



HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)

Annual Report

2022



Connecting for Life

This report was published in July 2023 and is available;

👁 To download at www.nosp.ie or www.connectingforlifeireland.ie

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The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) acknowledges people with lived experience of mental health difficulties, suicide and self-harm, and the experiences of people who have been bereaved by suicide, carers, families or supporters. We are always mindful that suicide prevention work is underpinned by these real experiences, and remember real lives that have been lived, and that have been lost.

The initiatives outlined in this report, are targeted to ultimately prevent suicide – by providing a wider understanding of suicidal behaviour and preventative interventions in Ireland, with a view to influencing policy and practice intended to save lives in the future. However, sometimes this type of content can be sensitive, upsetting or triggering to read. We encourage readers to be mindful of this, and to be aware of their own needs and self-care in this space.

- Listening support is available anytime day or night, from Samaritans on Freephone 116 123, visit www.samaritans.ie.
- Text support is available anytime day or night, from spunout Text About It – text HELLO to 50808, visit www.textaboutit.ie.
- Suicide and self-harm prevention and bereavement services are available from Pieta, visit www.pieta.ie.
- More information on mental health, services and supports is available at www.yourmentalhealth.ie.
- Information on getting urgent help is available at www.nosp.ie.
- If you are a journalist or media professional covering a suicide-related issue, consider the Samaritans [Ireland Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide](#) because of the potentially damaging consequences of irresponsible reporting. In particular, the guidelines advise on terminology to use and to include links to sources of support for anyone affected by the themes in any coverage.
- Information on crisis supports and helplines in over 50 countries, is also available from the [International Association for Suicide Prevention \(IASP\)](#).

Foreword from Dr Stephanie O’Keeffe



On behalf of HSE Operations Planning, I am very pleased to present the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) Annual Report for 2022.

There remains a very high-level commitment in the HSE, to realise the vision of our national suicide prevention strategy – Connecting for Life – of ‘an Ireland where fewer lives are lost to suicide’. Few communities in Ireland are untouched by suicide, and the impact of such losses is multi-faceted and unique. It is imperative that the HSE, and multiple partners across different sectors, work strategically and collaboratively to minimise the likelihood of such tragedies.

The ongoing implementation of Connecting for Life (extended to 2024) remains an important objective in the 2023 HSE National Service Plan, particularly in the context of improving access to Mental Health Services (including early intervention) and mental health promotion and improvement. The role of the HSE NOSP in achieving this objective is also important in the context of the implementation of Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020) and Stronger Together, the HSE Mental Health Promotion Plan (2022–2027). The HSE NOSP has always adopted a very responsive and collaborative approach to its programme of work, and many of the achievements outlined in this Annual Report are examples of wider cross-service initiatives that deliver on important shared objectives.

As the HSE looks ahead to structural changes in early 2024 (with the establishment of six new health regions and a reconfigured national centre), the enhancements to the delivery of integrated care will facilitate patients and service users to access their health services more easily, no matter where they live. It will also better facilitate our staff in delivering more joined-up care, keeping patients’ needs at the centre of what we do. With the support of the Operations Planning Senior Management Team, the HSE NOSP will continue to deliver an effective strategic and operational agenda, within these new structures.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the wide range of partners and collaborators that the HSE NOSP work with every year, including the Department of Health, other Government Departments, HSE staff and functions such as colleagues in Mental Health, Primary Care and Acute Operations, Communications, Health and Wellbeing, Finance, Clinical and across all our Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs), including our network of HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs), and Non Governmental Agencies. These organisations and teams, that we work with across the country, are incredibly important strategic partners to the HSE NOSP. They, and our ROSPs are critical drivers and facilitators of local work with individuals, families, communities and organisations across the length and breadth of the country. I would like to acknowledge their efforts and contributions to the achievements outlined in this report.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all the team in the HSE NOSP, for their work, expertise and tremendous drive to deliver in 2022. Your endeavours and accomplishments remind us all that a progressive cross-sectoral and collaborative approach is required to deliver what is needed, if we are to prevent suicide and realise the ultimate vision of Connecting for Life – of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost to suicide.

Dr Stephanie O’Keeffe

HSE National Director, Operations Planning

Introduction from John Meehan



On behalf of the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP), I am pleased to introduce this Annual Report for 2022.

The accomplishments in suicide prevention that are outlined in this report, are a result of many contributions and efforts across health services, and multiple agencies spanning many sectors. While the HSE NOSP is the named implementation driver for Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2020–2024), progress would be impossible without such cross-sectoral endorsement and engagement.

I would like to thank the Department of Health, for their leadership in 2022, of the Connecting for Life National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group, and their commitment to fostering shared ownership and responsibilities with Government departments, and other lead agencies.

During 2022, the independent views and advice from newly configured Connecting for Life Data and Intelligence Advisory, and Expert Advisory Groups, have also been invaluable to the HSE NOSP team and ensure that the direction and priorities of work, remain focussed and evidenced to the highest standards.

This Annual Report outlines key achievements of the NOSP office, and others, during 2022. Some highlights include:

- Delivering a wide range of evidence-based suicide and self-harm prevention training programmes – to almost 12,000 participants nationwide – across a variety of training initiatives and with multiple training partners and networks.
- Publishing the innovative HSE NOSP Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study (IPSDS) that presents new, in-depth and unique information on 2,349 people who died by 'probable suicide' for a four-year period from 2015 to 2018.
- Supporting the completion and publication of AfterWords: A survey of people bereaved by suicide in Ireland, from HUGG and the NSRF. The survey (with 2,413 respondents) provides invaluable findings that will help to shape postvention services and supports in the future.
- Core investment in the delivery of the new national HSE Mental Health Literacy Campaign that commenced in Q4 2022 – in partnership with HSE Mental Health Operations, Communications (Programmes and Campaigns), Health and Wellbeing, and Digital.
- Resourcing and supporting the work of 23 HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) across 9 Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) – advancing and enabling the implementation of 10 regional Connecting for Life Suicide Prevention action plans.
- Ongoing investment in the NGO sector, supporting the work in 21 organisations that provide a wide range of suicide prevention and mental health supports and services, and promotional activities and initiatives that are aligned with our national strategies, priorities and frameworks.

Investment in the HSE NOSP, and to support the implementation of our national suicide prevention strategy, has increased considerably in the last ten years from ~€5m in 2012 to ~€14m last year. In 2022, over €7m of this was allocated to a network of diverse NGOs working on innovative approaches to suicide prevention. Their invaluable work – some of which is represented in this report – is recognised as fundamental to achieving accessible and equitable suicide prevention supports and services across the country.

To close, I would like to acknowledge and thank our HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) colleagues and others in the HSE who work daily with the HSE NOSP team, across a wide variety of initiatives and projects. I would also like to thank all the team in the HSE NOSP for their work during 2022 and since. The team comprises wide-ranging work streams including strategy coordination, education, training, monitoring and evaluation, suicide bereavement, communications, finance and administration. All staff have maintained a concerted focus and agile approach to suicide prevention and we are grateful to you for all your hard work and dedication to Ireland's national strategy and suicide prevention.

John Meehan

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

The background of the slide is a vibrant orange color with a pattern of soft, white, fluffy clouds. The clouds are more concentrated in the upper half of the image, creating a sense of depth and texture. The overall tone is warm and energetic.

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Background and strategic context

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Background and strategic context

1.1. The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) was established to strategically lead on suicide prevention efforts across the HSE and in collaboration with multiple partners. This work is underpinned by Connecting for Life (CfL), Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2015–2024). The NOSP sits within Operations Planning in the HSE.

The [HSE National Service Plan](#) describes the high-level context for the work of the HSE NOSP. It sets out the services to be provided to the people of Ireland for the investment entrusted to the HSE. These commitments to services and developments are also in line with the [HSE Corporate Plan 2021–2024](#).

The HSE National Service Plan outlines key objectives that include the ongoing implementation of actions and recommendations in Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020) and Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2015–2024).

CfL has shaped the core functions of the HSE NOSP.

- Of the 69 actions in CfL, the HSE NOSP is the lead agency assigned to deliver on 16 actions, the joint lead on 2 actions and a supporting partner for 21 further actions.
- The HSE NOSP has a pivotal role in driving the overall implementation of CfL. The strategy mandates the HSE NOSP to support, inform, coordinate and monitor the implementation of CfL across the HSE, Government departments, statutory agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- Broadly, the HSE NOSP also works with the HSE, Government departments and within the NGO and community sector, in an advisory and supportive role, on activities or projects aligned with the CfL Strategy or on suicide and self-harm prevention, postvention and awareness.

As a whole-of Government strategy, CfL requires the HSE NOSP to provide a strategic view of implementation progress, and within an implementation structure established in 2015. The HSE NOSP fulfils a central role in this implementation structure and reports to the National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group (chaired by the Department of Health) on a quarterly basis.

Furthermore, the HSE NOSP is a specifically named lead for, or supporting partner of, actions in additional frameworks and strategies, or significant national projects such as:

- [Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone](#)
- [Stronger Together, HSE Mental Health Promotion Plan 2022–2027](#)
- [National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [National Traveller Health Action Plan](#)

During 2022, team members represented the HSE NOSP on additional networks such as:

- The UK and Ireland Roundtable Network of Suicide Prevention Leads – including representatives from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- [The International Association for Suicide Prevention \(IASP\)](#) – a proactive forum that creates strong collaborative partnerships and promotes evidence-based action to reduce suicide and suicidal behaviour internationally.
- [The International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership \(IIMHL\)](#) – which connects mental health leaders to help spread innovation and best practice to improve mental health and addiction services around the globe.
- [The National Implementation and Monitoring Committee \(NIMC\)](#) for Sharing the Vision – which is collectively responsible for driving and overseeing the long-term implementation of Sharing the Vision, A Mental Health Policy for Everyone.
- The four-year [CAWT Mental Health Innovation Recovery ‘i-Recovery’ Project](#) – with Project Chair John Meehan – as part of the European Union’s INTERREG VA Programme. The mission of CAWT (Cooperation and Working Together) is to improve the health and well-being of the border populations, by working across boundaries and jurisdictions.

1.2. Areas of work

1.2.1. Strategy Coordination

The Strategy Coordination work stream in the HSE NOSP focuses specifically on the lead agencies assigned to actions in CfL. There are 22 lead agencies, mainly across Government departments and health settings (HSE and non-HSE). The HSE NOSP engages with these agencies to ensure an appropriate level of commitment is assigned to their CfL actions, to advise on, and support the approaches required to deliver on assigned actions and to maintain the close cross-sectoral relationships and partnerships that are required to ensure successful implementation of the strategy.

1.2.2. Education and Training

The Education and Training work stream in the HSE NOSP has oversight of the national delivery of a suite of evidence-informed training programmes in suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. The [Connecting for Life Education and Training Plan](#) and accompanying Quality Assurance Framework provide the overarching frameworks to support the coordination, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation of education and training actions identified in the strategy. This work also aims to build the capacity of Government departments, funded agencies, the HSE, community organisations, groups and individuals to identify and respond appropriately to people at risk of suicide and self-harm.

1.2.3. NGO Support

The HSE NOSP works directly with the NGO sector – presently 21 agencies receive national funding from the Office to deliver on work aligned with the objectives and actions in CfL. Services and initiatives delivered across this diverse sector play a decisive role in advancing suicide and self-harm prevention, postvention and mental health promotion efforts in Ireland.

This work stream focuses on relationship management with these funded-agencies. Together with HSE Finance, the HSE NOSP manages the SLAs with each organisation and undertakes ongoing and regular assessment of service activity levels against agreed schedules.

1.2.4. Local Implementation Support

This work stream supports the local implementation of CfL, primarily through the network of 20+ HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) working across a range of Community Health Services, Community Health Organisations (CHOs) and areas nationwide. Reporting within local mental health services, the ROSPs coordinate the development and support implementation of 10 regional CfL Suicide Prevention Action Plans, each aligned to the national strategy.

The HSE NOSP provides funding support to the implementation of local actions and the delivery of suicide prevention training at a CHO level. The office also supports the network of ROSPs in an advisory capacity and maintains a two-way collaborative relationship with the group.

1.2.5. Bereavement

The Bereavement work stream in the HSE NOSP focuses on the coordination of supports for people bereaved by suicide, as outlined in the [Improving Suicide Bereavement Supports in Ireland](#) report, as well as engagement with providers of general bereavement supports, both internally in the HSE, e.g., Palliative Care and with external partners, e.g., Irish Hospice Foundation. The work is aligned with the objectives and actions in CfL to improve the uniformity, effectiveness and timeliness of support services to families and communities bereaved by suicide.

1.2.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation work stream focuses on monitoring the progress of the implementation of CfL and works with a range of stakeholders and experts in the area of suicide prevention to drive and guide this work.

In order to monitor, routinely track, and report on priority information about the strategy, the HSE NOSP uses continuous processes of collecting and analysing data on specified indicators. The HSE NOSP monitors the implementation of 69 actions across CfL, as outlined in the current implementation plan.

