



Connecting for Life

Strategy implementation monitoring report – Q1 2020

By: HSE NOSP (2020)

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1: Introduction

This is the Q1 2020 implementation monitoring report for Connecting for Life. It will provide an overview of the work carried out by strategy lead agencies from January-March 2020.

Clearly, this is a time posing significant challenges across the civil and public service as we work together to address Covid-19 and the variety of emergency measures required. With this in mind, this quarterly monitoring report will be shorter than usual and not focus on which actions are on track, off track etc.

It will instead provide a narrative overview of highlights under each goal, next steps and issues arising. Updates were received this quarter from the following 9 partners:

- Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
- Higher Education Authority
- HSE NOSP
- HSE Mental Health Operations
- HSE Health and Wellbeing
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Defence
- Department of Communications, Climate Change and Energy.

Understandably, many of our partners have had to prioritise other strategic and operational concerns and this report is compiled with this in mind. Of the 69 actions in CfL, updates were received on 47.

A considerable programme of work has been planned for 2020 and beyond, as CfL enters into its second phase of implementation. However, we are mindful of the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on suicidal behaviour, and on the implementation of CfL. Consequently the HSE NOSP is working with colleagues to ensure research-based intelligence is available to inform our work.

1: Q1 2020 at a glance

•CfL Implementation Planning (2020-24):

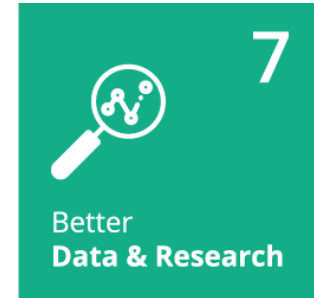
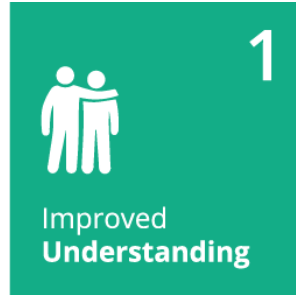
- The HSE NOSP engaged in planning meetings with all CfL implementation leads to set annual milestones for the next phase of implementation
- Potential, additional CfL partners also identified (such as Irish Rail, Central Statistics Office)
- CfL Implementation Plan 2020-24 has been drafted

•The public health emergency posed by Covid-19:

- Has had a significant impact on capacity to support the implementation of CfL towards the end of Quarter 1, with many of our key partners in the HSE, including staff working directly on the implementation of CfL actions, having been redeployed to other areas.
- The Research and Evaluation team in NOSP is tracking redeployment and other pressures on HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention, CfL HSE personnel, NGO partners and the National Clinical Programme for Self Harm via a fortnightly survey.
- Much of the mental health communications work in the HSE currently is prioritising Covid-19 related content and information.
- Many of the local Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention have also been redeployed.
- Since March all suicide prevention training being postponed due to social distancing restrictions.



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"> • HSE H&W has agreed draft actions for the National Health and Wellbeing Plan and stakeholder engagement planning has been progressed. • First draft of new national mental health communications plan developed for wider stakeholder consultation by HSE MH. • HSE NOSP submitted a proposal to DOH for inclusion of a module on suicide in the next Healthy Ireland survey. • HSE MH started working with DOH on public health mental health campaign in response to Covid-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through a PhD work placement student from UCD a review of CfL priority groups from a Communications perspective has commenced in HSE MH. • Covid-19 related messaging has been prioritised above regular awareness raising activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Fortnight festival delivered. • HSE NOSP has refined the SLA process with NGO partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One complaint regarding reporting of suicide and self harm in media submitted to the BAI. Outcome of this complaint will be available in Q2. • The HSE NOSP has commissioned the NSRF to undertake a literature review on the impact of suicide and self-harm content online. • HSE NOSP are supporting Headline with their 2020 programme of work, including media advisory and monitoring. Headline have allocated a significant amount of their resources to Covid-19 response.



