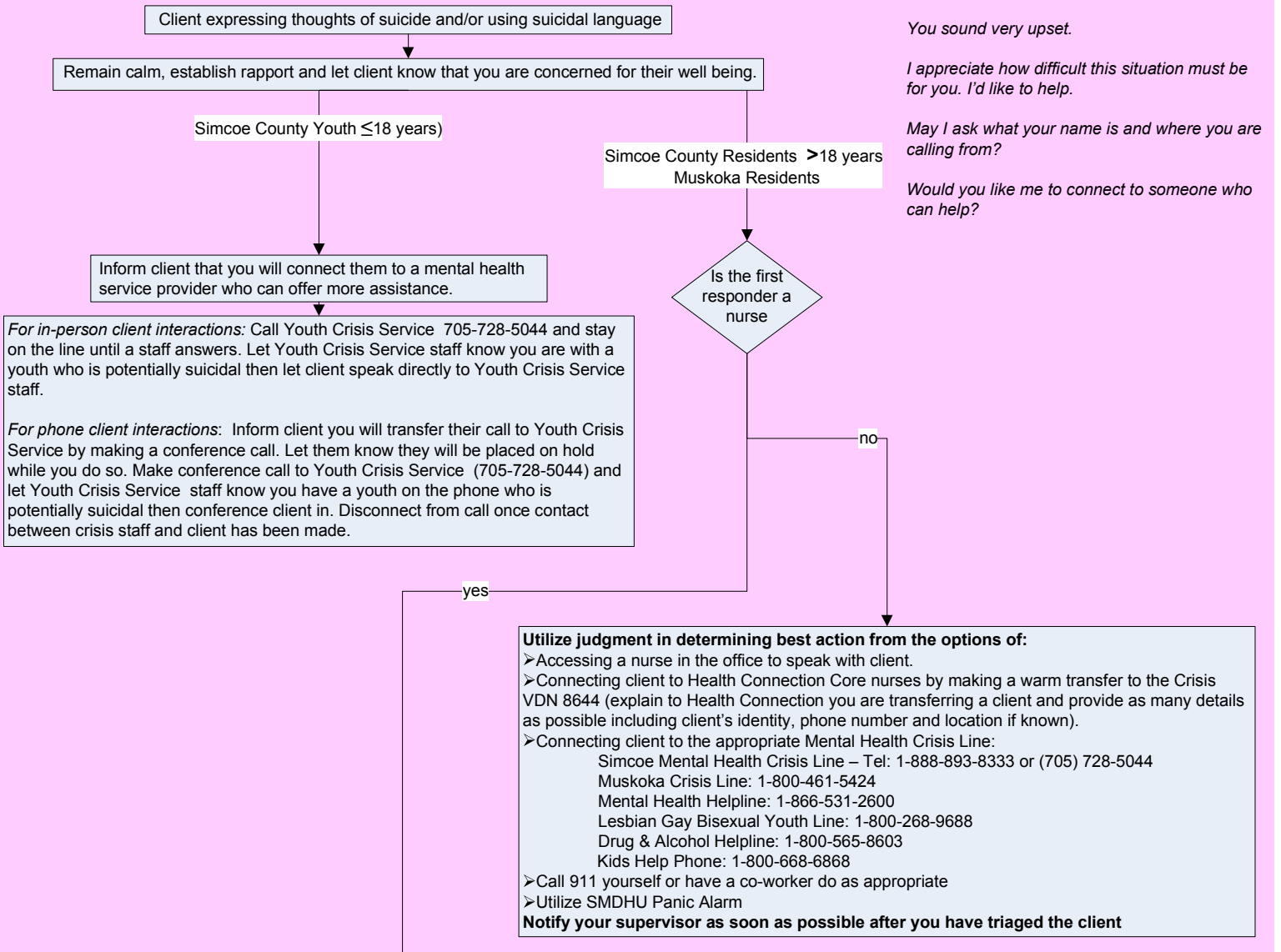This algorithm is for any staff faced with a situation where a client is using suicidal language. The client contact may either be in person or over the phone. Clients who are in crisis may be suicidal. A crisis occurs when a person is confronted with a critical incident or stressful event that is perceived as overwhelming despite the use of traditional problem-solving and coping strategies.

