



Connecting for Life strategy implementation monitoring report Q4 2022 and Q1 2023

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention



Connecting for Life



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1: Introduction

This is the Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 implementation monitoring report for *Connecting for Life (CfL)*. It will provide an overview of the work carried out by strategy lead agencies from October 2022 to March 2023.

To date in this period, of the 67 actions in CfL, **updates were received on 62**. Of these 62 actions for which updates were received, **8 were logged as needing attention**. The majority of actions were considered to be on track. Further detail on the needs attention actions are provided at the end of this report. No actions were logged as off-track.

The NGO quarterly CfL implementation report (Q4 2022) has been completed and is available [here](#)



Some highlights from this period include:

- On 10 December 2022, the Online Safety and Media Regulation (OSMR) Act was signed into law. The Act was commenced, Coimisiún na Meán established and relevant Commissioners (incl. the Online Safety Commissioner) appointed on 15 March 2023.
- 13 new social prescribing services are being mainstreamed within the HSE.
- Cineáltas: Action plan on Bullying was published on 1 December 2022 by the Department of Education.
- In Quarter 4 2022, the HSE's guided digital CBT service reported 1,646 referrals with over 90% coming from GPs.
- The DEASP trained 452 staff in safeTALK end of 2022 and 28 to date in quarter 1 2023.
- DoH Mental Health Unit (MHU) now sits on the Medical Council's Over-prescribing working group. This multi-disciplinary group considers issues relating to promoting correct prescribing of medications, in particular benzodiazepines and z drugs.
- HSE MH Ops have developed two data reports. The first report addresses data completeness and overlap regarding suspected suicides reported to NIMS and MHC. The second focusses on patient characteristics and circumstances of death.



This period updates were received from 18 partners:

- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM) – Media
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM) – Sports
- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP)
- Department of Justice (DoJ) – but no Irish Prison Service update
- HSE Health and Wellbeing (HSE H&W)
- HSE Primary Care (HSE PC)
- Tusla
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Department of Defence (DoD)
- HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (HSE NOSP)
- HSE Mental Health Operations (HSE MH Ops)
- Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- Local Government Management Authority (LGMA)
- Department of Health (DoH)
- Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI)

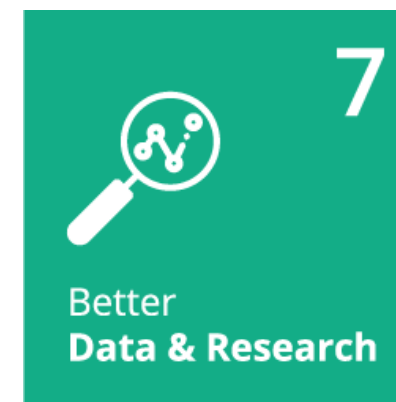
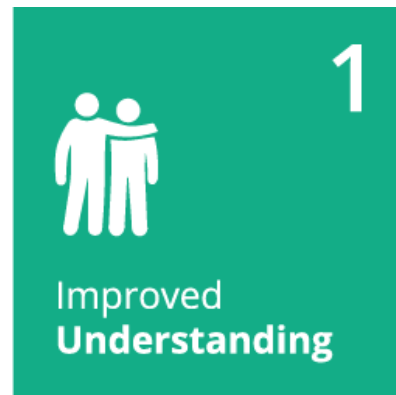
This period updates were not received from 3 partners:

- Press Council of Ireland
- HSE Acute Hospitals (HSE Acute Ops)
- Department of Children, Disability, Integration, Equality and Youth (DCDIEY)





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">Steering group convened to oversee implementation of Stronger Together. (HSE H&W)An online campaign ‘Safer Student Nights’ was promoted throughout Quarter 1 to raise awareness of current drug trends, drug emergencies and accessing help if physical or mental health concerns arise. (HSE PC)Joint application with the NSRF to access data from Healthy Ireland to explore suicide bereavement and suicide attempts in the general population, has been submitted to HI DoH. (HSE NOSP)NPAP Interdepartmental Group (National Physical Activity Plan group) has met and work has begun on developing the new NPAP. (DoH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The HSE has jointly funded the online peer support platform, Together All, for students in publicly funded higher education institutions. The Higher Education MH programme developed by Jigsaw was further developed in 2022/2023. (HSE MH Ops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2023 SLA with Shine (SeeChange provider) finalised. See Change stakeholder consultation and planning meeting for Green Ribbon 2023 completed. Monthly themes for 2023 finalised and regional events (with ROSPs) in planning. (HSE NOSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 10 December 2022, the Online Safety and Media Regulation (OSMR) Act was signed into law. The Act was commenced, Coimisiún na Meán established and relevant Commissioners (incl. the Online Safety Commissioner) appointed on 15 March 2023. (DTCAGSM-MEDIA)MOU and agreement finalised with #chatsafe Australia, and first consultation on content, with parents/carers in Ireland, in March. (HSE NOSP)