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"> On-going collaboration between HSE MH, Resources Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) and NOSP, particularly regarding local CfL implementation plans. HSE NOSP is preparing for the publication of guidance for community response plans to suspected suicides, which is currently out for final consultation. HSE NOSP also redeveloping '<i>Suicide Prevention in the Community – A Practical Guide</i>' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance and messaging activities have prioritised Covid-19 and mental health related communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of March 2020 all suicide prevention training halted due to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions. HSE NOSP have contracted an independent researcher to conduct an evaluation of the models of suicide prevention gatekeeper training. The NSE NOSP training webpage developed, with links to book training courses locally. HSE H&W have launched the online 'Stress Control' programme which is available to HSE staff and the general public, and the 'Minding Your Wellbeing' programme was delivered as planned in Jan/Feb. An independently commissioned report on the evaluability of social prescribing has been completed and is hoped to be launched in Q2. Transfer of participant training data from paper to online system ongoing.



Goal 3: Focus on Priority Groups

3.1 Reducing suicide among priority groups	3.2 Early intervention and prevention of substance misuse with Primary Care	3.3 Supports for young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Service Employee Assistance (CSEAS) have produced a variety of resources on minding mental health during this period. • Working Group for the development of policies and interagency protocols published a guide for staff in <i>Responding to a person in suicidal distress</i>. The next meeting of the group has <i>been</i> delayed due to Covid-19. • HSE NOSP ran the Suicide Assessment & Mitigation Course in January, in collaboration with the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland. • HSE H&W have set up a Working Group to plan an interface event with young people, in collaboration with Jigsaw. The event has been deferred due to Covid-19 restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates for this reporting period relating to this action. <p><i>(3.2.1 Continue the roll out of programmes aimed at early intervention and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse in conjunction with HSE Primary Care.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DES launched an Action Research Project on wellbeing in schools in 2019 which is underway. • DES currently developing wellbeing resources for schools and issuing revised guidance for the development of Student Support Teams. • DES Wellbeing Steering Group progressing the Wellbeing Policy and Framework for Practice. • Training on the management of critical incidents in schools is ongoing. • HEA held a consultation event with HEIs on the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework.



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"> HSE MH have postponed progress on exploring 24/7 mental health services due to Covid-19 response. Working Group and Steering Group meetings relating to the national guidelines on suicide and self-harm awareness, assessment and response. The National Clinical Programme for Self-Harm continues to be delivered in EDs, with a small number of nurses redeployed elsewhere to support the Covid-19 response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned regional stakeholder engagement sessions due to be held by HSE MH on models of care for therapeutic interventions postponed, to be rescheduled when possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSE NOSP has appointed a co-ordinator for bereavement support services. Work plan agreed and stakeholder engagement was commenced in Q1.



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"> • HSE NOSP launched the Best Practice Guidance for suicide prevention. • Implementation of the guidance is ongoing. • An independent evaluation of the Best Practice Guidance is underway. • The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) continues to roll out guidance for teachers on student wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group and Steering Group meetings relating to the national guidelines on suicide and self-harm awareness, assessment and response have had to be postponed, to be reconvened when possible. • In relation to implementing a system of service review, a standardised survey instrument agreed for attendees at Q4 2019 workshop on recording and reporting practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates provided for relevant actions in this reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE NOSP exploring the development of a standardised curriculum for suicide prevention which could be included in HEI courses. Scoping meeting was held with Course Director of the Mental Health Nursing Higher Diploma (UCD) in Q1. • SafeTALK trainers programme was delivered with coverage in all Department of Defence formations in Q1. • DES meeting with Directors of Education Centres to explore delivering Safetalk to teachers.

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">No updates on relevant actions provided for this reporting period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HSE MH have agreed membership of a national working group on environmental safety in mental health services. Communique to members postponed due to Covid-19 but first meeting of working group will be scheduled (either virtually or face to face).



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"> CfL evaluation programme of work on-going. New contracts in 2020 include (i) the evaluation of the models of suicide prevention gatekeeper training and (ii) an assessment & response to suicide and suspected suicide in a disadvantage community in Dublin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2019 Interim Report of the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland was published (on the NSRF website). Data collection (from 2018 closed coroners files) postponed due to Covid-19. On-going analysis of 2015/17 coroners data. HSE NSOP presentation on the coroners data at the TCD Integrated Healthcare conference 	<p>No updates received on this action area for this reporting period.</p> <p><i>(7.3 Review (and, if necessary, revise) current recording procedures for death by suicide.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of all commissioned research relating to CfL priority groups underway. Annual programme of work for the National Suicide Research Foundation agreed. CfL's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting held. CfL Evaluation Advisory Group (EAG) meeting held.

Thank You



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Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service