Evaluation analysis helps the HSE NOSP Team and other key stakeholders gain a better understanding of all aspects of their work, from design through implementation and on to completion and subsequent consequences. The Monitoring and Evaluation work stream also designs, implements and manages a broad programme of research work that informs different aspects of the strategy and approaches to particular projects, actions and objectives.

1.2.7. Communications

The Communications work stream supports the overall communications requirements of the Office, and those associated with CfL and its national implementation. Regular channels and areas of oversight include: online content (specifically www.connectingforlifeireland.ie and www.nosp.ie); social media (#connectingforlife and @NOSPireland); HSE NOSP reports, publications and print; other public information (leaflets, resources, World Suicide Prevention Day); email newsletter; press and media (with support of HSE Press Team); written correspondence (including collating responses to Parliamentary Questions, or preparing material for Oireachtas committees, reps and briefings); and events (online, in person).

1.2.8. Clinical Support

The Clinical Advisor in the HSE NOSP supports all other work streams in the Office, providing clinical oversight, advice and input to all projects and initiatives underway. The Clinical Advisor also has leadership in advancing communications, education and training, and research projects, in specific clinical and healthcare settings.

 [The team in the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention \(NOSP\)](#)

1.3. Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide

CfL – launched in 2015 – is Ireland's national strategy to reduce suicide. CfL sets out a vision of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide, and where communities and individuals are empowered to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

In 2020, the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD and the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler TD, announced the extension of Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, to 2024.

The extension of the strategy was an opportunity to advance and embed local implementation structures throughout the country. There are presently 10 accompanying local CfL Action Plans nationwide.

CfL has 69 actions, under 7 strategic goals.

- **Goal 1:** To improve the nation's understanding of and attitudes to suicidal behaviour, mental health and wellbeing.
- **Goal 2:** To support local communities' capacity to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour.
- **Goal 3:** To target approaches to reduce suicidal behaviour and improve mental health among priority groups.
- **Goal 4:** To enhance accessibility, consistency and care pathways of services for people vulnerable to suicidal behaviour.
- **Goal 5:** To ensure safe and high-quality services for people vulnerable to suicide.
- **Goal 6:** To reduce and restrict access to means of suicidal behaviour.
- **Goal 7:** To improve surveillance, evaluation and high quality research relating to suicidal behaviour.

The HSE NOSP has responsibility for developing implementation plans for the strategy. These plans set out the agreed milestones for each of the 69 actions. They describe the strategic and operational agenda needed to drive the implementation of the strategy.

In 2019, the HSE NOSP invited the Connecting for Life Evaluation Advisory Group to undertake an independent interim review of the strategy. The aims of the review were to examine the extent to which the key actions of the strategy were on-track to being achieved (by 2020), to help identify what was working well and where the challenges lay, and to help set strategic priorities for the following implementation period.

 [Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide](#)

 [Connecting for Life Implementation Plans](#)

 [Connecting for Life Interim Strategy Review](#)

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Management and accountability

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Management and accountability

2.1. Structures and stakeholders

The HSE NOSP leads, facilitates and supports a wide range of networks and structures, with key stakeholders across different sectors and involved in the implementation of Connecting for Life.

2.1.1. Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Services

The Cabinet Committee on Social Affairs and Public Services is chaired by An Taoiseach. It provides high-level political leadership and is accountable at Government level for the implementation of CfL. Membership of this Committee (of the 33rd Government) includes:

- Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence.
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications and Minister for Transport.
- Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform.
- Minister for Finance.
- Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.
- Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Rural and Community Development.
- Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.
- Minister for Health.
- Minister for Justice.

2.1.2. Connecting for Life, National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group

The National Cross Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group's role is to review and drive the implementation of CfL, applying a cross-sectoral approach. The group is chaired by the Department of Health. Membership includes representatives from:

- Department of Health.
- HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention.
- HSE Mental Health Operations.
- HSE Primary Care.
- HSE Health and Wellbeing.
- HSE Acute Operations.
- Mental Health Ireland.
- MyMind.
- Defence Forces.
- Tusla, Child and Family Agency.
- LGMA Local Government Management Agency.

- The National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF).
- Irish Prison Service.
- College of Psychiatrists of Ireland.
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.
- Department of Education.
- Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
- Department of Justice.
- Department of Rural and Community Development.
- Department of Social Protection.
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.
- Department of the Taoiseach.

2.1.3. Connecting for Life, HSE Cross-divisional Implementation Group

The HSE Cross-divisional Implementation Group provides direction on the implementation of 40 CfL actions, for which the HSE is assigned as lead. The group is chaired by HSE Mental Health Operations. Membership includes representatives from:

- HSE Mental Health Operations.
- HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention.
- Mental Health Heads of Service (x2).
- HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (x3).
- HSE Primary Care.
- HSE Health and Wellbeing.
- HSE Acute Operations.

2.1.4. HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs)

HSE ROSPs work across Community Health Organisations (CHOs) nationwide and are funded by the HSE NOSP. HSE ROSPs are the designated leads for the coordination and implementation of CfL Suicide Prevention Action Plans at a local level. Collectively they collaborate as part of a Learning Community of Practice (LCOP), which provides a formal mechanism for efficient and effective sharing of knowledge, skills and experience for the 22 HSE ROSPs. The LCOP serves as a reference group for the HSE NOSP and HSE Mental Health Operations, advising on issues relating to suicide prevention at CHO and community level.

 [Contact details for HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention \(ROSPs\)](#)

2.1.5. Connecting for Life, Data and Intelligence Advisory Group (DIAG)

In 2022, the CfL DIAG was established as a new group replacing the previous CfL Technical Advisory Group. This was to take account of the broad data and intelligence needs and priorities relating to CfL during the final two years of implementation (2022–24), and in preparation for the development of strategy post 2024. The CfL DIAG was established with a wider purpose and remit than the previous Technical Advisory Group.

The main purpose of the Group is to support the implementation and evaluation of the strategy, and to inform the work through effective application of data, information and intelligence relevant to the prevention of suicidal behaviour in Ireland.

The main areas of activity include, but are not limited to:

- The Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study (IPSDS): carry out further data collection, data analysis and reporting of findings; set out implications of findings and recommendations for CfL and post-CfL suicide prevention strategy and action in Ireland.
- Implementation and evaluation of CfL: meet data and intelligence requirements and provide support.
- Planning for post-CfL suicide prevention: identify data and intelligence requirements, and generate/acquire relevant data, as required.
- Suicide statistics: collaborate with the NSRF and Central Statistical Office (CSO) to improve the timeliness and reliability of data on suicide and self-harm in Ireland.
- Deaths by suicide in mental health services: contribute to the data completeness project between the Health Research Board (HRB) and the HSE (National Incident Management System) NIMS, as required.
- Ensure alignment of CfL with relevant suicide data recommendations in Sharing the Vision, A Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020).
- In collaboration with appropriate bodies in Northern Ireland, promote an all-Ireland approach to the generation, collection, analysis and dissemination of data and intelligence on suicide and self-harm.

The membership of the DIAG (at November 2022) was:

- Professor Siobhan O'Neill, Professor of Mental Health Sciences, Ulster University and Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland (Chair).
- Professor Philip Dodd, Clinical Advisor, HSE NOSP.
- Dr Brian Farrell, Dublin District Coroner emeritus.
- Dr Katerina Kavalidou, HSE NOSP.
- Dr Ena Lynn, HRB.
- Dr Suzi Lyons, HRB.
- Professor Kevin Malone, University College Dublin.
- Dr Anita Munnely, (previously) Research and Data Officer HSE NOSP.
- Dr Clíodhna O'Brien, Research Officer, HSE NOSP.

2.1.6. Connecting for Life, Expert Advisory Group (ExAG)

The purpose of the CfL ExAG is to provide advice and guidance to the Head of the HSE NOSP on a range of strategic and operational issues relating to the implementation and evaluation of CfL and post-CfL arrangements for suicide prevention in Ireland. The ExAG also provides oversight of the DIAG.

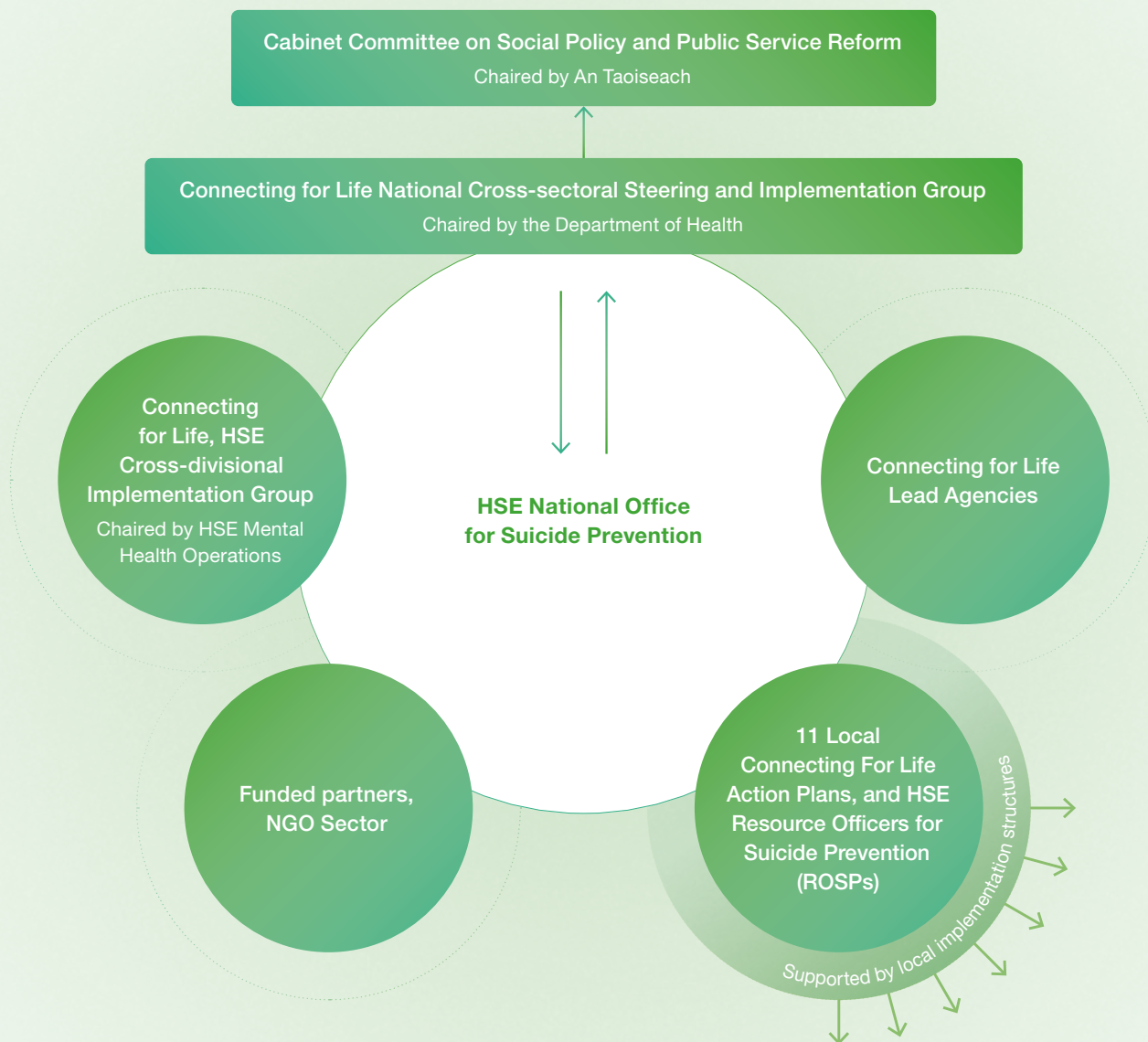
The operational and strategic issues considered by the ExAG include, but are not limited to:

- The implementation of CfL from 2022 to 2024, including arrangements for monitoring and evaluating progress towards delivery of outstanding actions (as set out in the strategy).
- The design and conduct of the proposed over-arching (summative) evaluation of CfL (2023–24).
- The development of a sustainable and feasible national strategic approach to suicide prevention in Ireland post-2024.
- Ongoing oversight of the work of the DIAG (via receipt of regular reports and standing meeting agenda item).

The ExAG comprises the following members:

- Emeritus Professor Steve Platt, University of Edinburgh, UK (Chair).
- John Meehan, HSE Assistant National Director, Mental Health Planning, and Head of the HSE NOSP.
- Professor Ella Arensman, Chief Scientist, NSRF.
- Stephanie Bartley, volunteer with Turas Le Cheile.
- Emer Clarke, Senior Project Manager, HSE Mental Health Operations.
- Dr Paul Corcoran, Head of Research, NSRF.
- Professor Barbara Dooley, Acting Registrar and Deputy President, University College Dublin.
- Dr Claire Hickey, Head of Socio-economic Research, Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Professor Agnes Higgins, Professor in Mental Health, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College, Dublin.
- Sally Lovejoy, National Nurse Lead, National Clinical Programme for Self-harm and Suicide-related Ideation.
- Dr Anita Munnely, (previously) Research and Data Officer, HSE NOSP.

