



Connecting for Life

Statutory strategy implementation monitoring report – Q3 2021

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1: Introduction

This is the Q3 2021 implementation monitoring report for *Connecting for Life (CfL)*. It will provide an overview of the work carried out by strategy lead agencies from July-September 2021.

This quarter, of the 66 actions in CfL, updates were received on 64. Of these 64 actions for which updates were received, 9 were logged as needing attention and 2 were off track. The majority of actions were considered to be on track. Further detail on the needs attention and off track actions are provided at the end of this report.

Some highlights from this quarter include:

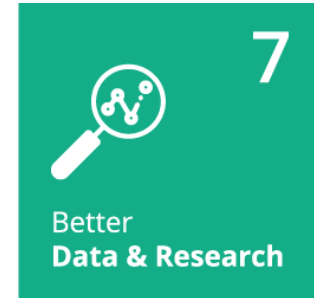
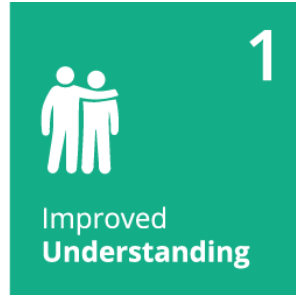
- Analysis of the Healthy Ireland data collected from the 1st module to be included on suicide showed that 6% of the sample said they had attempted to take their own life at some point in the past.
- HSE NOSP have launched and published “Developing a Community Response to Suicide: A resource to guide those developing and implementing an Inter-Agency Community Response Plan for incidents of suspected suicide, particularly where there is a risk of clusters and/or contagion. The forthcoming Garda data sharing protocol will be a key element of local CRPs.
- NOSP has published Education & Training Plan 2021 – 2022 which considers evaluation findings from report on Implementation of a Range of Delivery Models of Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training’.
- Over 1,000 referrals have been made to the new guided online CBT service with Silvercloud, including more than 800 referrals from General Practice.



This quarter updates were received from 16 CfL implementation partners: This quarter updates not received from 4 partners:

- Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)
- Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
- Press Council of Ireland
- Tusla
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Department of Defence (DoD)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- HSE Acute Hospitals
- HSE Health and Wellbeing (HSE H&W)
- HSE Mental Health Operations (HSE MH)
- HSE Primary Care (HSE PC)
- HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (HSE NOSP)
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM)
- Department of Health (DoH)
- Local Government Management Authority (LGMA)
- Department of Children, Disability, Integration, Equality and Youth (DCDIEY)
- Department of Social Protection (DSP)
- Department of Justice (DoJ)

2: Overview of progress on CfL strategic goals



Goal 1: Improved understanding

1.1 Understanding suicidal behaviour	1.2 Awareness of services	1.3 Reducing stigma	1.4 Media and reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Ireland have analysed the data collected from the 1st module to be included on suicide. Approximately 27% of the HI sample (7,454) completed this module. 6% of the sample said they had attempted to take their own life at some point in the past; there was no gender difference in this regard. Amongst those who had ever attempted suicide more than one-in-ten had done so in the last 12 months (11%). HSE H&W are completing last round of stakeholder consultation sessions on HSE Mental Health Promotion Plan. DOH has awarded a tender for consultation process to inform development of the national plan. Radio advertising, social media and paid search campaigns for YourMentalHealth have continued throughout Q3 including August Bank Holiday and WSPD in Sept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic to YMH.ie increased by 21% against Q3 2020. In Sep new content related to a new online CBT service for anxiety and depression was added to YMH.ie. A paid search campaign is in development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SeeChange Green Ribbon campaign launched in September. New relationships this year established with LGBTI, Traveller and Social Inclusion partners. NOSP supported a new podcast and inclusion event online marking Green Ribbon 2021. (HSE NOSP) World Suicide Prevention Day - partner pack comprising social messaging, key messages and images, completed and disseminated across stakeholders, and HSE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No complaints or published decisions relating specifically to Principle 3. Planning underway for training workshop for broadcast journalists on responsible reporting of suicide and self-harm. (BAI) The Press Council have had no complaints about suicide-reporting. They issued an Advisory Notice re the Co Kerry murder suicide. Headline officially started monitoring broadcast media at the beginning of Q3. Almost 70% of suicide reporting is happening in regional/local radio.



