



# Connecting for Life strategy implementation monitoring report Q4 2023

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention



Connecting for Life



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# 1: Introduction

This is the Q4 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 2023 to December 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, **5 were logged as needing attention and 4 were logged as 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.

**The NGO quarterly CfL implementation report (Q3 2023) will be completed and available [here](#) shortly.**

## Some highlights from this period include:

- A draft document of the high level actions for the national Mental Health Promotion plan has been produced. Cross-government engagement is ongoing to agree actions and appropriate wording. It is anticipated that the final draft will be completed by end of Q4. (DoH)
- Headline's appeal to a Press Ombudsman decision in relation to Principle 5.4 of the Code of Practice was successful (HSE NOSP)



- In early December, Coimisiún na Meán will publish its Draft Online Safety Code. This will propose rules to address online harms including suicide and self-harm. This is a public consultation process and civil society bodies, Public bodies and government departments will be invited to respond.
- Researcher commissioned and advisory group established to develop Deaths in Public Places toolkit. (HSE NOSP)
- STORM training was delivered to 11 trainee GPs in GP Scheme West – Sligo. Training in Grief and Bereavement delivered to 204 Counselling in Primary Care staff members. CAMS training delivered Q4, CHO 7. (HSE NOSP)
- There were 2 sessions of safeTALK delivered to IPAS staff in October attended by 50 IPAS staff members (DCEDIY). 48 personnel trained in SafeTALK over Q4, to date (DoD). SafeTALK training delivered internally in DSP throughout 2023 has had a high uptake. To date in 2023, the session was delivered to 260 staff members. (DSP)
- Counselling pilot details now live here [www.gov.ie/en/publication/61be8-counselling-in-primary-schools-pilot-cps-p-2023-2025/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/61be8-counselling-in-primary-schools-pilot-cps-p-2023-2025/) (DES)
- All 4 Traveller Wellbeing through Creativity projects are underway and operating. Meeting with projects scheduled to discuss progress and evaluation. (HSE H&W)
- Research to establish evidence base and best practice examples of shared care between PC and specialist MH services complete. Included review of Irish and international literature and a number of case studies. (HSE MH Ops)
- DRCD hosted an LCDC networking event in September 2023 that featured a presentation on Connecting for Life. DAFM, with the support of DoH and the HSE, hosted the 'Cultivating Mental Well-being in Rural Ireland' conference in November.
- The HSE NOSP and NSRF presented a review of bereavement supports provided through the coronial system in other jurisdictions to the Dept Justice.
- National Centre for Clinical Audit approved advancement of a feasibility study to establish National Probable Suicide Registry. Meeting in Q4 to review incident specific review tool for community mental suspected suicides. (HSE MH Ops)
- On-going production of report from the Self-Harm Assessment and Data Analysis (SADA) project with support from NOSP. Appointment of joint funded SADA Project Officer to assist in more detailed interrogation of available data. This will assist with data quality and translate to more effective policy and protocol development. (DoJ/IPS)



### This period updates were received from 18 partners:

- Department of Defence (DoD)
- Tusla
- Department of Health (DoH)
- HSE Health and Wellbeing (HSE H&W)
- HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (HSE NOSP)
- HSE Mental Health Operations (HSE MH Ops)
- Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- Local Government Management Authority (LGMA)
- Department of Justice (DoJ)
- Irish Prison Service (IPS)
- Coimisiún na Meán (CnM)
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM) – Sports
- Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
- Department of Social Protection (DSP)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)
- HSE Acute Hospitals (HSE Acute Ops)
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Department of Children, Disability, Integration, Equality and Youth (DCDIEY)

