

# North Lanarkshire Council

## Report

### Adult Health and Social Care Committee

approval  noting

Ref ...

Date 9 May 2019

### Suicide Safer Communities

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#### Executive Summary

This report is to advise committee of the content and associated work of the national and local Suicide Prevention Action Plans.

The Scottish Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2018 “Every Life Matters” (Appendix 1) notes that death by suicide should be regarded as neither acceptable nor inevitable and that Scotland has made real progress in the last decade addressing this issue.

The Plan describes the National vision and key strategic aims as:

1. people at risk of suicide feel able to ask for help, and have access to skilled staff and well-coordinated support;
2. people affected by suicide are not alone;
3. suicide is no longer stigmatised
4. we provide better support to those bereaved by suicide; and
5. through learning and improvement, minimising the risk of suicide by delivering better services and building stronger, more connected communities.

The eight local priority areas for suicide prevention within North Lanarkshire with recommendations for actions are set out in the North Lanarkshire Suicide Prevention Action Plan (2018/2019) (Appendix 2)

Within North Lanarkshire a multi-agency suicide prevention partnership was set up in 2018 to implement the national and local strategies via a range of activities. This group meets regularly, overviews actions and agrees joint initiatives.

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#### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Health and Social Care Committee:

1. Approve the content of the report

2. Approve the work plan
3. Request an updated Suicide Prevention Action Plan for a future Committee
4. Remits the report to the IJB for approval of direction of travel

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## Supporting Documents

### The plan for North Lanarkshire

- Improve the health and care of communities
- Support all children to realise their full potential
- Improve relationships with communities and the third sector
- Reducing inequalities
- Prevention and early intervention
- Targeting resources to those most in need
- Enhancing self-help abilities
- The use of creative and innovative solutions

### Appendix 1

The Scottish Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2018 “Every Life Matters”

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-suicide-prevention-action-plan-life-matters/>

### Appendix 2

North Lanarkshire Suicide Prevention Action Plan (2018/2019)

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=21770&p=0>

## 1. Background

According to the World Health Organisation (2018) suicide is a major public health issue and has a wide ranging impact on families, communities and society. Suicide is also the leading cause of death for young adults. Within Scotland the National Suicide Prevention Action Plan “Every Life Matters”, (Appendix 1) suggests that suicides are not inevitable and many can be prevented and asks that there is local coordinated integrated multi-agency agreement on the delivery of suicide prevention services addressing local need which coordinates service users and community contribution.

Scottish Suicide Information Database (ScotSID) note that:

- There were 620 suicides registered in Scotland in 2017, compared to 728 in 2016.

- As annual numbers tend to fluctuate from year to year, five year rolling average rates are used for monitoring progress. Based on these five-year rolling averages, the suicide rate decreased between 2002-2006 and 2012-2017. There has been a downward trend in suicide rates with an overall decrease of 17%.
- In 2017, the suicide rates for males was more than 2.5 times that for females.
- In 2012-2017, the suicide rate was more than 2.5 times higher in the most deprived tenth of the population (decile) compared to the least deprived decile (21.3 deaths per 100,000 population compared to 7.6).
- While suicide rates are strongly related to deprivation level, this difference or inequality has decreased between 2002-2006 and 2012-2017).
- The rate of suicide (European age-sex-standardised rates per 100,000 population) 2012 – 2016 across North Lanarkshire was 13.6. This is lower than the Scottish average of 14.1. The rate of suicide for males in North Lanarkshire was 20.8 (compared to a Scottish average of 20.9). The rate of suicides for females in North Lanarkshire was 6.4 (compared to a Scottish average of 7.3).

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## 2. Report

### 2.1 Current and Planned Work

The local action plan as delivered by the Partnership Group relates to suicide prevention for both children and adults, the aims are detailed below.

1. Reducing the risk of suicide in high risk groups.
2. Tailoring approaches to improve mental and physical health in specific groups.
3. Reducing access to means of suicide, including identified Locations of Concern.
4. Learning from investigations and reviews into unexpected deaths.
5. Providing better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide.
6. Supporting research, data collection and monitoring.
7. Building community capacity to help reduce the stigma and taboo associated with suicide.

The Suicide Prevention Partnership group is a multi-agency group which aims to promote the national and local suicide prevention strategies via a range of activities including awareness raising and training across services and local communities. The partnership members include:

- NHSL
- Independent Sector
- Education
- Police Scotland
- CAMHS
- NL Leisure

The objectives of the group are as follows

- To oversee and support suicide prevention work in North Lanarkshire.
- To work with partners to develop specific activities around suicide prevention in line with current research and demographic information.
- To oversee and evaluate the impact of suicide prevention work to ensure that the quality of such activities is sustained.
- To keep abreast of the national suicide prevention agenda promoted by Choose Life and to be informed to ensure a sound dialogue exists which in turn will inform future activities and events.

## 2.2 Working with young people in schools

Suicide is a difficult topic for any age group. There is growing evidence that suicide impacts on school children and statistics show that over 200 school children are lost to suicide every year in the UK.