Goal 2: Empowered Communities

2.1 Multiagency community responses	2.2 Accurate information and guidance	2.3 Education and training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is expected that all areas will submit draft local action plans for national review during Q4 with a view to publishing 3-year implementation plans in Q1 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSE NOSP have launched and published “Developing a Community Response to Suicide: A resource to guide those developing and implementing an Inter-Agency Community Response Plan for incidents of suspected suicide, particularly where there is a risk of clusters and/or contagion.” The document was launched by HSE COO at event which also showcased suicide bereavement supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOSP has published Education & Training Plan 2021 – 2022 which considers evaluation findings. In Q3: 889 licences issued for the online programme START; 60 people completed the online bereavement programme; 28 people took part in 3 online Understanding Self harm 2hr Introduction Sessions; Continued delivery of 30 minute presentation, 'Responding To A Person in Suicidal Distress'. Face to face training will recommence at the end of October. Professional Bereavement Training programme evaluation currently underway. Ongoing delivery of Stress Control online. HSE Stress Prevention/management programme at first draft stage. MYW re-designed for local delivery and T4T for HP&I colleagues to deliver in progress. MYW booklet developed. HSE Social Prescribing Framework launched on July 15th at online webinar.



Goal 3: Focus on Priority Groups

3.1 Reducing suicide among priority groups

- Communication sent to all DAFM staff on WSPD focussing on self care and supporting others.
- Defence Forces Mental Health and Wellbeing Standing Committee meets monthly.
- Tusla has engaged with NOSP to develop a whole agency approach to suicide prevention.
- Project team established to implement Garda Pulse data sharing protocol. (HSE NOSP).
- NOSP has provided funding for upscaling of SAMAGH. ICGP held webinar on anxiety (483 participants) & Depression and Loneliness in Older People (450 participants). National survey of vets and vets nurses regarding mental health, wellbeing and suicidality is in progress.
- 'Supporting young people impacted by Covid' training courses delivered in partnership with JIGSAW to 54 participants. (HSE H&W)

3.2 Early intervention & prevention of substance misuse with Primary Care

HSE Addiction Services published two reports: "Drug-Related Deaths in Ireland: Key patterns and Trends 2008 - 2017". The report highlights relevant trends and contains a number of recommendations pertaining to gender, age, polydrug use and dual diagnosis; "Report of the Emerging Drug Trends and Drug Checking Working Group This report examines the issue of drug use in the Night-time Economy.

HSE Addictions also hosted an online event for International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31st 2021.

3.3 Supports for young people

- Planning is continuing on supports for schools in reviewing their own wellbeing promotion. (DE)
- Guidelines for Student Support Teams finalised. New Learning module on NEPS Critical Incident training. Webinars on bereavement & loss & supporting children available. (DE)
- Progress Reports for Mental Health funding allocations and National Project received and analysed. (HEA)
- Inspectorate prioritising gathering information on implementation of schools' anti-bullying measures.(DE)
- Schools given option to defer increase of wellbeing provision at Junior Cycle until 2022/23. (DE)
- National CAMHS waiting list has 2,384 people in total & 170 who have been waiting more than 12 months. Percentage offered an appointment and seen within 12 months is currently at 55.8%.