First Responder

Client expressing thoughts of suicide and/or using suicidal language

Remain calm, establish rapport and let client know that you are concerned for their well being.

Simcoe County Youth ≤18 years)

Simcoe County Residents >18 years
Muskoka Residents

Is the first responder a nurse

Suggestions for building rapport.

You sound very upset.

I appreciate how difficult this situation must be for you. I'd like to help.

May I ask what your name is and where you are calling from?

Would you like me to connect to someone who can help?

Inform client that you will connect them to a mental health service provider who can offer more assistance.

For in-person client interactions: Call Youth Crisis Service 705-728-5044 and stay on the line until a staff answers. Let Youth Crisis Service staff know you are with a youth who is potentially suicidal then let client speak directly to Youth Crisis Service staff.

For phone client interactions: Inform client you will transfer their call to Youth Crisis Service by making a conference call. Let them know they will be placed on hold while you do so. Make conference call to Youth Crisis Service (705-728-5044) and let Youth Crisis Service staff know you have a youth on the phone who is potentially suicidal then conference client in. Disconnect from call once contact between crisis staff and client has been made.

no

yes

Utilize judgment in determining best action from the options of:
➢Accessing a nurse in the office to speak with client.
➢Connecting client to Health Connection Core nurses by making a warm transfer to the Crisis VDN 8644 (explain to Health Connection you are transferring a client and provide as many details as possible including client's identity, phone number and location if known).
➢Connecting client to the appropriate Mental Health Crisis Line:
   Simcoe Mental Health Crisis Line – Tel: 1-888-893-8333 or (705) 728-5044
   Muskoka Crisis Line: 1-800-461-5424
   Mental Health Helpline: 1-866-531-2600
   Lesbian Gay Bisexual Youth Line: 1-800-268-9688
   Drug & Alcohol Helpline: 1-800-565-8603
   Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
➢Call 911 yourself or have a co-worker do as appropriate
➢Utilize SMDHU Panic Alarm
Notify your supervisor as soon as possible after you have triaged the client

Nurse

Assess the issue/ Ask questions about
➢precipitating events
➢active suicide planning: current ideation, intent, plan, access to means,
➢substance use/abuse
➢reasons to live .
➢existence of supports/resources.
➢mental health history

Alert co-worker, if available and let then know you may need help.

Are any warning signs present?
➢threatening to kill or hurt self
➢suicide plan in place
➢seeking or access to available means e.g. pills, weapons
➢steps taken to carry out plan
➢previous suicide attempt

yes

no

Link to Mental Health Crisis Line for client.

For in-person interactions make call for client; stay on line until a staff answers; explain you are with a client who is potentially suicidal then let client speak directly to staff.
For phone interactions inform client that you will transfer their call to the crisis line by establishing a conference call; make conference call; let crisis staff know that you have a potentially suicidal client on the line; disconnect from call once contact between crisis staff and client has been made.
For electronic interactions contact crisis line staff and provide client's contact information if available otherwise reply to client urging them to seek help by phone; provide crisis lines phone numbers and HC phone number and hours of operation.

Problem solve and develop action plan with client -refer/ link client with community resources/supports e.g. mental health services, doctor

Document interaction

Notify your Manager and Human Resource Advisor or designates as required

Debrief with your manager or designate as required

Document interaction

Suggested Questions: **You want to set the stage for the client that these questions are part of the overall assessment of the current issue/problem**

I understand how difficult this must be for you at this time and it's common for people in situations like yours to feel overwhelmed , may even have suicidal thoughts. There is help available to get you through this difficult time.

Are you feeling hopeless about the present/future?

* Are you thinking of killing yourself?

*Have you decide how you will kill yourself?

*Have you decided when you would do it?

*Have you taken any steps to secure the things you would need to carry out your plan?

*Have you attempted suicide before?

Have you been drinking alcohol or using drugs?

If client answers yes to any ***** *question they should be connected directly to the appropriate mental health crisis line.*

Mental Health Crisis Lines:
Simcoe Mental Health Crisis: 1-888-893-8333 or 705-728-5044
Simcoe Youth Crisis Service :705- 728-5044
Muskoka Crisis: 1-800-461-5424
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