Connecting for Life Implementation Structure



2.2. Operational and risk reporting

In order to ensure accountability across all aspects of work in the HSE NOSP and to support an effective performance management framework, the Office maintains an annual Operational Plan for internal reporting purposes. This plan outlines priority areas for action, and further details specific actions with quarterly deliverables. In 2022, 48 actions were contained in the offices plan, spanning all strands of work and projects.

Performance monitoring of the Operational Plan is via quarterly progress reports, submitted to the National Director, Operations Planning and shared with the Operations Planning Senior Management Team and the National Operations Senior Team (NOST). The quarterly progress reports provide a concise update of all actions and their key deliverables, including a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating. They highlight performance issues to facilitate corrective action with appropriate oversight and support. Monthly reports are also provided to the National Director Operations Planning which include updates on progress against Operational Plan actions as part of the performance management framework in Operations Planning.

The HSE NOSP also maintains a Risk Register that sets out risks identified across all these stands of work. This is in line with the HSE integrated risk management policy, which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities for all levels of staff in relation to risk (financial and non-financial). It ensures that risk management is understood as everyone's responsibility, is embedded as part of normal day-to-day business and informs the strategic and operational planning and performance cycle.

This Risk Register is a standing agenda item at monthly HSE NOSP Senior Management Team meetings. New or emerging risks are notified to the HSE National Director, Operations Planning as part of the risk management and reporting process. This Risk Register is scheduled for presentation at Operations Planning Senior Management Team Meetings, minimum twice per year. This provides an opportunity to collectively review risks, and consider in the context of the HSE's Corporate Risk Register.

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What was delivered
in 2022

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What was delivered in 2022

3.1. Key achievements

3.1.1. Implementation monitoring

In 2022, the CfL National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group met quarterly (on 7th April, 7th July, 6th October and 8th December). To facilitate the work of the Group, the HSE NOSP uses a monitoring system, which includes monitoring 'dashboards'. The office collates updates from lead agencies assigned to actions in the strategy, on milestones as set out in the Implementation Plans. Lead agencies mark milestones as 'on track', 'off track' or 'needing attention'. They are also requested to highlight any issues arising that may be hindering the implementation of actions. These issues are brought to the attention of members of the National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group for discussion and resolution, if possible.

In 2022, the HSE NOSP published quarterly progress reports that were provided to National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group. These provide summaries of implementation progress from both statutory lead agencies and NGO partners.

-  [Q1, 2022 Progress Report \(Statutory\)](#)
-  [Q1, 2022 Progress Report \(NGO\)](#)
-  [Q2, 2022 Progress Report \(Statutory\)](#)
-  [Q2, 2022 Progress Report \(NGO\)](#)
-  [Q4, 2022 Progress Report \(NGO\)](#)
-  [Q4 2022 & Q1 2023 Progress Report \(Statutory\).](#)

3.1.2. Healthy Ireland Survey 2022 – Suicide module

The inclusion of questions on suicide in the annual [Healthy Ireland Survey](#) was a result of a close working relationship between the HSE NOSP and Healthy Ireland. The HSE NOSP produced a business case for, and worked with Healthy Ireland to develop survey questions for this module. 2021 was the first year a module on suicide prevention was included in this national survey.

The results published in 2022 were the seventh set of the findings from the survey. A representative sample of 7,455 people aged 15 and older living in Ireland were interviewed between November 2021 and July 2022. For the questions in the suicide module, data from both the 2021 and 2022 waves were combined to provide a robust sample.

Experiences of suicide, results:

- 67% know someone who has died by suicide, with 14% knowing someone close to them who has died in this way.
- Those aged between 45 and 64 are most likely to know someone who has died by suicide (45–54: 76%, 55–64: 77%), compared with 58% of those aged under 25, and 61% of those aged between 25 and 34.
- Just over a quarter (26%) of 45–54-year-olds know someone close to them who has died by suicide, compared with 15% of those aged under 25.

- Almost three quarters of those living in Munster (73%) and Connacht/Ulster (72%) know someone who has died by suicide. This compares to 59% of those living in Dublin and 69% of those living in the rest of Leinster.
- Just over a quarter (26%) report that the person they know who most recently died by suicide was a friend, 25% identify them as an acquaintance and 23% identify them as an extended family member. 4% identify a person who was an immediate family member.
- 8% of those who know someone who has died by suicide report that the death has a significant or devastating effect on them that they still feel.

Attempted suicide, results:

- 6% of respondents report that they have attempted to take their own life at some point in the past.
- 10% of those aged under 35 report an attempt to take their own life compared to less than 1% of those aged 65 or older.
- 15% of those describing their general health as fair or bad, and 9% of those with a long standing illness or health problem, report making an attempt to take their own life.

3.1.3. Planet Youth

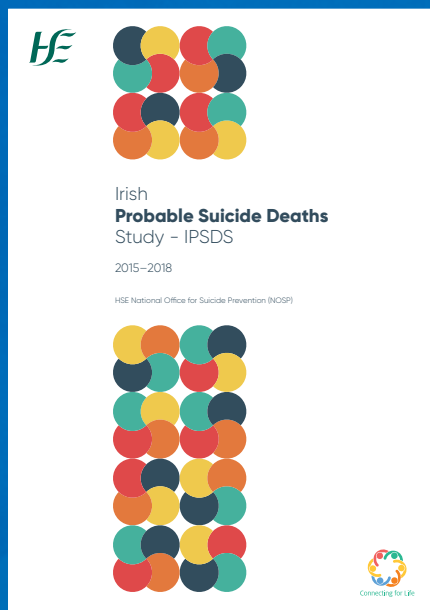
The [Planet Youth](#) survey was designed by the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA) at Reykjavik University. It examines many aspects of the lives of 16 year-olds and provides information on the risk and preventive factors that predict adolescent substance use, and leads to local/regional national interventions. Planet Youth focuses on the determinants of adolescent health, including relationships with friends and family, social activities, participation in sports and other extracurricular activities, bullying, future expectations, tobacco, alcohol and other substance use, sleep and stress.

In 2022, the HSE NOSP – in conjunction with researchers from NUI Galway and the NSRF – commenced a HRB-funded research project titled ‘Informing Youth Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion through Secondary Analysis of the Planet Youth Datasets (Inform - YSP)’.

The research aims to inform service provision and policy relating to mental well-being/suicide prevention by:

- identifying the adolescents who are most at-risk of experiencing poor mental well-being/suicidal ideation
- generating greater understanding about the factors that place adolescents at-risk
- examining the factors that buffer or protect against this risk
- exploring the stability of these relationships across three adolescent cohorts (sampled in 2018, 2020 and 2022).

In 2022, the research team at NUI Galway undertook an analysis on the 2018 data to explore the relationship between adversity and youth suicide ideation/wellbeing and examine whether positive connections with others moderates or buffers this relationship. The findings of this analysis will be disseminated in 2023.



The Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study (IPSDS)

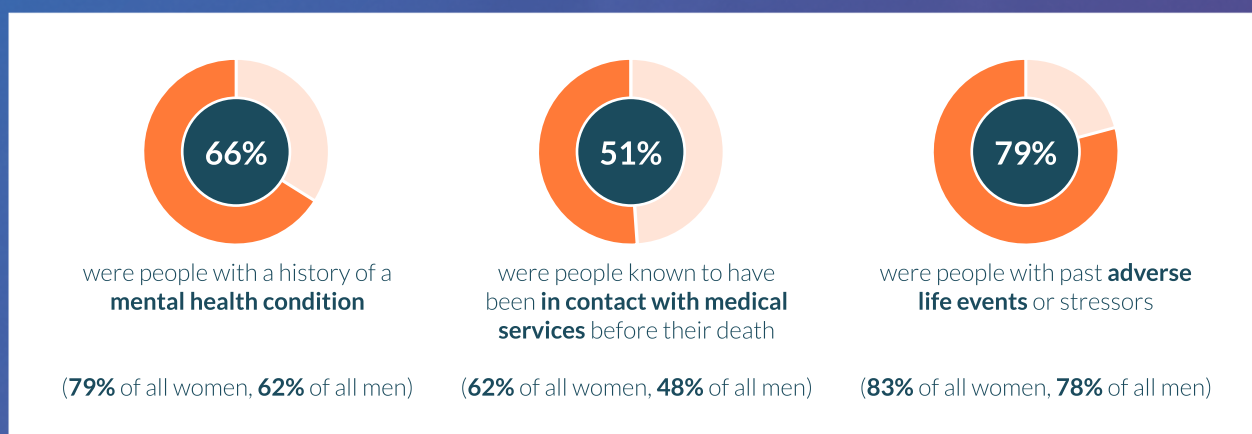
In 2022, the HSE NOSP published the Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study (IPSDS). The IPSDS is the result of a collaboration since 2016 between the HSE NOSP, the Coroners Service and the HRB, with support from the Department of Health.

The IPSDS presents information on probable suicide deaths, by looking at information contained in completed coronial files (from Coroners) through a wide lens. To gather information from coronial files for the study, the methodology and logistics of the HRBs National Drug-Related Deaths Index (NDRDI) were used. The governance, processes and methods of analysis are described in more detail, in the full study.

In Ireland, the current legal test for a coroner's verdict of suicide includes a requirement that the self-killing and intention are proved 'beyond a reasonable doubt'. This study includes these deaths. However, the study also includes additional deaths that are 'more likely than not' to have been death by suicide, that is, on the 'balance of probabilities'.

In applying this broad criteria for inclusion, this study therefore captured, analysed and presented more deaths than are typically included in official suicide statistics in Ireland, as published by the Central Statistics Office. It also provides much more in-depth information on the characteristics of people who have died.

The study has involved a secondary analysis of existing data. This means that the existing data in coronial files was not originally collected or recorded with this study in mind. Therefore, additional information that may have been of interest in this study, may not have been routinely available or recorded in those files.



Key findings

The IPSDS presents information of 2,349 deaths by probable suicide for a four-year period from 2015 to 2018. It has used anonymised information, so that no individual person can be, or has been, identified by the authors.

Of these people who died by probable suicide:

- 76% were men, 24% were women
- The highest numbers were between the ages of 35 and 54
- 50% were known to be single at their time of death
- 38% were known to be parents
- 66% had a history of a mental health condition
- 51% were known to have been in contact with medical services before their death
- 79% had past adverse life events or stressors
- 33% had a lifetime substance use history
- 23% had a history of previous self-harm
- 33% were in paid employment and 26% were unemployed
- 30% of their deaths occurred in a public location.

The full study outlines a wide range of information on these deaths by probable suicide, including sociodemographic information, clinical risk factors, adverse life events, and methods and places of death.

👁 [The Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study \(IPSDS\)](#)

👁 [The Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study \(IPSDS\) - Key findings](#)

3.1.4. Profiling self-harm and suicide risk in CHO1

In 2022, S3 Solutions were awarded a contract to undertake a community engagement and profiling exercise in CHO1 (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan). The aim of this work is to improve understanding of any specific risk or contributing factors to suicidal behaviour (including deaths by suicide, self-harm and suicide ideation) in this CHO area.

This research will also focus on two or more communities in the area to explore in more detail how these communities experience and respond to suicidal behaviour (including suicide attempt, self-harm and suicidal ideation). S3 Solutions worked collaboratively with HSE ROSPs in CHO1, and with the HSE NOSP on this research project.

3.1.5. Mental Health Promotion Interventions and Supports Provided by Voluntary Organisations to Workplaces

In 2022, the Health Promotion Research Centre in NUI Galway published research on [Mental Health Promotion Interventions and Supports Provided by Voluntary Organisations to Workplaces](#). The HSE NOSP and Healthy Ireland supported this research. The aim of the research was to map the range of mental health promotion supports and services that are offered by the voluntary sector to workplaces and to identify the most effective and feasible evidence-informed approaches that could be adopted to promote the mental health and wellbeing of workers in the Irish context. This research helped inform the development of the [Healthy Ireland at Work: A National Framework for Healthy Workplaces in Ireland, 2021–2025](#).

3.1.6. Showcasing innovation across area-levels

In 2022, the HSE NOSP published a report [Showcasing Innovation across area-level Connecting for Life Suicide Prevention Action Plans](#). This report covers part one of a wider project examining innovation and the self-evaluation of suicide prevention at an area-level, in collaboration with HSE ROSPs. 12 projects (dating from 2015 onwards) were selected for featuring in the Innovation Showcase report.

3.1.7. Work to prevent paracetamol-related intentional drug overdose

Action 6.1.2 in CfL is to 'continue improvements in adherence to the legislation limiting access to paracetamol through raising awareness amongst retailers and the public and the use of point-of-sale systems'.

The Department of Health, NSRF and the HSE NOSP lead a Working Group to collaborate on actions to prevent paracetamol related intentional drug overdose by optimising adherence to existing legislation limiting access to paracetamol. The group has representations from the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA), the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU), and the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI).

Work in 2022 included: the preparation of enhanced signage and messaging for point-of-sale areas and retail staff (in pharmacy, and non-pharmacy retail settings); preparation for a national survey of key stakeholders, and covert market surveillance completed by the HPRA with the retail sector. The survey (to determine levels of awareness of paracetamol sales regulations) and dissemination of associated awareness materials, will take place in 2023.

