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**PQ Ref 44257/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the status of the Garda surveillance project that will collate the real time suicide data; and the details of the project with particular reference to CHO7**

Dear Deputy,

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) has been requested to respond to your question above.

The project referred to in your question, is in planning stages and not yet operational. Under Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, An Garda Síochána has made commitments to work with the HSE NOSP and other stakeholders, on suicide prevention efforts and initiatives at local and national levels.

One outcome of this has been the agreement of a joint working protocol in 2021 that will enable regular sharing of data on deaths by suspected suicide, from An Garda Síochána to the HSE NOSP. The protocol also aims to ensure that bereaved families receive timely and appropriate support.

It is important to note that this information will not be routinely published by the HSE as it contains personal information about deaths that is entirely suspected or indicative of suicide, from preliminary, sensitive stages in the death investigation process. This joint working protocol does not aim to establish a new statistical understanding, or an alternative dataset, of levels of suicide locally or nationally. Following later investigation by the Coroner, these deaths may or may not eventually result in registration as a death due to intentional self-harm. Therefore, they may or may not be reflected in official suicide statistics from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), in the future.

Solely, the aims of this data-sharing protocol are to use this information to;

- Establish a rapid and direct referral pathway for those bereaved, to suicide bereavement supports/services.
- Enable the HSE and health services to respond to incidents or emerging trends of (suspected) suicide, at local levels, in a timely manner.

I trust this information is useful for you. Please do revert if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Mr John Meehan

HSE Assistant National Director, Mental Health Planning  
& Head of National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)

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