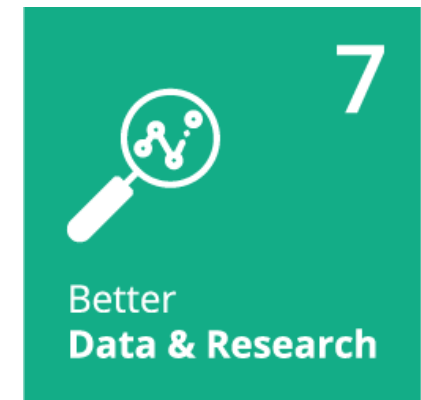
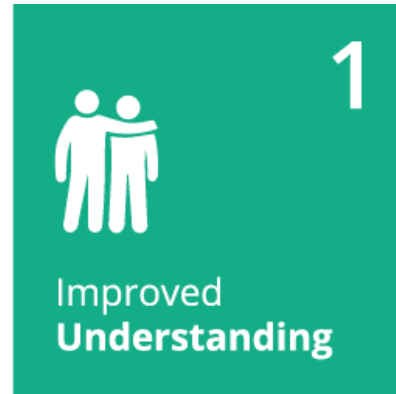
### This period updates were not received from 3 partners:

- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Press Council of Ireland
- HSE Primary Care (HSE PC)





## 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"> <li>NSRF/NOSP has received wave 7 and 8 of the Healthy Ireland data. Data looks at: factors affecting suicidal behaviour in Ireland; impact of suicide bereavement; risk and protective factors. Commenced drafting a data analysis plan.(HSE NOSP)</li> <li>Q4 Steering group meeting cancelled due to Industrial Action underway in the HSE. (HSE H&amp;W)</li> <li>A draft document of the high level actions for the national Mental Health Promotion plan has been produced. Cross-government engagement is ongoing to agree actions and appropriate wording. It is anticipated that the final draft will be completed by end of Q4. (DoH)</li> <li>Aiming for completion of drafting of new NPAP in Q4 2023; submission and publication Q1 2024. (DoH)</li> <li>The development of the new NPAP is ongoing, with plans to be published next year. (DTCAGSM) - Sport)</li> <li>YMH Campaign is running on search, social and display until end of year. Media planning in progress for Q1. Q1 social media being briefed. Creative for My Mental Health Plan tool in development. (HSE MH Ops)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My Mental Health Plan testing underway. Due to go live due in December. Content updates for YMH.ie included the National Counselling Service and CAMHS. User testing on website content currently in progress. Digital Mental Health Plan: signed off by Digital Mental Health Specialist Group (HSE MH Ops)</li> <li>Social media posts developed for a range of priority groups including International Men's Day &amp; posts to be shared on Christmas Day and New Years Day for those experiencing isolation and anxiety. 17 Mental Health promotion videos in development for My Health My language page on HSE website. (HSE MH Ops)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on related campaign activity with relevant NGOs at current SLA applications/meetings during this quarter (Shine, Spunout, USI). This includes support, review or contribution to their online content, in addition to 'campaigns'. First Fortnight Mental Health Arts Festival Programme announced. (HSE NOSP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning commenced for 'Media Reporting' event (in Q1) with partners Department of Health, and WHO. Headline appeal to Press Ombudsman decision successful. Work ongoing with 'Real-time Social Media' group (with ROSPs) to develop good practice postvention media and social media assets. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>In early December, the Commission will publish its Draft Online Safety Code. This will propose rules to address online harms including suicide and self-harm. This is a public consultation process and civil society bodies, Public bodies and government departments will be invited to respond. (Coimisiún na Meán)</li> <li>Since the last reporting period, there have been no complaints with respect to Principle 3 of the Code of Programme Standards. (Coimisiún na Meán)</li> </ul>