3.1.8. Disposal of Unused Medication Properly (DUMP)

The Disposal of Unused Medication Properly (DUMP) Campaign promotes the safe return and disposal of unused or unwanted medications. This is a means by which pharmacists can restrict access to means of suicidal behaviour. Unused or out-of-date medicines can build up in the home for a variety of reasons. Storing these medications long-term is not safe and can result a variety of adverse outcomes including accidental poisonings, intentional overdose, inappropriate sharing of medicines and environmental damage. In recent years, and with the support of the HSE NOSP, the DUMP Campaign has run in selected regions (such as Cork and Kerry since 2007, and more recently, in HSE CHO9).

In 2022, the HSE NOSP engaged with key stakeholders supporting the feasible national roll out of the campaign, as detailed in the [National Hazardous Waste Action Plan](#) (EPA, 2021). The HSE NOSP will support the planned national roll out in 2023, ensuring key stakeholders that all key messaging will be aligned with best practice suicide prevention messaging and approaches.

3.1.9. Deaths in HSE Mental Health Services

In alignment with CfL actions 5.2.3 and 7.2.2, this project is a collaboration between the HSE NOSP, the Mental Health Commission and HSE Mental Health Services. It involves a retrospective review of data reported to the Mental Health Commission and to the NIMS on all probable suicide deaths in Mental Health Services from 2015 to 2020.

In 2022, the analysis of data was completed and two reports drafted, for sign off and consultation with stakeholders in 2023. The learning from this project, will inform a strategic work plan to improve access to suicide data in community mental health services in the future.

In addition, in 2022 the HSE NOSP led work to develop new guidance for enhancing the use of the HSE Incident Management Framework in cases of community suicide. The guidance document was developed and consulted on in 2022, in preparation of approval processes, sign off, and piloting in 2023.

3.1.10. Central Statistics Office (CSO) Liaison Group on Suicide Mortality Statistics

The CSO Liaison Group on Suicide Mortality Statistics is facilitated by the NSRF and chaired by the CSO. Additional members are from the HSE NOSP, General Registration Office (GRO), Department of Health, Department of Justice, HRB, Coroner's Office, The Coroners Society of Ireland and An Garda Síochána.

 [Membership details and meeting minutes are available publicly on the CSO website.](#)

The broad aim of the group is to improve the quality of suicide statistics and their dissemination. The group provides a deliberative forum to ensure that the statistical system can meet national and regional policy requirements in the domain of suicide mortality statistics. The group examines and make recommendations on all quality aspects of suicide mortality and deaths of undetermined intent statistics, and works to ensure that the classification of suicide deaths in Ireland is consistent with international evidence informed guidelines and best practice.

In 2022, key agenda items for the Liaison Group included:

- Proposed changes to the suicide category in the An Garda Síochána Pulse System and the associated draft NOSP data sharing agreement with An Garda Síochána.
- The new annual CSO Statistical Bulletin on Suicide.
- Consultation with the General Registration Office on death registrations.
- Real time surveillance systems, e.g., the Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory (SSHO).

In 2022, the HSE NOSP also supported or participated in the following research papers associated with suicide surveillance:

- 👁️ [Real-time suicide surveillance supporting policy and practice \(2022\)](#)
- 👁️ [Real-Time Suicide Surveillance: Comparison of International Surveillance Systems and Recommended Best Practice \(2022\)](#)
- 👁️ [The development and validation of a dashboard prototype for real-time suicide mortality data \(2022\)](#)

3.1.11. Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects, 2021 and 2022

In 2021, the HSE NOSP introduced its first Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research projects, to support projects focused on improving the evidence base for mental health and suicide prevention on priority groups in Ireland. The scheme also aimed to promote and support collaborative research projects between researchers and services working in the area of suicide prevention in Ireland.

Thirteen projects were awarded funding and commenced work during 2021, and continued to progress throughout 2022. Where related outputs or developments are currently publicly available, they are highlighted below.

1. Impact of COVID Restrictions on People Experiencing Homelessness, Substance Use and Mental Ill-health throughout the pandemic.
 - 👁️ [The Effects of COVID-19 on People Experiencing Mental Ill-health, Substance Use Disorder and Homelessness or Housing Insecurity in the Dublin Region: A Longitudinal Qualitative Exploration](#)
2. Action research supporting development of a suicide prevention protocol in homeless services.
3. An investigation of suicidal behaviour and self-harm in adults with ADHD in Ireland.
 - 👁️ [The results of an investigation of suicidal behaviours and self-harm in adults with ADHD in Ireland](#)
4. Digital storytelling as a therapeutic intervention for Traveller men affected by suicide.
5. Safety Planning Group Intervention delivered with people experiencing Suicidality in an Acute Adult Mental Health Unit.
 - 👁️ [Using a Safety Planning Mobile App to Address Suicidality in Young People Attending Community Mental Health Services in Ireland: Protocol for a Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial](#)
6. Beyond Bullying - The Role of Humiliation in Suicidality in Ireland's Youth.
 - 👁️ [Associations between humiliation, shame, self-harm and suicidal behaviours among adolescents and young adults: A systematic review protocol](#)
7. Experiences of supports for suicide bereavement in Ireland: A national survey.
 - 👁️ [AfterWords: A survey of people bereaved by suicide in Ireland](#)
8. Retrospective chart review of patients presenting to the Emergency Department following High Lethality Intentional Drug Overdose (IDO) and subsequent prescribing practices.
9. Community Engagement for Suicide Prevention: Exploring Sex Worker Experiences in Ireland.
10. Lived Lives Revisited: A science-arts community intervention around suicide in priority groups.
 - 👁️ [Lived Lives Project](#)

11. Dying to farm: Towards developing a suicide prevention intervention for farmers in Ireland.
 - 👁 [‘New efforts to help farmers at risk of suicide’ Irish Examiner](#)
 - 👁 [‘Over half of Farmers experiencing depression’ The Farmers Journal](#)
12. A blue print for providing resources to parents of adolescents who self-harm.
 - 👁 [Impact Case Study: Helping parents support youth mental health](#)
 - 👁 [Project to improve youth mental health literacy of parents wins 2022 UCD Research Impact Case Study Award](#)
13. Developing a research-based Action Plan of priorities for implementing the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework (jointly funded with the Higher Education Authority).

As a result of the grant scheme, a working group was also established to steer two additional research projects that specifically address current gaps in knowledge and evidence of suicide, self-harm, and mental health amongst the Traveller Community. These projects are:

1. Traveller Mental Wellness Continuum Framework: A cultural intervention model of mental wellbeing and suicide prevention for members of the Travelling community in Ireland (funded by [Sláintecare](#)).
2. Closing the Gap: Exploring the co-variates of Suicidality among Irish Travellers Project (funded by [Sláintecare](#)).

3.1.12. HSE Bereavement support and information campaign

Following initiation (by the HSE National Director, Operations Planning) and development in 2021, the HSE NOSP continued to coordinate a working group and project team, to deliver a cohesive programme of work focussing on the themes of grief, loss and bereavement. Key members and partners included HSE Communications, HSE Mental Health, HSE Acutes, Hospital Services, Palliative Care, HR and HSE Workplace Wellbeing. Irish Hospice Foundation and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) were key external partners across the project.

The campaign commenced in December 2021, continued into Quarter 2 of 2022, and included:

- New public information bereavement, loss and grief, on the HSE website, at www.hse.ie/grief.
- Social media campaign of supportive messaging and signposting to relevant services, including dissemination of stakeholder partner pack. On social, the campaign had over 20.7 million impressions, and a reach of over 2.6 million.
- Development of accompanying leaflets and posters.
- 2-week radio campaign.
- Print campaign (56 regional press ads and 9 national press ads).
- Health Matters magazine article.
- Ongoing review of findings from a survey of healthcare workers, conducted by Irish Hospice Foundation.
- Developing targeted messaging and campaign material for healthcare workers, in collaboration with the HSE Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), (HSE Workplace Health and Wellbeing).

As a follow-up from the campaign, the HSE NOSP led and funded bespoke training to HSE EAP staff, in grief and complicated grief, and in the context of the impact of the pandemic on HSE staff. The HSE NOSP plans to develop this training offering in other clinical services in 2023, in collaboration with Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF).

HSE National Clinical Programme for Self-Harm and Suicide-related Ideation

The HSE's [National Clinical programme for Self-Harm and Suicide-related Ideation](#) (NCPSHI) was introduced to acute hospital emergency department (ED) settings in 2016. It had the overall aim to provide a caring and expert professional response to people presenting in self-harm crisis. The programme is now implemented in all 26 adult and one paediatric hospital ED setting that operate on 24/7 basis.

Currently, 49 Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) funded through the programme, are dedicated to a role whereby all patients who present to the ED following self-harm or with suicidal ideation:

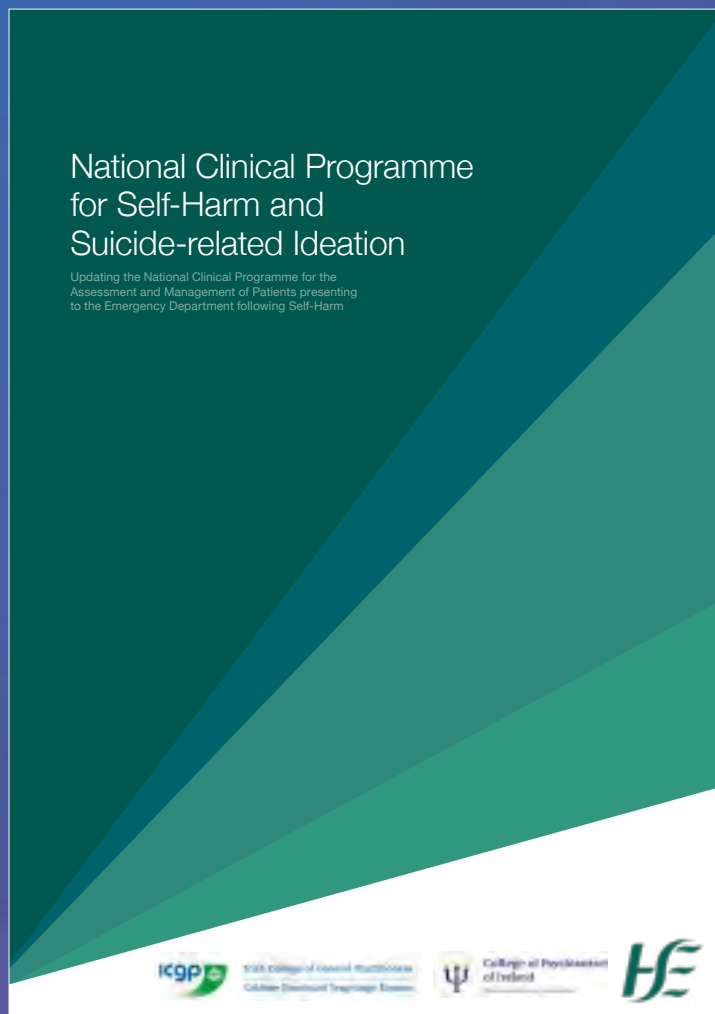
- receive a prompt biopsychosocial assessment
- their next of kin receive support and advice on suicide prevention
- the patient is linked with the next appropriate step in follow up, and
- both the patient and their general practitioner receive a written plan of care.

Ongoing development of the programme in ED settings is endorsed in the [Sharing the Vision Implementation Plan 2022–2024](#) and the HSE has approved the expansion of the Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN) service into primary care as outlined in the [NCPSHI Updated Model of Care](#) (2022). The revised model of care provides for a rapid service response for people presenting to their GP in suicidal crisis who do not require to be seen in an ED setting for medical reasons. Existing SCAN services are now under NCPSHI auspices and in 2022 six new SCAN CNS posts were funded with a view to national rollout as further funding becomes available.

The success of the NCPSHI has been demonstrated in its delivering the key clinical pillars of the programme. Accurate recording, analysis and dissemination of clinical data in relation to key performance indicators (KPI) is crucial in this regard and has been a recognised strength of the programme since its inception.

This important function has relied on funding through the HSE NOSP of a part-time data manager post since 2019. The data manager (seconded to the NCPSHI from the National Suicide Research Foundation) has developed the national database of the programme from 2018 onwards. The aims of the database are:

- to monitor the KPIs of the programme and the data submission process from the CNS staff
- to analyse patterns and trends of either self-harm or suicide-related ideation presentations nationally, and
- to provide evidence regarding hospital presentations for self-harm or suicidal ideation for specific population groups, i.e. ethnic minorities, unemployed, etc.



The NCPSHI database has been further used in research outputs through data requests, either internally to the HSE or externally, and a number of scientific papers with clinical data from Irish ED presentations with of people in suicidal crisis have been published.

Between January 2018 and June 2022, NCPSHI clinicians assessed 54,807 presentations due to self-harm or suicide-related ideation.

