

Learning Notice: 01/21: Maternal Mortality due to Suicide

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Actions required By Whom: Hospital Group CEOs, Maternity Network Clinical Directors, Obstetric Clinicians in all Maternity Units, Directors of Midwifery, Maternity Network Quality & Safety Managers.

By When: For **IMMEDIATE ACTION** in Maternity Hospitals and Acute Hospitals with Maternity Units/Services. Please ensure that this is brought to the attention of all relevant staff.

Learning:

In the last 4 weeks NWIHP have been notified of 2 maternal deaths as a result of suicide that have occurred in the same geographical area. In addition to these deaths another maternal death by suicide in the same geographical area occurred 2 years ago.

The numbers are small and maybe a statistically artefact however, given the serious nature of the adverse outcome it is important that the wider maternity community should be informed.

Prior to the reviews into these cases being completed it is difficult to speculate what other factors, like covid or social exclusion, may have played in these unfortunate outcomes. These deaths emphasise the importance of perinatal mental health and underline the significant role our colleagues in this area have to play.

We would ask that you review your screening processes for perinatal mental health services with the perinatal mental health specialists in your hospital.

This is a learning outcome from the Obstetric Event Support Team.

NWIHP Learning Notices can be viewed on:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/acute-hospitals-division/woman-infants/quality-and-safety/>