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">• Ten local CfL plans have been developed by CHOs to cover the extended implementation period. The status is as follows: <p>Published plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CHO 2• CHO 5• CHO 6• CHO 7• CHO 9 <p>Drafted plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CHO 1• Cork• Kerry• CHO 8• CHO 3 <p>(HSE MH Ops)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suicide Prevention in the Community drafted for publication. (HSE NOSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training & Education figures Q4 2022:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-safeTALK 1509-ASIST 810-Understanding Self Harm 335-Understanding Self Harm - Online 51-Professional Bereavement Workshop 127-START 869-CAMS 14-STORM 25• Online suicide prevention training programme on target for delivery in Q3. (HSE NOSP)• Redrafting of content for new HSE Stress Prevention Programme underway with HSE Psychology. Digital recording underway led by digital agency. (HSE H&W)• 13 new social prescribing services being mainstreamed within the HSE. Transfer of funds to CHOs and Expression of Interest process underway for host organisation. (HSE H&W)



Goal 3: Focus on priority groups

3.1 Reducing suicide among priority groups

3.2 Early intervention & prevention of substance misuse with Primary Care

3.3 Supports for young people

- Eight successful proposals were announced under the European Innovation Partnerships (EIP). The projects focus on addressing challenges around farm health, safety, positive health and wellbeing. (DAFM)
- Recruitment of additional health posts to support delivery of wraparound health supports to the 269 new Housing First tenancies planned. (HSE PC)
- New intercultural awareness training module has been designed on understanding migrant mental health and wellbeing. (HSE PC)
- A Tusla National Suicide prevention policy will be developed in 2023. Q2 will focus on developing an initiation to National Policy Oversight Committee for approval to proceed. (TUSLA)
- Initial contact made with the D/Taoiseach, Social Policy Unit regarding scoping of pathway for policy proofing. Work is continuing to identify a suitable course on OneLearning platform. (DoH)

- Funding approved and distributed to each CHO area to recruit a SAOR worker specifically for the Health Diversion programme. This worker will work with funded agencies in CHOs area to build networks and referral pathways.(HSE PC)
- 980 people completed the SAOR eLearning module on HSELand in 2022. Between 1st Jan and 8th March 2023, 300 people completed the module. Over 500 people received in-person SAOR training across CHO areas in 2022.(HSE PC)

- Sharing the Vision Specialist group on Youth Mental Health Transitions continues to meet to progress Workstream 1 & 2. (HSE MH Ops)
- Ongoing engagement with Orygen & University of Melbourne to provide 6 HSE-funded training places for Psychiatrists in Certificate in Youth Psychiatry. (HSE MH Ops)
- As of end of Jan 2023:
 - 91.1% of urgent referrals to CAMHS were responded to within three working days, meeting/exceeding the 90% target.
 - 65.9% of referrals accepted by child and adolescent community teams were offered an appointment within 12 weeks against a target of 80%.
 - 91.2% of accepted referrals / re-referrals offered first appointment and seen within 12 months. (HSE MH OPS)
- By Dec 14th 2022, 1047 participants had completed the Critical Incident programme. (DoE)
- Cineáltas: Action plan on Bullying was published on 1st December 2022. (DoE)



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">The publication of the Model of Care for Dual Diagnosis is currently being considered. Recruitment is on going. Women's Health project progressing extremely well with in excess of 65 women engaging in the programme. (HSE MH Ops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recruitment has progressed in a number of CHOs for Talking Therapies. A networking event for the pilot CHOs was held in February 2023. Steering and working group meeting are progressing regularly. Evaluation plans are being prioritised. (HSE MH Ops)The Sharing the Vision (StV) mental health in primary care specialist group/workstream continues to meet. Two sub groups are progressing this work with a focus on capacity for talking therapies and improved shared care in mental health and primary care services. In the meantime, the HSE continue to directly provide and fund provision of talk therapies through funded partner organisations, including digital service provision. (HSE MH Ops)In Quarter 4 2022, the HSEs guided digital CBT service reported 1,646 referrals with over 90% coming from GP's. (HSE MH Ops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MH ops have worked with the NSRF to launch the Suicide Bereavement Survey on October 11th 2022. (HSE MH Ops)2023 recurring funding confirmed for suicide bereavement services provided by Pieta, Vita House, Mayo Bereavement Service and HUGG. (HSE NOSP)



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

- A public consultation on a draft strategic framework for lifelong guidance was conducted during January and February 2023. (DoE)
- NOSP Training and Education Plan continues to be highlighted to all NEPS psychologists to share with schools. The plan is included in the Department's Directory of Wellbeing CPD and NEPS Critical Incident eLearning course for school staff. (DoE)
- In Q1 2023, new publications:
 - Turn2Me Evaluation
 - Review of Bereavement counselling services in SECH. (HSE NOSP)
- Statutory consultation process and (in the context of wider policy development on the regulation of health and social care professionals) has been completed. (DoH)

- Continued training and briefing sessions for staff. Q4 2022. E-Learning programme for staff in relation to incident management. As the Incident Management Framework matures the agency builds-up valuable data to identify trends and inform service improvement. (TUSLA)

- No updates provided.