During this time:

- 48% of presentations were from males, and 52% were from females.
- The most prevalent age group reaching EDs was people aged 20 to 29 years (29%).
- 48% of presentations were due to suicide-related ideation only.
- A significantly higher proportion of males reached EDs for suicide-related ideation (55% male, 42% female).
- 34% of all presentations were of people attending mental health services at the time of their presentation to the NCPSHI service.
- In 45% of NCPSHI presentations, substances (involving alcohol and/or drugs) were recorded as contributory factors.
- There was a significant increase in overdose poisoning – noted in 5% of presentations in 2018, and in 14% of presentations in the first half of 2022.

3.1.13. Education and training

The HSE NOSP is involved in a wide range of education and training initiatives encompassing suicide and self-harm prevention, and suicide bereavement. These have been identified as key components of work to achieve the vision of CfL. Gatekeeper training in suicide prevention is available to anyone over the age of 18 years in Ireland, free of charge.

In 2022, the HSE NOSP worked with a range of stakeholders to support the delivery of suicide prevention gatekeeper programmes. These programmes include:

- Livingworks START – a 90 minute online interactive training programme that gives participants the skills and knowledge to keep others safe from suicide.
- safeTALK –an internationally recognised half-day training programme that supports participants to recognise and engage persons who might be having thoughts of suicide, and to connect them with community resources. The programme stresses safety while challenging taboos that inhibit open talk about suicide.
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) – a 2-day skills-based workshop that equips participants for an effective suicide intervention role. The emphasis is on first aid – helping a person at imminent risk stay safe and seek further help.
- STORM® – a 2–3 day skills-based interactive workshop designed to accommodate the needs of people with differing levels of engagement and responsibility for safety planning.
- Suicide Bereavement Professionals Workshop – a one-day programme that provides individuals with the skills and knowledge to support those bereaved through suicide.
- Understanding Self-harm – a 1-day programme that works to reduce the stigma of self-harm, improve individual and care agencies' awareness and sensitivities to self-harm issues and promote effective care services for those who self-harm.

Participants in training programmes, by CHO, in 2022

	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8	CHO 9	National	Total
Livingworks START	449	313	238	813	345	206	603	488	688	603	4,746
safeTALK	871	199	319	294	364	245	591	683	337	93	3,996
ASIST	246	84	138	93	117	148	288	40	132	183	1,469
STORM®	115	27	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	148
Suicide Bereavement Professionals Workshop	15	17	15	59	41	-	8	54	35	-	244
Understanding Self-harm	317	51	75	78	105	63	83	93	130	-	995
Introduction to Understanding Self Harm	-	44	35	100	-	-	-	75	-	-	254
Total	2,013	735	820	1,437	972	668	1,573	1,433	1,322	879	11,852

STORM® training in the HSE

In partnership with STORM® UK (Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Mitigation Training), the HSE NOSP supported an evaluation of the implementation of STORM® in Adult Mental Health Service teams and Children and Adolescent Mental Health services teams, in CHO1 and CHO3. The STORM® training programmes are framed around learning outcomes and skill sets relevant to the participating professionals. Considerable improvements were noted in participants' confidence following training and notable improvements were observed in communication skills to engage someone in distress. Participants were also more comfortable with their role as suicide prevention gatekeepers as a result of the STORM® training. Improvements were reported in assessing vulnerability, safety planning and working collaboratively with the adult/young person.



The training provided me with current best practice on suicide and self-harm which I will be applying immediately.

CAMS learning site in CHO7

In 2022 the HSE NOSP secured funding to pilot the implementation of CAMS (Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality) to mental health staff in CHO7. In 2022 implementation structures were agreed and ethical approval was secured for an evaluation. The programme will be rolled out in 2023.

Webinars

The HSE NOSP worked collaboratively with a number of organisations including the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IloP), the Irish General Practice Nurses Educational Association (IGPNEA), and National Clinical Advisory Group Leads (NCAGL) Mental Health, to deliver 'Suicide Prevention Information and Awareness' webinars to members. The webinars provided participants with an overview and understanding of the role of suicide prevention gatekeeper training and the key steps to take with a person who may be thinking about suicide. The provided an evidence based introduction to suicide prevention training with participants detailing how they would draw on the information and knowledge gathered going forward.



It was great to know what steps to take with a patient, I have always been anxious about asking or speaking about suicide.

Training partnerships

- The NSRF and Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) published research, with the support of the HSE NOSP. The **Report on Mental Health and Wellbeing within the Veterinary Professions** – on the health and wellbeing of veterinary professionals in Ireland – endorsed the delivery of safeTALK training to veterinary professionals in 2022. Participants who attended indicated an increase in confidence in dealing with the needs of someone who may be suicidal. Participants detailed how they would respond as per the safeTALK guidance by speaking with the individual, listening, and keeping them safe and felt confident in identifying appropriate services.
At baseline, half of the participants (50%) were uncertain about the proportion of deaths by suicide that they considered preventable, with a further 33% considering a large proportion as preventable. At follow-up, all participants considered a large proportion of suicides as preventable, indicating the trainings positive influence.
- With the support of the HSE NOSP, the College of Psychiatrists in Ireland and the NSRF worked to build evidence of the need for suicide bereavement training and supports to psychiatrists (and other health and social care professionals). To inform the direction of this work, a survey was developed and disseminated to all psychiatrist and trainee psychiatrist members in the College of Psychiatrists in Ireland, at the end of 2022.

- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) credits associated with suicide prevention training programmes were secured and promoted in 2022. CPD credits for programmes were secured with professions including: Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Irish College of Paramedics, ICGP, Royal College of Surgeons, Royal College of Physicians, College of Anaesthetists and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI).
- The HSE NOSP and the ICGP continued partnership initiatives in alignment with CfL action 3.1.5, to ‘provide and sustain training to health and social care professionals, including frontline mental health service staff and primary care health providers. This training will improve recognition of, and response to, suicide risk and suicidal behaviour among people vulnerable to suicide.’ In 2022, the ICGP:
 - + Incorporated a range of mental health promotion topics and experts into their ongoing Wednesday evening and wellbeing webinar series. Two examples were the webinars on Depression (with 948 attendees) and on Minding Your Wellbeing (with 174 attendees).
 - + Developed a new Quick Reference Guide on Depression, for review – by the ICGP Quality and Safety in Practice Committee – and launch in 2023.
 - + Included a session on ‘Self-harm and suicidal ideation in general practice’ at the ICGP Autumn Conference, ‘Shaping general practice for the future’ (280 GPs and undergraduate medical students attended the conference).

3.1.14. Data sharing protocol with An Garda Síochána

Accessing more timely data on suspected suicides is a strategic action within CfL. To this end, the HSE NOSP has been working with the Garda Victim Liaison Office which is part of the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) on a joint working protocol and Memorandum of Understanding. Under the protocol, An Garda Síochána would share daily records of suspected suicides from their Pulse system as well as providing a pack and referral to bereaved families, if appropriate.

The protocol has gone through the various stages within An Garda Síochána and was reviewed by their Leadership Team in late 2022. When implemented the data will form a key part of community response planning as well as enhancing prevention and postvention initiatives.

3.1.15. #chatsafe for families

In 2018, researchers at Orygen Australia developed the #chatsafe guidelines, which were the world’s first set of evidence-informed tools and tips designed to directly support young people to communicate safely about suicide on social media. To date, the guidelines have been downloaded over 100,000 times; they have been translated into 8 different languages for 12 different regions worldwide.

In 2022, the HSE NOSP reached a partnership agreement with Orygen Australia, as part of their efforts to globalise resources for other countries. In 2023, the HSE NOSP will continue to consult with Orygen to adapt, translate and introduce the [#chatsafe for parents and carers guide](#) in Ireland.

HSE Mental Health Literacy Campaign

The HSE NOSP participates in the Campaign Team for the delivery of the national HSE Mental Health Literacy Campaign, and is a primary funder of campaign activity. HSE Mental Health Operations lead the Campaign Team, with HSE Communications (Programmes and Campaigns) and members from HSE Digital and HSE Health and Wellbeing.

In addition to the development of the campaign during 2021 and 2022, the Team also had a priority focus on improving the digital offering across the HSE Mental Health website www.yourmentalhealth.ie.

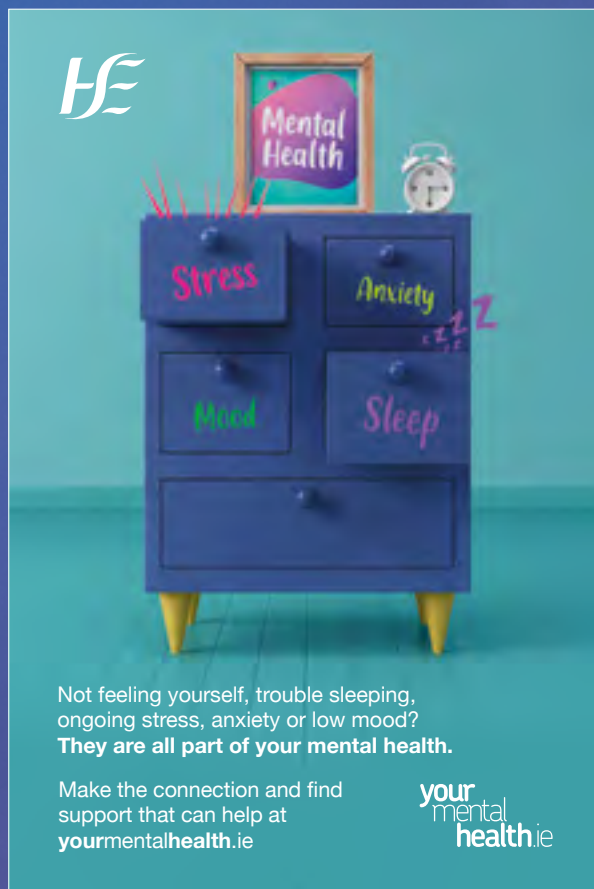
For example, ongoing developmental work on:

- The reorganisation of existing (and creation of new) content on the site – to provide appropriate and accessible information and signposts to support services, for people visiting who have common mental health difficulties or for people who support others.
- A 'Mind Plan' App. Based on the NHS 'Every Mind Matters Mind Plan', this tool will be integrated with the site in 2023.
- Showcasing a wider range of online and/or digital products on the site, such as the HSE Stress Control programme.

On World Mental Health Day (10th October 2022) the new HSE Mental Health Literacy Campaign was officially launched. The campaign – which has continued into 2023 – helps people make the connection between common mental health difficulties (like ongoing stress, sleep, anxiety or low mood) that they, or others in their life may be experiencing, and highlights the different levels of support that can help.

The main channels utilised for the campaign in quarter 4 of 2022, focussed on reaching a wide audience.

- Radio: national and local, audio platforms (e.g., Spotify, ACast).
- Sponsored reads: podcasts (e.g., Second Captains, and Catch up with Louise).
- Video on demand: RTÉ Player, All 4, Sky on Demand, YouTube.
- Out-of-home: nationwide: buses, bus shelters, train stations, (commuter wait areas).

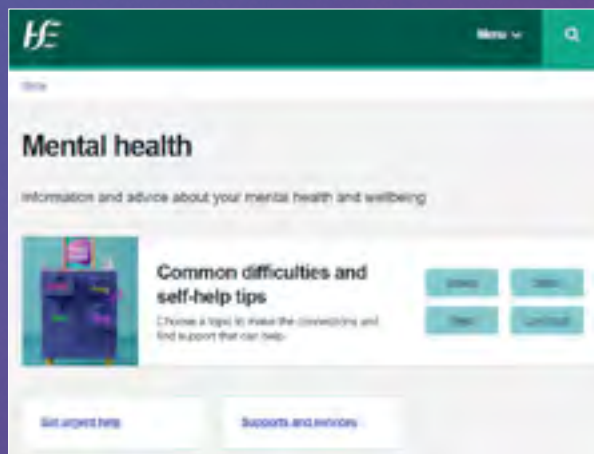


From the launch in October to the year end, the new campaign performed strongly.

- Sessions on the www.yourmentalhealth.ie site increased by 86% from the previous quarter.
- New users to the site increased by 66%.
- An additional 20,000 sessions were recorded on the site, for the combined pages on stress, anxiety, low mood and sleep difficulties (as per the Campaign topics). 35% of these users visited signposts to tips and help.
- 1,000 (7%) of site users visited 'helping someone else' pages weekly.
- 41% of site traffic came from campaign activity on social channels, 34% came from organic search, and 17% came from paid search.
- There was 55% 'Video On Demand' completion rate of campaign ads on YouTube (29% being the benchmark).
- Radio listenership figures indicated that 71% of all adults heard the campaign radio ad at least once, and 48% heard it at least 3 times.

On social in 2022, YourMentalHealth.ie:

- Had over 81,000 Facebook followers (75,000 in the year previous).
- Had approximately 59 million impressions on Facebook (paid and organic).
- Generated over 527,000 engagements on Facebook (paid and organic).
- Had over 13,000 Twitter followers.
- Generated over 1,400 engagements on Twitter.
- Had a reach of over 100,000 on Twitter (estimate as reach figures only available from June 2022).