Goal 4: Better access to support

4.1 Assessments and Care Pathways	4.2 Therapeutic Interventions	4.3 Support Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required staffing levels for the 7/7 service improvement project achieved & review of implementation is planned.(HSE MH Ops). • Programme Manager and Clinical Lead for National Clinical Care Programme for Dual Diagnosis in post. Work resuming on the development of model of care. (HSE MH Ops) • Guidelines on uniform assessment approach for self-harm/suicide across health services ready for consultation. (HSE MH Ops) • New clinical lead for self-harm programme in post. Recruitment for CNS' has recommenced following industrial action. 2 CNS posts in Crumlin and Tallaght in post by end November. (HSE MH Ops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Model of Care for Talking Therapies in Mental Health Services has commenced and all of the pilot sites have identified the community mental health teams that will be increasing the provision of psychological interventions. Over 1,000 referrals have been made to the new guided online CBT service with Silvercloud, including more than 800 referrals from General Practice. (HSE MH Ops). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An audio version of the 'You Are Not Alone' support booklet is recorded and will be disseminated in collaboration with the NCBI. Contents from the booklet have been edited and prepared for online publication in accessible format. • The development and launch of a national survey on the experience of bereavement by suicide has been supported. • A working group has been established to develop supports for children bereavement by suicide. (HSE MH Ops). • NOSP continues to fund a national SBLO and suicide bereavement counselling service. An evaluation of the Pieta SBLO service is near completion.



Goal 5: High quality services

5.1 National quality standards, guidance and information for suicide prevention	5.2 Responses to suicidal behaviour in services	5.3 Responses to suicidal behaviour in the justice system	5.4 Best practice among Practitioners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation of the Best Practice Guidance for Suicide prevention Services project has been completed. (HSE NOSP) • DOE focused on implementing INDECOR report recommendations on guidance counselling at post primary level. • Q3 CfL website new publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of CfL Research ○ Community Response Plan to Suicide NOSP Annual Report 2020 ○ World Suicide Prevention Day Partner Pack ○ Grant Scheme Book of Abstracts National Education and Training Plan 2021-2022 ○ Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Review ○ NOSP Briefing on CSO and Eurostat Statistics • Q3 (to date) NOSP Twitter - 136,000 impressions. Q3 CfL Newsletter - issued September to 1,299 subscribers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tusla has developed a national childcare information system to appropriately record data in respect of its work with children and families. The National Incident Management System also records significant incidents related to self harm and suicide. • The incident-specific review tool for suspected suicide amongst community mental health service users is progressing and the working group continues to meet. (HSE MH Ops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates received for this action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SafeTALK training has resumed within all formations of the Defence Forces while adhering to COVID restrictions. The use of internal online training has been discontinued and progress is being made using SafeTALK and ongoing use of START. • Report on feasibility of developing standardized suicide prevention curriculum for relevant third level courses and mapping exercise completed. Job description has been drafted for project lead. (HSE NOSP)

Goal 6: Reduced access to means

6.1 Access to drugs used in intentional overdose	6.2 Lethal methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working Group established with representatives from DoH, NOSP, NSRF and HPRA to consider ways to improve adherence by the retail sector to legislation restricting the sale of paracetamol products. First meeting held to agree terms of reference and discuss next steps. Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland and Irish Pharmacy Union invited to join WG. (DoH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The ligature risk reduction national guidelines document is finalised and signed-off. The audit tool has been designed with user-friendly functionality embedded. Training resources (two modules for HSELand) have been developed. (HSE MH Ops)



Goal 7: Better data and research

7.1 Evaluating CfL	7.2 High quality Data	7.3 Death recording	7.4 Research and Evaluation Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation programme of work (almost) complete and commissioned CES review published on CfL website. New contracts have been awarded for the evaluation of STORM and Suicide Bereavement programmes. (HSE NOSP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination of Irish Suicide Information Database (ISID) reports has paused. Analysis of the dataset is ongoing. Data collection on 2019 cases is ongoing. (HSE NOSP). The Mental Health Commission have transferred their data file on suspected suicides to the National Suicide Research Foundation for pseudonimisation and (HSE MH Ops). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No updates for this action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on the C-SSHRI (Connecting Suicide and Self-Harm Researchers based on the island of Ireland) network is ongoing with an event planned for World Mental Health Day. (HEA) NOSP (as a knowledge user) in partnership with NUIG, the NSRF, the Western Regional Drug Task Force & the relevant ROSPs successfully proceeded to the phase 2 review process of the HRB Secondary Data Analysis Projects. The proposed project seeks to inform youth suicide prevention through secondary analysis of Planet Youth datasets.

