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Deputy Matt Carthy  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

14<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Re: PQ ref 13768/25** - To ask the Minister for Health the community response plans that guide Cavan Monaghan mental health service following suicides; when the current plans were established and revised; if there are proposals to review these plans; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Carthy

I refer to your recent correspondence. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position of Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service.

#### **Community response to suspected suicide**

Every death by suspected suicide in the area will yield a response that is unique to the needs and circumstances of the particular tragedy. Arrangements are in place locally with An Garda Síochána to provide information on suicide bereavement supports to members of the deceased's family. This includes the HSE "You are not alone" booklet which contains an insert with details on local supports – link to booklet: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/news/national-suicide-bereavement-support-guide.pdf>

The HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention, works closely with the HSE Principal Clinical Psychologist, the Pieta House SBLO and local community partners to provide co-ordinated responses to support communities in the aftermath of suspected suicides\*. These responses vary depending on the individual circumstances and the potential impact within a community (particularly in relation to risk of contagion or cluster suicides). Examples of responses implemented include the following:

Guidance and advice by phone, email and in small groups to community leaders supporting local responses to the suspected suicides.

Information is circulated widely in the aftermath of a suspected suicide and on an ongoing basis through schools and the wider communities of Cavan and Monaghan, including individual schools impacted and the broader school community as required. This includes information on ongoing supports available including the SBLO Service and information on referral pathways to community and statutory services.

Community support meetings have been facilitated by the HSE Psychology Manager and HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention in the immediate aftermath of a suspected suicide and on the invitation of community leaders including GAA volunteers.

Community information evenings have been scheduled where the NOSP presentation on supporting communities in the aftermath of a suicide has been delivered jointly by the Principal Psychology Manager for Cavan Monaghan Psychology Services and the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention.

The schedule of suicide prevention awareness training is shared widely and requests for delivery of training for specific groups or communities are facilitated.

Guidance for media personnel on the importance of sensitive reporting in relation to suicide and self-harm has been circulated to local media outlets. This has been followed up with an online event aimed at media personnel on this subject.

\* This response is dependent on the ROSP being informed/made aware of the death by suspected suicide in the first instance.

It is important to note that there is no formal arrangement in place whereby the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention is notified when a death by suspected suicide occurs. Work has been taking place nationally between staff in NOSP and AGS to develop and sign off on an inter-agency protocol which would facilitate the real-time sharing of data from the AGS Pulse system to a central point of contact in NOSP who would then notify the relevant ROSP of a death by suspected suicide.

### **Community Response Plan to Suicide - HSE Cavan Monaghan**

A Community Response Plan (CRP) has been developed in the HSE Cavan Monaghan area which provides a framework for the coordinated inter-agency response to suspected suicide clusters and/or where there is concern about contagion (the 'copycat' effect) in the Cavan Monaghan area.

In 2022 a project group\* was established by HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service to produce this plan. It has been developed in alignment with national operational guidance [Developing a Community Response to Suicide](#) (HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP), 2021).

The aims of this plan – which outlines response structures, roles and processes – are:

To facilitate the early detection of suicide clusters and potentially related suicides and provide guidance and support in the provision of a timely and coordinated inter-agency response.

To provide postvention activity that seeks to promote healing after a death by suspected suicide where there is a concern about contagion.

To reduce the risk of subsequent suicides.

The Project Group held meetings during 2022 and 2023 to develop and sign off on the Community Response Plan for the area.

\* The following members have been assigned in Cavan Monaghan, for involvement in the implementation of a CRP in the area. These lists can be added to depending on the unique circumstances of each particular incident. The highly-sensitive nature of the data and need to maintain confidentiality (particularly in relation to the bereaved family) must be considered at all times. Therefore, only those deemed absolutely necessary will be included in the CRP Core Team.

#### **CRP Lead**

Executive Clinical Director of HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

#### **CRP Core Team**

Executive Clinical Director, HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

Clinical Director, HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

Principal Psychology Manager, HSE Cavan Monaghan

Area Director of Nursing, HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

Assistant Director of Nursing, HSE CMMHS - Cavan/Monaghan Adult Mental Health Team or CAMHS depending on the age profile/location of the suspected suicide

Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention, HSE Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

Garda Inspector, An Garda Síochána, Cavan Monaghan District



Pieta Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officer

HSE Communications Officer

Tusla Senior Manager PPFS Cavan & Monaghan

NEPS Senior Educational Psychologist

Dependent on the background to, or location of, incidents of suspected suicide, additional optional members are:

CAMHS Consultant

Cavan Monaghan ETB

Student Services (Third level institutions)

### **Information Provision**

Information is circulated widely in the aftermath of a suspected suicide and on an ongoing basis through schools and the wider communities of Cavan and Monaghan, including individual schools impacted and the broader school community as required; this includes the following resources:

HSE "You are not alone" booklet which contains an insert with details on local supports;

Localised information posters on youth, community and statutory supports available to support mental health and well-being;

Help is at Hand Information Poster on available national/local services;

HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention Cavan Monaghan "Numbers when you need them"

Information Cards – these wallet sized cards provide details of support and information resources available in counties Cavan and Monaghan and nationally;

HSE "Responding to a person in suicidal distress" Guidance Document – This aims to support staff and volunteers working in public facing roles to interact with people who present or contact the service in distress or at risk of suicide and self-harm;

A selection of suicide and self-harm informational booklets and leaflets including:  
'Concerned about suicide?'

'Would you know what to do if someone told you they were thinking of suicide?'

'If you have been bereaved by suicide'

'Supporting someone bereaved by suicide'

'Supporting young children bereaved by suicide'

'Self-harm & Young People – An informational booklet for parents & concerned adults'.

This information and other resources can be accessed on the NOSP website or at the following link:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/nosp/resources/booklets/booklets.html>

I trust this information is of assistance to you, however should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**A/Rosemary Hanni**  
General Manager  
Mental Health Services CDLMS