3.2. HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention

The main role of [HSE ROSPs](#) is to coordinate the development, and support the implementation of the regional CfL Suicide Prevention action plans. As such, HSE ROSPs work across a range of Community Health Services, CHOs and areas nationwide to assist all relevant services and stakeholders in implementing the relevant actions of each plan. They are supported in their work by the HSE NOSP to ensure that each local action plan is evidence based and in line with national programme goals and performance metrics. In 2022, local CfL Implementation Plans (for the current implementation period) were completed in CHOs 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9, and the remaining four are to be finalised in 2023.

In 2022 the HSE NOSP:

- Funded CHOs to deliver suicide prevention training in line with the national [Connecting for Life Education and Training Plan](#).
- Resourced a fortnightly Learning Community of Practice (LCOP) and a programme of Continued Professional Development for the HSE ROSP network.
- Supported the establishment of a new Working Group to examine how support for the HSE ROSP network can be further developed. This followed research conducted by a HSE ROSP (as part of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland Masters in Bereavement), scoping self-care needs for this group.

The HSE NOSP also provides additional annual funding to CHOs, for individual projects that support the implementation of their local CfL plans. Annually, ROSPs submit business cases for initiatives requiring funding. The management of the allocation, monitoring and evaluation of such funding is integral to the work of both the HSE NOSP and the HSE ROSPs. Each CHO area is required to provide quarterly financial and activity reports to the HSE NOSP.

The following are initiatives and projects that were successful in receiving additional funding to CHOs, in 2022.

CHO 1 (Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

- The implementation of a new Communications Plan for Cavan Monaghan, including the development of:
 - + Resources for print and social media on signposting to local supports and services, supporting someone at risk of suicide, and supporting people bereaved by suicide.
 - + Printed resources for front-line professionals on referral pathways for people at risk of suicide.
 - + A social media strategy for communication of information on managing risks of suicide and signposting to supports.
 - + The Community Response Plan to suicide.
 - + Articles and interviews for local print and radio coverage.
- The allocation of funds to local community and voluntary groups to support initiatives to reach at risk groups in relation to supporting their mental health and reducing risks of suicide and self-harm.

↳ Continued

Specific at risk groups targeted included:

- + People bereaved by suicide (e.g., development of Suicide Bereavement Support Group in Monaghan).
- + Young men (e.g., support toward the development of early intervention youth mental health services).
- + Travellers (e.g., identification of champions in Traveller community to help signpost Travellers to local mental health supports and services).
- + Refugees and asylum seekers (e.g., work with local agencies on wellbeing initiatives to support residents in local reception centres).
- + Victims of domestic violence (e.g., work with local Dochas for Women Service on improving access to supports for victims of domestic violence).
- + Other groups as determined by local need.

CHO 2 (Community Healthcare West)

- The delivery of the Eden Programme on a phased approach, in Community Healthcare West. This comprised of the delivery, review and evaluation for the seventh programme in two sites (one face-to-face and one online), and the recruitment for the eighth programme to be delivered in 2022, in three sites.
- Continuation of the NUIG IT Project, and the development of the SafePlan App. This comprised the development of a pilot randomised control trial of the SafePlan intervention and advancement of the associated Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Project (a project on using artificial intelligence and machine learning to gain a better understanding of complex and interactive suicide risk).
- The provision of the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service in Roscommon (through Vita House in Roscommon).
- The provision of the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service and Flourish Services in Mayo (through the Family Centre, Castlebar) risk groups in relation to supporting their mental health and reducing risks of suicide and self-harm.

CHO 3 (Mid West Community Healthcare)

- Support the implementation of actions in the Mid West Connecting for Life Communications Plan, including the facilitation of annual networking events for stakeholders.
- The update, reprint and circulation of Mid West crisis service cards, leaflets and services posters.
- Support participation in annual Mental Health Week events and festivals across three counties.

CHO 4 (Cork, Kerry Community Healthcare)

- Support participation and planning for the annual Cork and Kerry Mental Health and Wellbeing Fest, and the distribution of 40,000 Green Ribbons across the region.
- The delivery of Cork and Kerry CfL stakeholder conferences.
- The update, reprint and circulation of Cork/Kerry crisis service cards, leaflets and services posters.
- Support training to the Kerry Student Support Care Team.
- Support the initial development of the River Project (crisis signage at high-risk locations).
- Support the development of Traveller signposting resources, with representatives of HSE Mental Health Services and the HSE Traveller Health Unit Cork/Kerry and in collaboration with Traveller organisations across Cork/Kerry.
- Support the delivery of Traveller Culture Awareness Training (TCAT) in Mental Health Services in Cork/Kerry.
- Support to Joy in the Park, Cork Pride and Together at the Castle (Mallow).
- Development of a mental health awareness initiative for the FAI Women's National League – Flag Your Feelings.

CHO 5 (South East Community Healthcare)

- Supporting mental health promotion in South East Community Healthcare including among priority groups, on World Mental Health Day and World Suicide Prevention Day.
- The development of resources/literature/publications for the five counties.
- Support for partner organisation initiatives and events in suicide prevention and mental health promotion.
- Continued support of facilitated and peer supported suicide bereavement support groups in Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary.

CHO 6 (Community Healthcare East)

- Support for the development, updating, reprinting and circulation of information resources across Community Healthcare East.

CHO 7 (Dublin South, Kildare, West Wicklow)

- Support the development of communications and campaign resources for World Suicide Prevention Day, World Mental Health Day, the Green Ribbon Campaign and other signposting materials.

↳ Continued

- The development of a mental health supports and services pathways booklet for children/young people and parents guardians.
- Support for the mid-term evaluation of Ballyfermot SPACE (Suicide Prevention and Community Engagement) project.
- Production of promotional signage and signposting materials for construction workers locally.
- Continuation of work of Minding Me working group, including events World Maternal Mental Health Week, and a range of bespoke resources and workbooks.
- Support the promotion of the WITH (Wellbeing in the Home) Programme – a young person’s guide to parental mental health – across CHO7.
- Support work with Naas General Hospital on the development of a suicide intervention and bereavement support project.
- Provide ongoing funding support to the Village Counselling Service (Tallaght).
- Support the development of an illustrated storybook for children who have been bereaved by suicide (ongoing in 2023).

CHO 8 (Midlands, Louth, Meath CHO)

- Support community and statutory organisations in the delivery of Mental Health Awareness Weeks and information events for the annual Green Ribbon Campaign.
- The update, reprint and circulation of crisis service cards, leaflets and services posters across six counties.
- To support community development work from the Midlands LGBTI+ Project, established in 2021 under the governance of Youth Work Ireland.
- Support for the development of the Midlands Louth Meath CfL Action Plan, to 2024.
- Funding of the Travelling to Wellbeing programme, delivered on an ongoing basis by Offaly Traveller Movement.
- Funding of the Men Power project, delivered by Offaly Local Development Company.
- Development of Crisis Response Plan for the Traveller Community in Laois, Westmeath, Longford, Louth and Meath.

CHO 9 (Dublin North City and County)

- Support for the development, updating, reprinting and circulation of information resources across Dublin North City and County.

Irish Suicide Bereavement Survey

AfterWords: A survey of people bereaved by suicide in Ireland, was launched by Mary Butler TD, Minister for Mental Health and Older People, in October 2022.

Funded by the HSE NOSP as part of the Collaborative Research Grant Scheme 2021/2022, this first-of-its-kind survey in Ireland was undertaken by the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), in collaboration with the suicide bereavement organisation HUGG (Healing Untold Grief Groups).

AfterWords: A survey of people bereaved by suicide in Ireland



[READ REPORT >](#)

The study sought to provide a national profile of the impact of suicide bereavement and the needs of the estimated 60,000 people affected by suicide every year in Ireland. As well as understanding the emotional and physical impact of suicide bereavement, researchers sought to identify gaps and barriers to accessing appropriate supports for those affected.



National Suicide Research Foundation



Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



Between October 2021 and February 2022, 2,413 adults completed the survey.

- While most (62%) of participants had lost a family member or partner to suicide, a significant proportion had experienced the loss of friends, work colleagues, or as part of their professional role (including first responders, members of An Garda Síochána and healthcare workers). In addition, half of participants (54%) experienced multiple bereavements.
- Half of participants (56%) reported poor mental wellbeing and reported symptoms of depression and anxiety were higher than the general population. Of concern, one-in-five participants expressed some thoughts of self-harm or suicide in the two weeks prior to the survey. Poor mental wellbeing was most pronounced for young adults aged 18-24 years.
- Common grief experiences reported included expressions of guilt, feelings of perceived stigma and shame, as well as searching for an explanation for the death. Impacts following the death included mental health challenges, relational or family problems and prolonged use of alcohol. Despite this, many participants also reported positive personal growth over time.
- One-third of participants did not access any supports following their loss. Formal supports were accessed to a lesser extent by men or people experiencing suicide loss as part of their professional role. Those who did access support generally found them to be beneficial particularly specialised services.
- Two-thirds (65%) of participants felt the quality of services in their area was poor and common barriers to accessing support included awareness, availability, waiting times and financial costs.
- Factors that helped people access support included realising the significance of the mental health impacts, encouragement and information from others, financial and practical ease of access, and previous positive experiences.

The launch was followed by a stakeholder workshop, which generated important action points and priority recommendations to inform future service development and policy. In November 2022 – to coincide with World Suicide Bereavement Day – an accompanying public webinar was held with the NSRF, HUGG and representatives from Irish Hospice Foundation and Dublin Fire Brigade.

In 2022, the HSE NOSP also supported the following research paper associated with complicated grief: **Synthesising existing research on complicated grief in intellectual disability: findings from a systematic review** (2022).

3.3. The NGO sector

The HSE NOSP allocates over 50% of its budget to supporting mental health and suicide prevention NGOs that are strategically linked to CfL.

 [Please see Section 5.0 Financial Summary](#)

NGOs apply for annual funding from the HSE NOSP through an SLA process. The HSE NOSP NGO Programme Manager ensures that funded activities align to CfL actions, and ensures quarterly reporting from each funded agency, of their activity levels and achievements. Understanding particular service needs and demands – as informed by services experiences, research, evidence, standards and best practice – is important for the HSE NOSP in assessing funding applications or making allocations.

All HSE NOSP SLAs are considered within the context of relevant HSE budgets – and funding is provided and governed under the national [HSE Governance Framework for the funding of Non-Statutory Agencies](#).

The following information are highlights from self-reported activity in 2022, from each NOSP-funded NGO.

Aware

www.aware.ie



The HSE NOSP supports the delivery of Aware programmes that are designed using the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). These programmes are evidence-based and delivered free of charge by trained Aware facilitators. Adults with depression and mood related conditions are offered free programmes in their local communities, and online.

In 2022

- There were 1,115 participants in the Life Skills Adult Programme (across 76 programmes).
 - There were 1,620 participants in the Life Skills Online Programme.
 - There were 159 participants in the Living Well with Bipolar Disorder Programme (across 18 programmes).
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Belong To Youth Services

www.belongto.org



Belong To's National Network, and Mental Health Programmes of work are supported by the HSE NOSP. These encompass a range of services and mental health initiatives for young LGBTI+ people delivered nationally through local networks across the country. They support the wider objectives of the national organisation, to ensure young LGBTI+ people are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences in Ireland.

In 2022

- There were 12 National Network meetings, providing a forum for knowledge exchange, peer support and collective planning.
- There were 7 supervision and therapeutic support National Network meetings (with Insight Matters) for front-line youth workers.
- Through the National Network (x10 organisations):
 - + 542 one-to-one support sessions were delivered to 347 individuals (young people and families) and 775 group sessions were delivered.
 - + 828 students, 305 staff and 322 other professionals, received training.
- The main presenting issues reported to National Network organisations were mental health (27%) and bullying/victimisation (20%).
- 127 hours of crisis counselling were provided in partnership with Pieta.
- The National Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland research study commenced – with Trinity College Dublin, and co-funded by the HSE NOSP, HSE Social Inclusion and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Community Creations (spunout.ie)

www.spunout.ie



Funding from the HSE NOSP supports spunout in their provision of high quality and trusted online content, video content, information and campaigns for young people. This helps to promote help-seeking behaviour among young people, and improve their mental health literacy, including on lesser-understood mental health issues such as eating disorders, self-harm, suicide and mental health disorders.

In 2022

- Spunout continued the provision of specific information to at-risk groups who require more targeted information services (e.g. Disability, Traveller, LGBTI+, Migrants, BIPOC), and in line with CfL 'priority groups'.
- The 'Tune in to Burnout' campaign (April) aimed to equip young people with awareness on how to recognise and prevent burnout, as well as the individual, environmental and societal factors that lead to it. A pre-campaign wellbeing survey with 1,000 young people, showing that 85% of 16-25 year olds were experiencing at least one of the main symptoms of burnout.
- The 'Treatment Directions' campaign (October) highlighted the different kinds of mental health treatments available in Ireland, what these treatments are used for, how they can be accessed, and what it is like to engage in them. A campaign survey of 628 young people found 47% did not know where to go to access mental health treatment and over 1 in 3 young people said they would not seek mental health treatment if they needed it.
- There was a total combined readership for mental health content on spunout.ie of over 428,000. There was a combined readership for Mental Health Literacy Factsheets of over 36,000, and for Mental Health Crisis Factsheets of over 172,000.

