of suicidal ideations
- There is a natural fluctuation to suicidality and danger. It is important to properly verify that the MAAS episode has run its course and that it is not a transient fluctuation.
- A follow up allows to enrich the understanding of the consequences of a MAAS episode and its progress over time.
- It allows to adjust the action plan in relation to the person's evolution and to verify the effectiveness of interventions performed during the suicidal episode.
- A follow-up is part of the process of "taking MAAS seriously" and shows the person that what happened is taken into account and is important.

The follow-up bases itself on the results of the initial assessment and is done in the form of informal discussions or formal interventions with the person, based on the situation and their needs.

Following up is important after an observable suicidal episode. The fact that the MAAS seem too have disappeared is not a reliable indicator that the person no longer thinks of suicide. In addition, as in other situations of distress and disorganisation, and as illustrated in Figure 8, ideations can fluctuate with time over a long or short period, according to the person's ability to solve problems and use help resources. This case illustrates a situation where MAAS are persistent but not perceptible because they have not been explored (see figure 9).

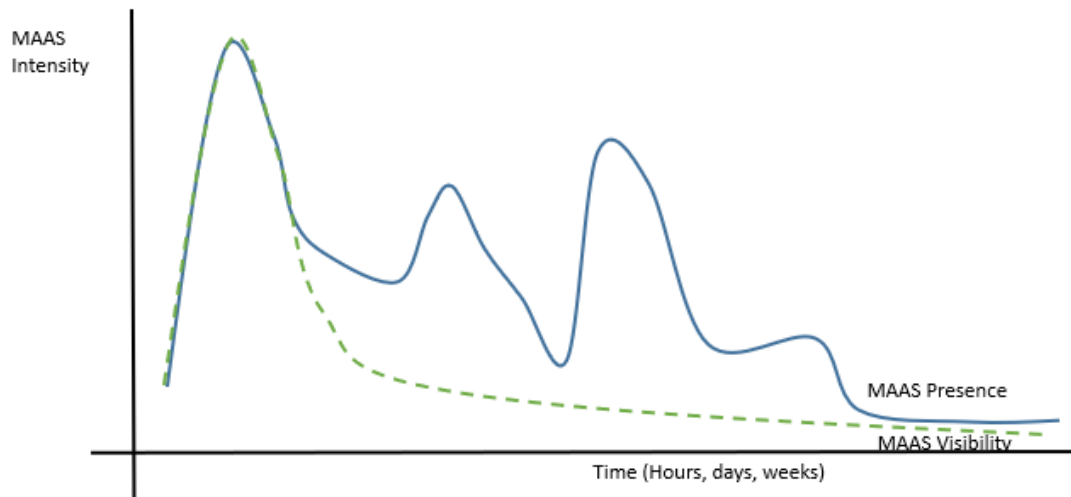


Figure 9 - Illustration of MAAS variation over time

General Structure of the follow-up process

The follow-up step is based on the structure below:



Managing the suicidal episode-Post-Suicidal episode follow-up

When? Within hours or days following the initial MAAS episode, based on the level of danger and the person's needs



Name, Last name :		Follow up date :	
Name of person conducting follow up:		Relationship with person :	
<p>Information to collect: Indicators on which to base your clinical judgment about the evolution of the danger of suicide and of the episode</p> <p>Changes in the MAAS Types of MAAS present at follow-up: Verbal/ Non-verbal communication, behaviours, thoughts Elements of planification present at follow-up: Method/means, time, location preparations for death, danger at follow-up, access to method, lethality of method (real and perceived by person), planning ability</p> <p>Changes in trigger events</p> <p>Critical moments/trigger events identified at follow-up Ongoing or anticipated, positive and more difficult moments within the last few days, since initial MAAS episode</p> <p>Changes in current risk and protective factors Proximal risk factors that may increase the danger level at follow up</p> <p>Protective factors present at follow-up</p>	Observer	<p>Observe: Collected information Source: Questions to person, observations, questions to professionals or close persons, person's file</p>	
	Decider	<p>Decide: Decision based on the changes in the episode and the level of danger</p> <p>Changes in the level of short-term danger for the person:</p>	
	Agir	<p>Act: Intervene to adjust the action plan based on the evolution of the person's needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase or reduce the security measures put into place - Adjust the action plan - Plan the next follow-up 	

Follow-up objectives as part of suicidal episode management

The objectives of the Post-suicidal episode follow-up are:

- Verify that the MAAS episode has run its course and that it is not a transient fluctuation. (Natural fluctuation to suicidality and danger)
- Enrich the understanding of the consequences of a MAAS episode and its progress over time. (A MAAS episode can last longer than it appears after the initial expression of suicidal ideations)
- Adjust the plan according to the person's evolution
- Verify the effectiveness of interventions performed during the management of the suicidal episode.
- Show the person that what happened is taken into account and is important (as part of the process of "taking MAAS seriously")

Observe: Sources of information and follow-up indicators

The follow-up allows, a few days after the implementation of the Suicide Prevention Plan - Episode (SPP-E), to redo a summary evaluation in order to verify:

- Changes in the MAAS
 - **Types of MAAS present during follow-up** (Verbal/ Non-verbal communication, behaviours, thoughts)
 - Elements of planification present at follow-up
 - Method/means, time, location, preparations for death
 - Danger at follow-up
 - Access to method, lethality of method (both real and perceived by person), planning ability

- Changes in trigger events
 - **Critical moments/trigger events identified at follow-up**
 - Ongoing or anticipated
 - Positive and more difficult moments within the last few days
 - Since initial MAAS episode

- Changes in current risk and protective factors
 - Proximal risk factors that may increase the danger level at follow-up
 - **Protective factors present at follow-up**

Decide: Decision made from analysis

The central questions at the follow-up are:

- Are there any changes in the person's short-term danger? Yes/no
- Are adaptations to the SPP-E necessary? Yes/no

Act: Intervene to adapt the management of the suicidal episode

If an adaptation to the SPP-E is necessary, it must be based on changes observed during the collection of information of the follow-up. The adaptations are meant to increase or reduce the close monitoring, adjust interventions and the intensity of the implemented measures.

To conclude, a subsequent follow-up must be planned as needed.