At a Glance: Needs Attention (9 actions)

Goal 1

1.4.1 Engage with online platforms to encourage best practice in reporting around suicidal behaviour, so as to encourage a safer online environment in this area. DTCAGSM No updates on previous quarter

Goal 3

3.1.1 Integrate suicide prevention into the development of relevant national policies, plans and programmes for people who are at an increased risk of suicide or self-harm.

Consultation on next steps in policy proofing has been delayed but with D/Taoiseach has suggested some options to explore to advance action. (Dept Health)

3.1.2 Develop and implement a range of agency and inter-agency operational protocols to assist organisations to work collaboratively in relation to suicide prevention and the management of critical incidents. (HSE Acute Ops)

The initial planned Phase I targeted training of ED staff was progressed but delayed due to COVID and cyber attack. Acute Operations is now engaged with the Emergency Medicine Clinical Programme to plan the roll out of ED staff training for Q4 2021 (HSE Acute Ops)

Goal 5

5.4.2 Deliver training in suicide prevention to staff in government departments and agencies who are likely to come into contact with people who are vulnerable to/at risk of suicidal behaviour (HSA).

Awaiting finalisation of the Healthy Workplace Framework (HWF) by Department of Health. Both Dept of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Health and Safety Authority have contributed to the draft HWF.

5.4.3 Support professional regulatory bodies to develop and deliver accredited, competency based education on suicide prevention to health professionals. (Dept Health)

Action delayed as Unit resources are focussed on Covid 19 response. MHU will work with NOSP to ensure the NOSP standardised training programme is delivered to undergrads and medical professionals.

At a Glance: Needs Attention (9 actions)



Connecting for Life

Goal 6

6.1.1 Work with professional groups to reduce the inappropriate prescribing of medicines commonly used in intentional overdose, including benzodiazepines and SSRIs. (Dept Health)

Action delayed as Unit resources are focussed on Covid 19 response. Discussions have recommenced with relevant units to further this action.

Goal 7

7.2.1 Develop capacity for observation and information gathering on those at risk of or vulnerable to suicide and self-harm. This includes children/young people in the child welfare/protection sector and places of detention, including prisons.(Tusla)

This area of work requires attention following the National Public Health Emergency and the recent cyber attack.

7.2.2 Collate and report on incidences of suicide through current and expanded health surveillance systems over the life of Connecting for Life. (HSE MH Ops)

The HSE data on suspected suicides in mental health services is not yet available and agreement needs to be reached regarding the data request to the State Claims Agency for the relevant NIMS data.

7.4.4 Evaluate innovative approaches to suicide prevention including online service provision and targeted approaches for appropriate priority groups. (HSE NOSP)

Delay in publishing final report on innovation in CfL Local Area Action Plans.

At a Glance: Off Track (2 actions)

Goal 2

2.1.1 Implement consistent, multi-agency suicide prevention action plans to enhance communities' capacity to respond to suicidal behaviours, emerging suicide clusters and murder suicide (HSE MH Ops)

While work is progressing in all areas there have been delays in progressing the local implementation plans. This is due to the HSE Cyber-attack and competing operational challenges.

Goal 7

7.2.3 Collect, analyse and disseminate high quality data on suicide and self-harm and ensure adequate access to and understanding of the data among those working in suicide prevention across all sectors. (HSE NOSP)

Work on this action is paused pending confirmation from DOH of next steps in the project.



HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention – October 2021