Dublin Simon Community

www.dublinsimon.ie



Dublin Simon Sure Steps Counselling Service receives funding from the HSE NOSP, specifically to facilitate the provision of the service out-of-hours, at evenings and weekends. This is a low threshold, primary care level service for the homeless client base as well as for an increasing number of other homeless services across the Dublin Region. The service has evolved to provide two interlinked strands – general counselling and a suicidality/self-harm focused programme of interventions, including the CAMS (Collaborative Assessment Management Suicidality) approach.

In 2022

- There were 265 new referrals to the service. At the end of the year, 263 clients were active, with a counsellor assigned.
- 1,712 one-to-one sessions were delivered (day and out-of-hours, remote and face-to-face).
- There were 901 drop-in visits (across 11 services) – 423 were to day services and 478 were to out-of-hours services.
- A new drop-in service was established in Bray, Co Wicklow.
- A counsellor was recruited to work exclusively with 18 to 24 year olds.

Exchange House Ireland

www.exchangehouse.ie



Exchange House National Travellers Service, with the support of the HSE NOSP, provides a range of Traveller-specific mental health and suicide prevention services to the Traveller community. Their aim is to improve the overall wellbeing of Travellers and reduce the likelihood of suicide or self-harm within the community.

In 2022

- 271 Service users accessed individual supports in the National Traveller Mental Health service, including counselling, social work, family support and peer support. The main areas of focus included homelessness, accommodation advocacy, depression, suicidal crisis, addiction, financial pressure, child protection issues, discrimination, legal/justice issues, sexual abuse, family relationships, bereavement and physical health.
- 22 Traveller participants completed a 16-week college preparation course.
- Following on from a 16-week preparation course, 26 Travellers from Longford, Westmeath, Offaly and Laois commenced Level 7 Diploma in Community Development and Wellbeing with NUI Galway (in September).
- 16 Traveller women in Limerick City completed Mental Health First Aid Ireland training. 14 of the group completed Level 6 Diploma in Advanced Facilitation Skills and Train the Trainer.
- Limerick Traveller Network completed a survey with 107 Traveller families in Limerick City. The surveyed produced findings to demonstrate the lack of representation and voice for Travellers in Limerick.
- The 3rd part of 'John Boy' (a suicide prevention short film trilogy) premiered at the Lighthouse Cinema Smithfield. The film was also screened at the Indie Film Festival Cork.

First Fortnight

www.firstfortnight.ie



First Fortnight works to challenge mental health stigma through creative arts, interactive events and the provision of creative therapies to marginalised groups. HSE NOSP funding supports First Fortnight's advocacy and therapeutic work - namely the annual First Fortnight Mental Health Art and Culture Festival (which is held every January) and the provision of Art, Music and Group Creative therapies for people who are experiencing homelessness.

In 2022

- The First Fortnight Festival (January) worked with 105 artists and 13 creative technical staff to deliver 77 events to diverse audiences. The Festival comprised 67 performances, 11 exhibition days and 10 workshops. 1,964 people attended 46 in-person events (in Dublin, Donegal, Galway, Kildare, Cork and Wexford). 1,502 people attended 31 online events (available nationally). Over the course of the Festival campaign (November 2021 to January 2022) there was an estimated 'reach' of over 8 million across all platforms.
- NOSP-funded activity included the provision of 541 hours of Art, Music and Group Therapy for the homeless community, who are a key priority group within CfL.
- First Fortnight commenced piloting their service evaluation tool and to evaluate the impact and suitability of this tool.
- First Fortnight completed an update of their website, which made firstfortnight.ie secure, GDPR compliant and Charity regulator compliant.
- There was continued service development of CACTus (Child and Adolescent Creative Therapy Service) which launched in 2021.
- There was ongoing development of outreach partnerships, for example in an International Protection Accommodation centre (commenced December 2021) and in Exchange House (commenced in March 2022).

GAA

www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/community-and-health/healthy-club/



The HSE NOSP is a supporting partner in the GAA Healthy Clubs initiative, which aims to help GAA clubs explore how they support the holistic health of their members and communities. Funding from the Office specifically supports the provision of a National Health and Wellbeing Coordinator for GAA Healthy Clubs, and the promotion of ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) and safeTALK suicide prevention training programmes across the GAA. Additional strands of work include general mental health promotion, suicide prevention and critical incident response initiatives.

In 2022

- 150 new clubs commenced Phase 4 of the Healthy Clubs initiative.
- 9,311 people engaged through mental health programmes and events – most commonly in tandem with the HSE mental health campaign, 5 Ways to Wellbeing campaign, 'One Good Coach' module, and safeTALK.

- A requirement to promote safeTALK training to club members, was included as part of a new continuous improvement model for Healthy Clubs.
 - The GAA Community and Health departments supported units in responding to 20 incidents of suspected deaths by suicide. The GAA Critical Incident Response Plan was deployed in all cases, and linkages with HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention were common.
 - Partnerships and/or referral pathways were also maintained with, among others, Samaritans, Jigsaw, Pieta and Belong To Youth Services.
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HUGG, Healing Untold Grief Groups

www.hugg.ie



HUGG is a national suicide bereavement charity, with its main aim to provide reactive grief support and advice to suicide-bereaved adults, raise public awareness of both the impact of suicide on the bereaved and the service provided by HUGG, and encourage and participate in suicide prevention research. Funding from the HSE NOSP supports the delivery of HUGG Peer Support Groups, and building their capacity to evaluate approaches of work.

In 2022

- There were 1,559 participants at HUGG meetings.
 - There were 495 new attendees at HUGG Peer Support Groups.
 - 5 HUGG Volunteer Training Programmes were delivered.
 - AfterWords: A survey of people bereaved by suicide in Ireland, was launched (October). This national survey (of over 2,400 people) was a collaborative project with the National Suicide Research Foundation, and with the support of the HSE NOSP.
 - HUGG participated in a wide range of additional public information, partnership and advocacy events, and in the media.
-

ISPCC (Childline)

www.childline.ie



Childline provides a range of active listening services for children and young people up to and including age 18, across phone, text and online chat, with additional information and resources online. Funding from the HSE NOSP supports the provision of these services for young people, 24 hours every day, 365 days every year - in particular, the ongoing recruitment, selection, training, development, support and supervision of Childline Volunteers.

The HSE NOSP also provided pilot funding in 2021 and 2022, for the delivery of Childline's Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programmes (Silvercloud). These comprise mainly 'Space from Anxiety' (for those between the ages of 14 and 18), 'Supporting An Anxious Child' (for parents/carers of those between the ages of 5 and 11) and 'Supporting an Anxious Teen' (for parents/carers of those between the ages of 12 and 18).

In 2022

- There were over 75,700 Childline calls and over 360 'Ask Alex' emails received.
- There were 21,939 online conversations held.
- There were 136,523 users on childline.ie.
- There were 314 new referrals to Childline's Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programmes (Silvercloud).
- 227 new cases were opened across Childline's Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programmes (Silvercloud) – 165 parents/carers and 62 young people.
- Between January and March, young people reported 100% satisfaction rates with the programmes and parents/carers reported satisfaction rates of 94%.
- 10 Childline Supervisors, 12 Childline Call Facilitators and 74 Childline Volunteers were trained as 'Supporters' for the delivery of Childline's Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programmes (Silvercloud).

LGBT Ireland

www.lgbt.ie



Funding from the HSE NOSP specifically supports the training function of LGBT Ireland and the organisation's efforts to provide support and information to LGBTI+ people and their family members. This includes the development of a network of peer support groups across the country, the delivery of mental health and suicide prevention initiatives for the LGBTI+ community, and the provision of a support helpline.

In 2022

- There were 1,099 helpline calls and 747 chats received.
- There were 84 peer meetings with 400 attendees.
- There were 23 webinars/events held, with 1,191 attendees.
- There were 63 workshops held, with 615 participants.
- 76 Helpline volunteers and 6 Peer Facilitators were trained.
- 'Believe Me or Not, But I Am Who I Am' (experiences of LGBTQI+ asylum seekers proving credibility in the Irish international protection system) and 'Unveiling Inequality, experiences of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma' research findings were published. These reports highlight the levels of poor mental health and wellbeing with recommendations for supporting people on the margins of a minority community and in more than one minority community.
- LGBT Ireland coordinated the sector in seeking and managing host accommodation offers for LGBT+ Ukrainian refugees. In 2022, they successfully accommodated 11 refugees and supported 38 LGBT+ Ukrainians – through peer support activities, individual support and other activities.

Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI)

www.mhfi.org



HSE NOSP funding to the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, is to support the three year initiative - CAIRDE (Construction Alliance to Reduce Suicide). This project seeks to use the construction industry in Ireland as a setting to create and embed a whole organisation mental fitness culture, which can actively promote and support men's mental health and resilience, and reduce the risk of suicide.

In 2022

- The CAIRDE project progressed, with 1,675 people completing the on-site survey across 58 construction sites, owned by 8 companies.
- Two systematic reviews were conducted, focusing on mental health and suicide stigma reduction interventions for men, and the key ingredients of mental health promoting interventions in the construction sector.
- There was a comprehensive review of the research findings and a first draft report generated.
- A second study (which replicated the original on-site survey) commenced with young apprentices within the construction industry. Over 400 responses were received from eight different training bodies.
- Planning took place for co-design workshops for the General Awareness Training (GAT) element of CAIRDE.
- Work progressed to identify the core pillars of the CAIRDE intervention – what interventions have shown promise, what improvements can be achieved, and the types of training, education, or learning that might be most applicable.

My Mind

www.mymind.org



MyMind provides a range of counselling and psychotherapy services online and face-to-face across the country. Services are available for children, adolescents, adults, couples and families in a wide variety of different languages. In 2022 HSE NOSP funding to MyMind allowed for the provision of subsidised/ low cost and free counselling sessions for the most economically disadvantaged, and subsidised sessions for people who are unemployed, employed part-time, or students.

In 2022

- There were 42,607 counselling appointments.
- Of these, 11,852 were low-cost, 6,673 were online, 5,179 were face-to-face, and 1,502 were free appointments for CfL priority groups.
- There were 203 active mental health professionals working in the services.

The National Family Resource Centre (FRC) Mental Health Promotion Project

www.familyresourcementalhealth.ie



Funding from the HSE NOSP supports the delivery of the Family Resource Centres (FRCs) Mental Health Promotion Project across the network of FRCs nationwide. This project includes the promotion of suicide and self-harm awareness training programmes, and the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice training, across the network of 121 FRCs across the country.

In 2022

- 29 programmes (with 347 participants) were held across the network of FRCs – comprising Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) training (5x2-day events), Suicide Prevention Code of Practice training (8 events), Self-care Sessions (6 events), 30-Minutes for Me! (7 events) and other general information events (3 events).
- 90 FRC staff attended the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice Training in Ballymun FRC (Dublin), Kilmovee FRC (Mayo), Downstrands FRC (Donegal), Rosemount FRC (Dublin), Northside FRC (Limerick), Silver Arch FRC Nenagh (Tipperary), Athlone FRC (Westmeath) and Newbridge FRC (Kildare).
- The 53 staff and volunteers that completed the 2-day WRAP programme were from 17 FRCs across the country.
- Additional activities included:
 - + Working in partnership with HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Ireland, to deliver 3 Information Sharing and Networking events (South East, Laois Offaly, and Mid West).
 - + Conducting a Training Needs Survey across all 121 FRCs (138 response from 81 FRCs). The top three training requests were for Compassion Fatigue training, WRAP training, and Suicide Prevention Code of Practice training.
 - + The redevelopment of the website to promote the work and services of the FRC Mental Health Promotion Project.
 - + Participation in the Health and Wellbeing Community Referral Programme – a Social Prescribing Service delivered in partnership with the HSE in Cork and Kerry.

The National Suicide Research Foundation

www.nsrp.ie



The NSRF is an independent, multi-disciplinary research unit that delivers research projects in suicide, self-harm and mental health. Funding from the HSE NOSP ensures these projects can contribute to the surveillance, research, implementation, evaluation and the evidence base for strategic goals and actions of CfL. The HSE NOSP also funds the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI), which is operated by the NSRF. It is the world's first national registry of cases of intentional self-harm presenting to hospital emergency departments.

