

To: Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board

On: 25 November 2022

Report by: Interim Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Alcohol and Drugs Recovery Services

Heading: Mental Health – Suicide Prevention

Direction Required to Health Board, Council or Both	Direction to:	
	1. No Direction Required	X
	2. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	
	3. Renfrewshire Council	
	4. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and Renfrewshire Council	

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) on the local and national suicide prevention context; and the current and planned strategic activity relating to suicide prevention. The most recent statistics for probable deaths by suicide in Renfrewshire are highlighted.
- 1.2. The paper provides an outline of the Scottish Governments recently published National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2022-2032 'Creating Hope Together' and accompanying 3-year Action Plan for 2022-2025. The strategy's vision, guiding principles and priorities are described and aligned with the HSCP's Strategic Plan and ongoing local activity.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the IJB note:

- The local and national position and ongoing activity in relation to suicide prevention;
- The headline priorities of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy and how this aligns with the ongoing and planned activity within Renfrewshire; and
- The progression towards implementing a multi-agency strategic group for suicide prevention in Renfrewshire; and the request for IJB representation and support.

3. Background

- 3.1. In August 2022, the National Records of Scotland published its statistics for probable deaths by suicide in 2021. Figures for Renfrewshire showed 25

suspected suicides in 2021, an increase of 3 (13%) from 2020. This compares with figures for Scotland which showed a decrease of 6% in suspected suicides across Scotland to 753.

3.2. In September 2022, Scotland's new 10-year Suicide Prevention Strategy was published, titled 'Creating Hope Together'. This is accompanied by a 3-year action plan to deliver on the strategy's vision and target outcomes.

3.3. The strategy replaces the previous Suicide Prevention Action Plan: Every Life Matters which was published in 2018. It aims to build on the good work already happening across Scotland to prevent suicide.

4. National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2022/23 – 'Creating Hope Together'

4.1 Scotland's new national strategy sets out the Scottish Government and COSLA's vision for suicide prevention over the next ten years, to reduce the number of suicide deaths in Scotland, whilst tackling the inequalities which contribute to suicide. The aim is for any child, young person or adult who has thoughts of taking their own life, or are affected by suicide, to get the help they need and feel a sense of hope.

4.2 The strategy outlines a collaborative whole of Government and whole society approach across all sectors to support communities, so they become safe, compassionate, inclusive and free of stigma.

4.3 The strategy aims to deliver on four key outcomes:

- Outcome 1 – The environment we live in promotes conditions which protect against suicide risk – this includes our psychological, social, cultural, economic, and physical environment.
- Outcome 2 – Our communities have a clear understanding of suicide, risk factors and its prevention – so that people and organisations are more able to respond in helpful and informed ways when they, or others need support.
- Outcome 3 – Everyone affected by suicide is able to access high quality, compassionate, appropriate, and timely support – which promotes wellbeing and recovery. This applies to all children, young people and adults who experience suicidal thoughts and behaviour, anyone who cares for them, and anyone affected by suicide in other ways.
- Outcome 4 – Our approach to suicide prevention is well planned and delivered, through close collaboration between national, local, and sectoral partners.
- Our work is designed with lived experience insight, practice, data, research, and intelligence. We improve our approach through regular monitoring, evaluation, and review.

4.4 The outcomes are based on four priority areas:

- Build a whole of Government and whole society approach to address the social determinants which have the greatest link to suicide risk.
- Strengthen Scotland's awareness and responsiveness to suicide and people who are suicidal.
- Promote & provide effective, timely, compassionate support – that promotes wellbeing and recovery.
- Embed a coordinated, collaborative, and integrated approach.

4.5 The delivery of the Strategy is directed by seven guiding principles:

- We will consider inequalities and diversity – to ensure we meet the suicide prevention needs of the whole population whilst taking into account key risk factors such as poverty, and social isolation.
- We will co-develop our work alongside people with lived and living experience (ensuring that experience reflects the diversity of our communities and suicidal experiences). We will also ensure safeguarding measures are in place across our work.
- We will ensure the principles of Time, Space, Compassion are central to our work to support people's wellbeing and recovery. This includes people at risk of suicide, their families/carers and the wider community, respectful of their human rights.
- We will ensure the voices of children and young people are central to work to address their needs and co-develop solutions with them.
- We will provide opportunities for people across different sectors at local and national levels to come together, learn and connect – inspiring them to play their part in preventing suicide.
- We will take every opportunity to reduce the stigma of suicide through our own work.
- We will ensure our work is evidence informed, and continue to build the evidence base through evaluation, data, and research. We will also use quality improvement approaches, creativity, and innovation to drive change – this includes using digital solutions.

4.6 In the 2021-22 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government committed to double the specific annual funding available for suicide prevention from £1.4million to £2.8million. The funding aims to directly support the ambition of the strategy. The whole of Government and society approach also draws

upon non-mental health funding and resource to support suicide prevention including policies aimed at child poverty, substance use and debt.

