



**For more information:**

Jim Dissett

303-532-7392

[PR@gritdigitalhealth.com](mailto:PR@gritdigitalhealth.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New Online Tool for Lethal Means Counseling  
Demonstrates Promise for Prevention of Suicide**

*Developed by the co-creator of YOU at College, 'Lock to Live' provides guidance on reducing access to potential suicide methods during times of acute crisis*

**DENVER, February 27, 2020** – Voluntarily reducing access to medications and firearms is an important step in suicide prevention, yet previous work suggests that many people experiencing suicidal thoughts receive little to no counseling on such preventive measures, according to a new study published by the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*.

To combat this lack of awareness and education, [YOU at College](#) developer [Grit Digital Health](#) partnered with the [University of Colorado School of Medicine](#) and the [Anschutz Medical Campus](#) to create "[Lock to Live](#)," a new online "decision aid" to counsel those experiencing suicidal ideation toward safe storage of lethal means during times of crisis. The tool is now included as a resource for all students using the YOU at College platform. The aforementioned study, a pilot randomized control trial, tested the effectiveness of Lock to Live and received promising results.

"About 20 percent of college students consider suicide at some point during their college career, so we're very encouraged by the results of this trial, which demonstrate the value of educating individuals on how to manage dangerous materials when experiencing suicidal thoughts," said Joe Conrad, chief executive officer and founder of Grit Digital Health. "This study is exactly the type of scientific validity we seek for all of our mental health solutions."

Lock to Live is a self-administered online tool that guides a person through detailed questions on personal preferences for storage of lethal harm methods. Once completed, Lock to Live displays storage or disposal options for firearms and medications, including logistical considerations like cost and legal issues provided in an easily printed format. The pilot trial for Lock to Live was completed at three large emergency departments in Colorado to test the feasibility and receptivity of the tool for adults with suicidal thoughts and/or behaviors. The [results](#) were published in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*.



Over 10 months, 49 adult patients were enrolled in the trial, with 33 randomized to the Lock to Live intervention group and 16 to the control group. Results indicate that:

- Interest in the Lock to Live resource was very high among adults with acute suicide risk. Almost all reported they would recommend it to someone in the same situation.
- Participants overwhelmingly found the tool to be useful, informative and respectful of their values with regard to firearm ownership.
- 73 percent wanted a print out of the storage recommendations.

In addition, the tool proved to be feasible for use in a clinical setting. There were no issues accessing the content via tablet in the emergency department and utilizing the tool didn't interrupt the patient experience, taking only six minutes to complete.

"Efforts in healthcare settings, like providing this tool to change how dangerous items are stored, can make a big difference for people in crisis," said Emmy Betz, MD, MPH, associate professor of emergency medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and director of the project. "This isn't about gun control. It's about helping people take action to keep themselves and their loved ones safe during tough times."

#### **About YOU at College**

YOU at College is a student-centric digital platform that connects students to the right resources at the right time to address the well-being challenges facing every campus. YOU helps students design their ultimate college experience by comprehensively addressing campus connections, academics, physical health, and mental well-being. YOU at College was developed by [Grit Digital Health](#), LLC in partnership with Colorado State University. For more information, visit [youatcollege.com](http://youatcollege.com).

#### **About the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus**

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is a world-class medical destination at the forefront of transformative science, medicine, education, and patient care. The campus encompasses the University of Colorado health professional schools, more than 60 centers and institutes, and two nationally ranked hospitals that treat more than 2 million adult and pediatric patients each year. Innovative, interconnected and highly collaborative, together we deliver life-changing treatments, patient care, professional training, and conduct world-renowned research powered by more than \$550 million in research awards. For more information, visit <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/>.

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