In 2022

- The NSRF continued delivery of a range of outputs, across core research projects:
 - + The National Self-Harm Registry Ireland Report.
 - + Deaths in Mental Health Services (project with Mental Health Commission and HSE).
 - + Mental Health of Veterinary Professionals Survey.
 - + Monitoring of Self-Harm in Prisons (SADA Project).
 - + Preventing Paracetamol-Related Intentional Drug Overdose Working Group.
 - + Development of a university module in suicide prevention.
 - + Impact of Patient Suicide on Psychiatrists in Ireland.
 - + The coordination and streamlining of research completed by third-level institutions (Higher Education Authority, HSE NOSP).
 - + Evaluation of the CAMS (The Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality) in CHO7.
 - + Self-harm – Revision of training programme and development of new evidence-based materials for utilisation in the training programme.
- The NSRF supported other research activities associated with CfL objectives and actions, including on the following themes, groups or streams of work:
 - + The role of the media and media reporting in suicide prevention.
 - + The CSO Suicide Mortality Statistics Liaison Group.
 - + The CfL Expert Advisory Group (ExAG).
 - + The Higher Education Authority (HEA) CfL Working Group.
 - + The CfL National Cross-sectoral Steering and Implementation Group.
 - + Evaluation and scalability of the Suicide and Self-harm Observatory (SSHO).
 - + Regular synthesis and summation of literature in relation to COVID-19 of relevance for the NGO groups and CfL partners.
 - + Provision of information and briefing documents for CfL partners, Government departments, media and general public – as required.
 - + Support of the Irish Probable Suicide Deaths Study (IPSDS), National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Project and Open Dialogue Project.
 - + Collaborations with Text50808 and Exchange House Ireland.
 - + Participation in the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Surveillance and Research in Suicide Prevention.

Pieta

www.pieta.ie



Funding from the HSE NOSP supports the provision of free one-to-one therapeutic services and the 24/7 Pieta helpline to people who are in suicidal distress, who engage in self-harm, or who are bereaved by suicide. The Office also specifically funds the provision of the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service (SBLS) by Pieta nationally. This service delivers proactive and practical support to individuals, families and communities who have experienced a loss through suicide.

In 2022

- There were 41,622 helpline calls, and 57,420 text messages received to the helpline service.
- There were 43,894 intervention (suicide, self-harm) counselling appointments provided, to between 2,200 and 2,600 unique clients each quarter.
- There were 7,438 bereavement counselling appointments provided, to between 330 and 380 unique clients each quarter.
- The SBLS delivered 4,754 client-facing hours, to between 230 and 260 household cases each quarter.
- Across all counselling clients, between 60% and 65% each quarter, were deemed to be at 'high risk'.

Samaritans

www.samaritans.ie



Samaritans Ireland is a national organisation which supports the work of 21 Samaritans branches (13 in ROI, 8 in NI) and over 2,000 active volunteers all across Ireland. Samaritans provides a long-established free 24-hour telephone listening service in Ireland, every day of the year. HSE NOSP funding to Samaritans Ireland supports the delivery of the freephone telephone service. It also contributes to Samaritans' core costs for the delivery of a wider programme of works, including research and outreach projects.

In 2022

- There were 397,697 calls and emails to the helpline service.
- Samaritans volunteers provided 64,434 'listening hours'.
- Samaritans worked in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders across multiple projects, for example, with the GAA, the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed, on the CAIRDE project, with the Free Legal Advice Centre, Irish Management Institute, Suicide or Survive, Aware, the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) and Mental Health Reform.
- Samaritans commenced work a self-harm and stigma research project, 'An Open Secret: Self-Harm and Stigma in Ireland and Northern Ireland.'

Shine (See Change, Headline)

www.seechange.ie www.headline.ie



Shine delivers two important national projects with funding support from the HSE NOSP:

- See Change is Ireland's national stigma reduction programme, working to change minds about mental health problems and end stigma. The funding supports the See Change Ambassador and Workplace Programmes, and the national, annual Green Ribbon Campaign.
- Headline is Ireland's national programme for responsible reporting of suicide, and representation of mental ill health. The funding supports Headline's digital reach, Media Trust Initiative, education programmes, media monitoring and the annual Mental Health Media Awards.

In 2022

- Almost 700,000 ribbons, 2,000 key chains, 1,500 enamel pins and 9,750 tea packs were distributed nationwide as part of the See Change Green Ribbon Campaign. The 2022 theme for the Campaign was Mental Health Stigma, Shame and Discrimination.
- Overall awareness of the Green Ribbon Campaign increased to 22%, compared to 18% in 2021. A detailed Campaign Impact Report for 2022 was compiled and published, outlining reach and activity.
- See Change delivered Ambassador 11 training events for Ambassadors (to 98 participants) and 38 Workplace training workshops (to 348 participants). They delivered 4 staff presentations, 14 Ambassador presentations, and had Ambassadors represented at 21 events. Notably, 8 Ambassadors had a 3-day presence at the Electric Picnic Festival.
- The Headline Mental Health Media Awards were coordinated and delivered – there were over 1,800 public votes for the Shine Audience Choice Award, over 160 submissions across 8 other categories, and 135 people attended Awards ceremony in December.
- Headline delivered 12 student education workshops (approximately 212 participants) and 3 professional education workshops (26 participants).

Suicide or Survive (SOS)

www.suicideorsurvive.ie



Suicide or Survive (SOS) is focused on breaking down the stigma associated with mental health issues and ensuring that those affected have access to quality recovery services that are right for the individual. With the support of the HSE NOSP, SOS delivers a variety of suicide and self-harm prevention initiatives. These include Wellness Workshops and Supporters Programmes (delivered online and in person), the Eden Programme and WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) programme.

In 2022

- 41 Wellness Webinars were delivered (1,235 registrants, 490 live attendees, 170 on catch up).
- 41 Wellness Workshops were delivered (857 participants).
- 6 Supporters Programmes were delivered (57 registrants, 40 completed). SOS piloted an evening time version of the Supporters Programme to meet needs.
- 23 WRAP Seminar 1 programmes were delivered (314 registrants, 257 completed).
- 2 WRAP Seminar 2 Facilitator training programmes were delivered (25 completed).

- 2,435 people availed of the online version of the Wellness Workshop for people over the age of 18 years (wellnessworkshop.ie) and 441 availed of the online Wellness Workshop for people aged 18 to 25 (youmatter.ie).

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

www.teni.ie



The vision of TENI is to advance the rights and equality and improve the lives of trans people and their families in Ireland. Funding support from the HSE NOSP supports TENI's training, awareness and mental health promotion activities nationwide. For example, workshops that are targeted at health professionals working in public and voluntary and community services, and TENI's peer support groups for trans people and their families.

In 2022

- Individual support was provided to 1,412 service users (Trans and Non-binary people, families and those providing support to Trans and Non-binary people) in a variety of formats such as email, phone and at events, and to over 120 people via the dedicated Family Support Line.
- Support was provided to approximately 120 peer-led support meetings. This included supporting the development of facilitators and providing direct help from TENI staff.
- There was a social media reach of over 1.2 million across all social media platforms. There was a 172% increase in views on Facebook, and 629% increase in visits on Instagram. General content included links and signposting to key resources that support the community with their wellbeing and other services.
- A variety of other wellbeing and culturally focused events were hosted or supported by TENI, and in their community space. These can provide safe spaces for Trans and Non-binary people to express themselves and to feel able to receive support and activities that enrich their wellbeing.

Turn2Me

www.turn2me.ie



Turn2Me provides a wide range of innovative mental health peer support, group support and counselling services, all easily accessible online. Funding from the HSE NOSP specifically supports the delivery of online counselling, peer to peer and self-help services.

In 2022

- 4,528 one-to-one adult counselling sessions were delivered.
- Turn2Me completed a collaborative video project with Exchange House Ireland, delivering a Mental Health Awareness and Engagement Campaign for the Irish Travelling Community.
- Turn2Me continued other collaborative projects including the delivery of schools talks, the Future Schools Project, Thought Catcher (peer-to-peer online support) and a variety of PR campaigns.

Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

www.mentalhealth.usi.ie



The USI is the national representative body for students in 3rd level education. Funding from the HSE NOSP contributes to the provision of a dedicated USI Mental Health Programme Manager who leads on a range of mental health promotion and awareness activities. Of note is the USI's central role in the development and implementation of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework (2020).

In 2022

- There were 10 campus visits by the Mental Health Programme Manager, across the academic year 2022/2023. This resulted in 543 new students subscribing to newsletters to engage with the mental health programme of work.
 - The Open Up campaign continued – an overall mental health campaign encouraging people to talk about their mental health. This campaign was amplified in line with national awareness days including World Mental Health Day, World Suicide Prevention Day and Eating Disorders Awareness Week.
 - The DeStress campaign continued – focusing on exam and assessment stress reduction and general mental health promotion (fully online campaign).
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4.0

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Information on deaths by suicide in Ireland

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Information on deaths by suicide in Ireland

4.1. Suicide data in Ireland

In Ireland, the decision as to whether someone has died by suicide is a legal determination made by Coroners, not a medical decision by doctors or the HSE and there is a time delay in the availability of data.

Following the Coronal investigation, inquest and registration processes, the CSO publishes national mortality data, including data on deaths by suicide. All CSO data on suicide deaths is publicly available on their website www.cso.ie.

Annual data from the CSO is provided in three stages –firstly by year of registration ('provisional'), revised later by year of occurrence ('official'), and revised later again to include late registered deaths.

Number of deaths by suicide, 2012–2022

	All deaths by suicide	Male deaths by suicide	Female deaths by suicide	CSO source
2022	412	331	81	CSO PxStat Table VSD30 Suicides (updated 26th May 2023). These figures exclude late registered deaths.
2021	399	302	97	
2020	465	338	127	
2019	524	408	116	CSO Statistical bulletin on suicide (published 9th September 2022). These figures have been revised in 2022, from the time of each year's Vital Statistics Annual Report, to include late registered deaths.
2018	540	399	141	
2017	510	399	111	
2016	530	429	101	
2015	497	390	107	
2014	577	471	106	
2013	544	437	107	
2012	585	475	110	

There are three main areas of the CSO website that provide information on suicide.

- [Vital Statistics releases](#)

These provide early provisional information on deaths (by year of registration) and are published in Vital Statistics reports quarterly and annually.

- [PxStat Data Dissemination Service](#)

There are 5 suicide-specific tables in the PxStat Data Dissemination Service, each providing different types of information. They are updated at different intervals each year.

- + VSD30 – Suicides – (Area of residence, Sex, Year)

- + VSD31 – Suicides – (Sex, Year)

- + VSD32 – Suicide death rates – (Sex, Year)
- + VSD33 – Published Suicide deaths and Late Registered Suicide deaths (Sex, Year)
- + VSD34 – Late registered suicide deaths (Sex, Year of occurrence, Year)
- [Statistical bulletin on suicide](#)
An annual statistical bulletin and summary of suicide data, which recommenced publication in September 2022.

4.2. Self-harm data in Ireland

Why record self-harm data?

Non-fatal self-harm is a far more common form of suicidal behaviour than suicide and it is one of the strongest risk factors for suicide. Hospital-presenting self-harm is the most severe type of non-fatal self-harm. As a result, reducing the rate of hospital-presenting self-harm is one of the two defined outcomes of Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015–2024.

What is the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland?

The [National Self-Harm Registry Ireland](#) records and reports information about self-harm presentations to hospital emergency departments across the country. The Registry is operated by the [NSRF](#) and is funded by the HSE NOSP.

What does the Registry do?

The Registry tells us how many self-harm presentations there are each year. It tells us which groups in the country make the most presentations, when the presentations happen, what type of self-harm is involved, and which areas have the highest rates. By providing this information, the Registry helps to inform the improvement of services for individuals who self-harm and prevention efforts.

- 👁️ [Read more about how the Registry records and processes data](#)
- 👁️ [Access Registry reports and publications](#)

5.0

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Financial summary

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Financial summary

In 2022, the HSE NOSP's budget was €13.9m and expenditure was €14.00m.

The budget and expenditure of the NOSP has increased significantly in the last ten years, from €5.19m in 2012.

In 2022, 50% of expenditure was for grants to national organisations and frontline services working in the area of suicide prevention and mental health promotion. Additional grants are allocated to more local agencies, via CHOs.

HSE NOSP expenditure in 2022

	2021	2022
Grants to agencies <i>(breakdown next page)</i>	7,384,509	7,065,772
Communications projects	1,257,615	1,157,226
Research	501,975	505,258
Non-grant expenditure <i>(Office expenses, salaries, overheads, etc)</i>	1,108,439	1,333,995
Training programmes <i>(Non-clinical training, clinical training and National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Project)</i>	1,183,663	1,582,627
Regional liaison and suicide prevention services Capacity building	1,307,240	1,307,240
Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention Local CfL Implementation Plans Grants to agencies via CHOs	1,326,226	1,050,286
Total	14,069,666	14,002,404

HSE NOSP grants to national agencies in 2022

	2022
Aware	333,469
Belong To Youth Services	233,401
Community Creations (spunout.ie)	197,182
Dublin Simon Community	309,957
Exchange House	325,000
First Fortnight	185,000
GAA	50,000
HUGG, Healing Untold Grief Groups	99,263
ISPCC (Childline)	209,500
LGBT Ireland	120,000
Men's Health Forum Ireland (MHFI)	58,250
MyMind	190,500
The National Family Resource Centre (FRC) Mental Health Promotion Project	100,000
National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF)	989,931
Pieta	1,868,551
Samaritans	580,000
Shine (See Change, Headline)	571,712
Suicide or Survive (SOS)	215,837
Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)	79,000
Turn2Me	351,095
Union of Students in Ireland (USI)	68,900
Accruals	(70,776)
Total	7,065,772





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