4.7 The previous suicide prevention strategy, 'Every Life Matters' generated local area suicide prevention action plan guidance, development of new digital learning resources, raising awareness through the 'United to Prevent Suicide' campaign, pilot programmes in 'Supporting People Bereaved by Suicide'; and reviews of deaths by suicide. In addition to this, provision of "more timely data" has commenced, as well as work to ensure that "lived experience" and the needs of children and young people are included in this work.

4.8 It should be noted that Scottish Government will be consulting on and drafting a Self-Harm Prevention Strategy early in 2023.

5. Local position and activity

5.1 Locally, we continue to build on the strong work already underway ensuring this aligns with the newly published National Strategy, other national policies including the Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 and the priorities outlined in the HSCP's Strategic Plan

5.2 The overall decrease in suicides in Scotland is to be welcomed, however we are saddened to see an increase in the number of people who have died by suicide within Renfrewshire. This is now the 3rd consecutive year there has been an increase in the number of deaths within Renfrewshire from a low of 13 in 2018. For Scotland the 5-year rolling average data for 2017-21 was 14.4 deaths by suicide per 100,000 of population. For Renfrewshire the 5-year rolling average data was below this at 11.1 per 100,000 of population.

5.3 Suicide is a complex issue for Renfrewshire, and the 'Whole of Government' and 'Whole Society' approach of 'Creating Hope Together' is welcomed. "Suicide is Everyone's Business".

5.4 One of our short-term strategic priorities is to implement a Chief Officer led local multi-agency strategic group for suicide prevention by March 2023. The group is currently being established; the remit being developed with a comprehensive term of reference. The group will consist of relevant key partners across Renfrewshire and will lead on developing a suicide prevention strategy aiming to reduce the rate of suicide and self-harm within Renfrewshire. This aligns with the national strategy's whole society approach.

5.5 Building on previous work, a new online training programme 'Living Works START' commenced in Renfrewshire from January 2022. The programme aims to support staff to become more comfortable and confident in talking about suicide, keep people safe in times of distress; and to build skills and knowledge about resources available. To date 200 people have completed this course, from a range of statutory and 3rd sector organisations.

- 5.6 The Choose Life Service Co-ordinator works closely with a range of services and departments to further the work of suicide prevention. Working collaboratively with colleagues in Education Services, every education establishment now has a mental health, suicide prevention and self-harm policy available to all staff. More than 40 pupil support staff have been trained in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) with further courses planned to increase this number.
- 5.7 Return of face-to-face training is expected in January of 2023, with the Choose Life Service Co-ordinator, having a large supporting role to the limited number of trainers to deliver face to face training. This programme of courses will include SMHFA (Scotland's Mental Health First Aid), safeTALK (suicide alertness for everyone); ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training); and What's the Harm? (self-harm awareness training). In addition to this, Living Works START programme will continue to be offered online, alongside other online sessions.
- 5.8 The Choose Life Service Co-ordinator represents Renfrewshire HSCP at National and Greater Glasgow & Clyde strategic meetings. The Co-ordinator is currently working collaboratively with colleagues from West Dunbartonshire HSCP and the City Deal Team, Clyde Waterfront Renfrew Riverside Team regarding the construction of a new bridge. This partnership approach will ensure that learning from the 'Erskine Bridge Case Study' will be used to inform the design, enable safety measures to be 'designed in'; and reduce the need for retrospective work.
- 6. Next Steps**
- 6.1 Progress with the development of a Local Strategic Suicide Prevention Group for Renfrewshire.
- 6.2 As part of establishing the strategic group, we will develop a local communications and awareness raising plan. We will engage with people with lived experience and a wide range of stakeholders to share the National Strategy and seek views about how we will implement the priorities locally.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No implications from this report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – No implications from this report.
3. **Community Planning** – Local leadership and accountability for suicide prevention will sit with Chief Officers in line with public protection guidance. As part of this role Chief Officers will connect into Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) which will help ensure suicide prevention is considered as a priority in the wider strategic context, and that all local partners are engaged and supportive.

4. **Legal** – All updates in this report are consistent with the HSCP’s statutory duties and support delivery of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.
5. **Property/Assets** – No implications from this report.
6. **Information Technology** – No implications from this report.
7. **Equality and Human Rights** – No implications from this report.
8. **Health & Safety** – No implications from this report.
9. **Procurement** – No implications from this report.
10. **Risk** – No specific risks require to be highlighted.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None from this report.

List of Background Papers: None

Author: Douglas Johnston, Choose Life Service Co-ordinator

Laura Howat, Interim Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Alcohol and Drugs Recovery Services

Any enquiries regarding this paper should be directed to Laura Howat, Interim Head of Mental Health, Addictions and Learning Disability Services
(laura.howat@renfrewshire.gov.uk)