North Lanarkshire Suicide Safer Schools proposal has been developed in line with the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and in Partnership with Education. This initiative will be progressed through the Education and Families senior management team to:

- Develop a policy document to guide suicide prevention work in schools. This includes guidelines on how to prevent suicides, how to intervene with someone who is actively suicidal and how to handle a situation where someone has taken or tried to take their life.
- Develop, deliver and sustain a programme to raise awareness of the prevalence of suicide, how to spot signs and what to do to provide support.
- Ensure all schools are familiar with local resources and trained helpers in their communities.

## 2.3 Public Awareness

Recent work given the prevalence and risk within the population has included developing and delivering:

- *SPNLC App* – The Suicide Prevention North Lanarkshire App is available for download and gives practical advice on how to start difficult conversations around suicide. The app is also geo fenced around locations of concern, a helpline number flashes up on the screen as people enter that location.
- *RU That Guy* Text messaging campaign – targeted at young males, encouraging them to check in with each other and start difficult conversations about suicide.
- *RU Good*, Graffiti campaign and grass roots youth shirt sponsor.
- Targeted online promotion through Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.
- Media promotion, local and national.
- Pin badge conversation piece.
- Local sporting sponsorship, Cumbernauld 10K, OVO Tour race series, NLC Schools Pipe Band, four professional football clubs.
- Seven aside football and Netball Tournament for adults.
- Football and netball tournament for senior school pupils.

## 2.4 Suicide Reviews

When a suicide takes place in NHS Lanarkshire, there is an internal review undertaken to consider learning to improve services, identify and manage risk. When relevant this information is shared across agencies.

Action 10 of the Scottish Government action plan identifies the need to develop appropriate reviews into all deaths by suicide, not inclusive to those individuals with professional intervention. This is being developed within North Lanarkshire and led by the suicide prevention partnership group.

Currently Police Scotland advise Social Work Services identifying the person and the method of suicide. Statutory agencies are then notified. The response to the suicide of a young person of school age includes a multi- agency meeting within 24 hours of the notification of death, where key decisions are made in partnership. Debriefing sessions for teachers and parents are carried out as well as identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils affected by the suicide.

## 2.5 Training

Four levels of training are currently offered across North Lanarkshire, over the past two years 50 staff have been trained to deliver Suicide Prevention at the various levels across agencies.

**SUICIDE TALK:** Basic awareness raising and information about suicide which can build capacity across communities. Suicide Talk has been delivered to community groups, businesses, colleges, football fans, churches and schools

for S5 and S6 pupils. The private sector has been included e.g. McDonalds, Asda and the Royal Bank of Scotland along with the four local professional football clubs.

**SAFETALK:** Safe talk is an extension of Suicide Talk which progresses to educating people on 'alerts to suicide' (risk factors, awareness and intervention). It is offered to staff of health and social care, the voluntary sector and those who may come into contact with vulnerable members of the community. Recently 10 sessions of Safe Talk were delivered to DWP Job Centre Staff.

**ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training):** is an intensive 2-day course aimed primarily at Health and Social Care Staff, but open to the voluntary sector and community groups. Recently 24 managers from McDonalds completed the training. Any group of staff receiving Safe talk will have additional staff trained in ASIST to ensure a comprehensive approach and capacity to deal with escalation of risk.

**STORM TRAINING:** Targeted at NHS and Mental Health Officer focusing on assessing risk in a clinical setting. Storm Training is currently under national review with a view to updating and refreshing.

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### **3. Equality and Diversity**

#### **3.1 Fairer Scotland**

Suicide is the leading cause of death in young and middle-aged men in most western countries including the UK. Last year in Scotland, an average of two people died by suicide every day; that's 728 deaths with 75 percent of these being men (ScotSID).

3.2 Minority ethnic groups are not specifically included within the local action plan. Work is underway to determine how to support minority groups with understanding suicide, taking in to consideration cultural and religious beliefs on the subject.

3.3 People within the LGBT Community are more at risk. The developing local strategy will progress work in relation to particular risks identified.

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### **4 Implications**

#### **4.1 Financial Impact**

The financial implications for the actions recommended in this report are costed within the annual budget provided by the Scottish Government.

#### **4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact**

The recommendation comply with National Suicide Prevention Action Plan "Every Life Matters" and the Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2017 – 2027.

#### 4.3 **Environmental Impact**

Work has been undertaken with local communities to identify locations of concern. Locality teams have been involved in developing local strategies to minimise risk in areas identified e.g. the artwork initiative developed in Cumbernauld Locality

#### 4.4 **Risk Impact**

Suicide rates are influenced by individual circumstances and societal factors therefore prevention has to consider both.

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### **5 Measures of success**

5.1 Current evaluation tools include quantitative measures. We continue to develop our evaluation of overall impact of our interventions and public awareness in relation to suicide rates and outcomes for individuals

5.2 The Suicide Prevention self-evaluation instrument (SUPRESE) is a self- evaluation tool. The SUPRESE instrument is based on international evidence and practical experience. The instrument is intended to help those with responsibility for suicide prevention planning and action at the local level to assess whether key elements of suicide prevention planning, strategy and action plans are in place. This tool will be used to evaluate all local suicide prevention activity and campaigns. Implementation is scheduled for September 2019

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