- Access to the on-line course, eSuicide Talk, continues to be available to all staff in the Health and Safety Authority. This course is included in the Authority's annual Learning and Development programme as well as being highlighted and brought to the attention of new staff during the Authority's on-boarding programme. This Suicide Awareness course provides a structure in which staff can explore some of the most challenging attitudinal issues about suicide. (HSA)
- The Department's ED&I Advocacy team arranged a number of events to celebrate the diversity of our people. (DAFM)
- DEASP trained 452 staff in safeTALK end of 2022 and 28 to date in quarter 1 2023.
- Local Authority training commitments are reviewed as required. Continue to highlight any new training opportunities provided through NOSP and stakeholder partners. (LGMA)



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">• DoH Mental Health Unit (MHU) now sits on the Medical Council's Over-prescribing working group. This multi-disciplinary group considers issues relating to promoting correct prescribing of medications, in particular benzodiazepines and z drugs. (DoH)• New patient guidance published in Q1 2023 re appropriate use of relevant medicines: https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/medicines-management/bzra-for-anxiety-insomnia/ (DoH)• DoH working with the Environmental Protection Agency re the development of a National DUMP Campaign, as per the EPA's National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2021-2026. MHU linking with Community Pharmacy Unit of DoH to advance. (DoH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Authorities continue to communicate with the sector as appropriate regarding this action. As highlighted previously, any decisions around this action should be made at a local level by each Local Authority. There are many considerations to be taken into account in addressing this action. (LGMA)



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">Tender has been prepared for evaluation of Suicide Observatory. (HSE NOSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reports based on the data completeness study have been finalised. The 1st report addressed data completeness and overlap regarding suspected suicides reported to NIMS and MHC. The 2nd report focussed on patient characteristics and circumstances of death. (HSE MH Ops)Guidelines for responding to suspected suicides amongst community mental health service users have also been completed and will be circulated to stakeholders for consultation. (HSE MH Ops)Draft work plan for IPSDS (the Irish Probable Suicide Deaths) data analysis and reports and publications has been prepared. (HSE NOSP)	<p>No updates provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Project Steering Group has been established. A number of stakeholder events have been held to gain insights into suicide and self-harm in CHO1. Ethical approval has been received from one site. (HSE NOSP)EAG and DIAG meetings were held in December 2022 where new members of expertise were welcomed to the groups, and the new Terms of Reference (ToR) for the groups were agreed. (HSE NOSP)A literature search has been undertaken to define 'innovation' in suicide prevention, to aid in the development of the tool for assessing innovation in suicide prevention. (HSE NOSP)



3. At a Glance: Needs Attention (8 actions)

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. (Dept. Of Defence)

Three Working Groups remain active within the DF Mental Health and Wellbeing Standing Committee dealing with suicide awareness and Prevention. Post-suicide guidance for commanders remains under development.

Goal 3

3.1.2 Develop and implement a range of agency and inter-agency operational protocols (including protocols for sharing information and protocols in respect of young people) to assist organisations to work collaboratively in relation to suicide prevention and the management of critical incidents. (HSE NOSP)

The deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol between the HSE and An Garda Síochána still has not been signed, although it was reviewed by the Garda Leadership Team at a meeting on the 1 November 2022.

Goal 4

4.1.4 Deliver a uniform assessment approach across the health services, in accordance with existing and recognised guidelines for people who have self-harmed or are at risk of suicide.(HSE Mh Ops)

MH Ops and NOSP agreed to finalise and publish the guidance document developed as a result of Suicide and Self-harm Awareness and Response Project (SSHARP).



3. At a Glance: Needs Attention (8 actions)

Goal 5

5.1.5 Disseminate information on effective suicide prevention responses through the development and promotion of repositories of evidence-based tools, resources, guidelines and protocols. (HSE NOSP)

No progress to date on redevelopment of hse.ie pages, although requirements are noted and in the queue.

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. (Dept of Defence)

This training, while being prioritised, is competing for time and personnel resources with other unit training and operational commitments. Training/Instruction provided by BPSSOs/PSS staff in location.

Goal 6

6.2.2 Implement a strategy to improve environmental safety within the HSE mental health services (e.g. ligature audits). (HSE MH Ops)

Content of audit tool and guidelines remains under review following engagement with colleagues in the UK. ADON's have been informed regarding the review of the guidelines with respect to the risk associated with ligature height. There may be a requirement to revise the guidance. Further, there is a requirement to consider non-ligature risk aspects of this recommendation as it relates to environmental safety.



3. At a Glance: Needs Attention (8 actions)

Goal 7

7.1.1 Conduct proportionate evaluations of all major activities conducted under the aegis of Connecting for Life; disseminate findings and share lessons learned with programme practitioners and partners.

(HSE NOSP)

Draft Business Case on overall evaluation of CfL is being prepared.

7.4.1 Support research on risk and protective factors for suicidal behaviour in groups with an increased risk (or potential increased risk) of suicide behaviour (see Strategic Goal 3). (HSE NOSP)

A Project Steering Group has been established.

A number of stakeholder events have been held to gain insights into suicide and self-harm in CHO1.

Ethical approval has been received from one site.



HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention – March 2023

