

Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention NEWS

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Making Hertfordshire a county where **NO ONE** ever gets to a point where they feel suicide is their only option.

Set up in 2017 to deliver the Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Strategy, the Suicide Prevention Network involves more than 80 people from 20-plus organisations working in focused groups, including many people who have been bereaved by suicide. This newsletter aims to inform and update on the progress made by the programme.

Suicide is the leading cause of death for men under 50. Each death by suicide impacts as many as 130 people and costs the UK an estimated £1.67 million. Hertfordshire has low suicide rates compared to regional and national rates – but each and every death is a tragedy.

Our shared vision is to make Hertfordshire a county where no one ever gets to a point where they feel suicide is their only option.



“We must all join together in our continued ambition to reduce the number of deaths in our county”

Catherine Pelley, Deputy Director at Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT)

At the end of March 2018, all task and finish groups within the network met up to discuss progress to date and next steps. Here is an overview:

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The Task and Finish Groups



Mental health transition between care teams

This group aims to help people move from one organisation to another through better information sharing and signposting of services available. As part of this, the group is creating a discharge pack for service users to take away when they leave a service or transition to another.



Spot the Signs

The Spot the Signs campaign aims to increase public awareness of depression and suicide, as well as remove the stigma linked with suicide. The campaign provides training for GPs, professionals and organisations, and signposting to mental health services available in the county.

Emma Paisley, Spot the Signs Co-ordinator, said “The training has had an outstanding response with over 750 people having attended. In addition to this, we have developed and circulated a signposting guide to all GPs in the county. The team has also been to over 20 events leading to 6,035 contacts, all helping to raise the profile of suicide prevention.”

Within the work of Spot the Signs, there is also a big focus on children and young people, offering workshops for young people on managing their mental health. Just as important is the work with parents, helping them to feel comfortable and confident to respond to the signs their children are showing. There's more information at:

 www.hpft.nhs.uk/spot-the-signs



Performance

Tasked with developing a process and conducting a regular suicide audit for the county, the group will also be reviewing railway data and developing a process of sharing information and managing incidents that take place on the rail network. The next steps for the group include undertaking the next suicide audit and exploring real-time surveillance options for Hertfordshire.

Read on for further information on the work being done with the railways, not just in the county but on a national scale too.



Children and young people

The group has supported the introduction of the Healthy Young Minds in Herts School Accreditation and Suicide Aware School status.

This accreditation process will enable schools to achieve kite mark status for their work on supporting mental health and wellbeing. The Suicide Aware Schools Status award contains some additional requirements for schools to demonstrate a commitment to reducing suicide.

Schools can apply for Healthy Young Minds in Herts School Accreditation and Suicide Aware School status using a self-reporting template.

The Hertfordshire Whole School Review tool provides signposting to national and local models of planning, doing and reviewing. Schools can download this from the same website:  www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk

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Signposting and referral

This group has successfully updated the Community Directory with services in the Spot the Signs signposting booklet.

Online, they have developed coding on search engines with common search terms related to suicide e.g. 'feeling angry' to flag up suicide prevention services when searched.

In addition to this they:

- enabled services to go on MiDos, the system used by the local NHS 111 service
- reestablished referral from custody suites to Samaritans
- established a referral pathway between HertsHelp crisis service and Samaritans
- promoted pathways face-to-face with food banks, Relate, patient participant groups, interfaith organisations, local family justice board, housing associations and more.



Support of people bereaved by suicide

This group has worked with the families and carers of those impacted by suicide.

The group has identified sources of available support for bereaved families in Hertfordshire and professionals including GPs. A particular guide is the 'Help is at Hand' booklet. Another area they have focused their efforts on is identifying gaps in service provision and creating a new Family Liaison Officer (FLO) role.

Signposting leaflets have been created for police grab bags and links with charities and organisations have been developed.



Boys and Men

This group is focused on reducing the rate of suicide and self-harm amongst men and boys.

This group has contributed to the development and launch of the Just Talk campaign which aims to normalise mental health conversations for teenage boys. At least 1 in 4 secondary schools have engaged with Just Talk and the social media campaigns on Instagram, and Facebook have been successful in reaching more than 55,000 people, 90% of whom are men. In addition, there have been over 9 million potential impressions on Twitter. Just Talk training was also delivered to 73 professionals in the county.

 www.healthyyoungmindsherts.org.uk/justtalk



Communications

Communications teams from across all agencies are liaising closely to raise awareness of suicide prevention initiatives in Hertfordshire, using national awareness weeks as hooks for media coverage and regularly sharing joint approaches to social media to maximise impact. This newsletter has been produced by the group.



National Suicide Prevention Initiatives

Suicide prevention on the railway

The Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Programme with Samaritans has been working with railway partners to reduce suicides at local hotspots. National work includes:

- working to destigmatise mental health and suicide and encourage vulnerable people to seek help, like the Small Talk Saves Lives campaign:

 www.samaritans.org/media-centre/our-campaigns/small-talk-saves-lives/how-to-help

- supporting the Government's target of a 10 per cent reduction in suicides by 2020/21, with appropriate resources to be made available to ensure it is achieved
- working with schools to make young people aware of mental health issues to allow them to look after themselves and others.

In 2016/17 there were 237 suicides and suspected suicides nationally on the over ground rail network – 15 fewer than the previous year. This represents the lowest number of suicide events recorded on the railway since the rail industry's suicide prevention programme began in 2010.

There's more information at  www.networkrail.co.uk

The Zero Suicide Alliance

The Zero Suicide Alliance is a collaborative of NHS trusts, businesses and individuals who are all committed to raising awareness of and promoting **FREE** suicide prevention training.

There's more information at  www.zerosuicidealliance.com

Who dies by **suicide** in Hertfordshire

80% MALE

82% HAD DISCUSSED THEIR MENTAL HEALTH WITH GP

50% EMPLOYED 

 **23%** INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

67% NOT IN A RELATIONSHIP

59% NOT KNOWN TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 



If you would like to feature in the next edition, please contact  hpft.comms@nhs.net