## 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"> <li>Local Plans for CHO 3 and CHO 4 all currently being implemented. New local plan for CHO 3 due to be published by end of year. Actions that are outstanding for CHO 4 are being drafted into an action plan for 2024/2025 and to be approved by MH Management Team. (HSE MH Ops)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services' updated to reflect the Charities Governance Code 2022. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>Researcher commissioned and advisory group established to develop Deaths in Public Places toolkit. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>Workplace guidance document agreed - document in design. (HSE NOSP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online Training programme signed off- online portal in development for soft launch Q4, 2023. USH TtT completed, Programme material updated. Trainer survey completed and analysed.</li> </ul> <p>Training Figures for Q3 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>START - 747</li> <li>safeTALK - 1375</li> <li>ASIST - 598</li> <li>USH - 103</li> <li>Introduction to USH - 39</li> <li>Professional Postvention - 52</li> <li>STORM – 17</li> <li>USH TtT delivered - 12 trainers.</li> </ul> <p>Trainer survey conducted with safeTALK and ASIST trainers to determine trainer support needs. (HSE NOSP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing national delivery of programme to HSE staff across CHOs. Adaptation of Minding your Wellbeing programme for delivery with older people is ongoing. Materials being adapted in consultation with HP&amp;I officers, University of Galway and community facilitators. Seven pilot sites recruited.</li> <li>Minding your Wellbeing was delivered to first year Veterinary students in UCD (Oct - Nov 2023). Process evaluation conducted by NSRF.</li> <li>Contract awarded to University of Galway to conduct a Realist Evaluation for social prescribing. A separate study underway with TCD to conduct Pilot of three evaluation tools for social prescribing - training provided for link workers on data collection tools and processes.</li> <li>Last service to be implemented via 2023 DOH funding service in Co. Clare. Host organisation identified and recruitment of link worker underway.</li> <li>Further editing required on content of the new online HSE Balancing Stress programme.</li> <li>Request for Tender for developing online health and wellbeing training for early years practitioners being drafted in consultation with DCEDIY.</li> <li>University of Limerick working with Health and Wellbeing and Department of Education on development of Year 2 and 3 Emotional Wellbeing curriculum content. (HSE H&amp;W)</li> </ul>





## 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

- 48 Personnel trained across the DF in Q4, to date. Impacted by availability of personnel to undergo the training. (DoD)
- The deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol between the HSE and An Garda Síochána has been approved by the Garda Data Protection Office, with minor edits. It has not yet been signed. (HSE NOSP)
- First draft of social determinants of suicide review developed and IPSDS data entry (small area codes) is underway. Grant scheme papers all published. Additional funding provided for Dying to Farm project and Safety Planning project. LGBTIQ+ 2 national survey completed - data analysis underway. (HSE NOSP)
- STORM V5 training delivered to 11 trainee GPs in GP Scheme West – Sligo. Two webinars delivered in October: webinar to GPs and GP practice nurses on the topic of 'Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder' by Dr Michelle Hill, -1259 GPs and GP practice nurses attended; webinar to GPs on Reducing Stress and Burnout for GPs, by Dr Andree Rochfort - 237 GPs attended. The ICGP In person Autumn Conference heard a presentation on 'Anxiety-managing a modern malaise' by Prof Brendan Kelly- 320 GPs attended. Training in Grief and Bereavement delivered to 204 Counselling in Primary Care staff members. CAMS training delivered Q4, CHO 7. (HSE NOSP)
- All 4 Traveller Wellbeing through Creativity projects are underway and operating. Meeting with projects scheduled to discuss progress and evaluation. (HSE H&W)
- DRCD hosted an LCDC networking event in September 2023 that featured a presentation on *Connecting for Life*. The *Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)* continues to promote and support projects/initiatives/groups in line with the Connecting for Life Strategy. The Empowering Communities Programme (ECP) provides information and link-ins with mental health and wellbeing services. (DRCD)
- Two L&D Officers attended ASIST - one officer has completed the shadowing exercise. (DSP)
- DAFM with the support of DoH and the HSE, hosted the 'Cultivating Mental Well-being in Rural Ireland' conference in November. Eight farm safety European Innovation Partnerships focus on addressing challenges around farm health, safety and well-being.. DAFM's most recent Thematic Research Call sought proposals including on farmer's safety, health and wellbeing. DAFM funded printing of the FSPAC 'Farmers Health and Wellbeing' booklet which was distributed to over 122,000 farmers. (DAFM)
- Work is currently on-going to progress the development of a standardised training course for all ED staff. (HSE Acute Ops)
- Policy documents on responding to suicidal distress are available to IPAS staff, accommodation centre staff and International Protection applicants on the IPAS website. (DCEDIY)

- No updates provided

- HEI Reporting template under review. (HEA)
- Online focus group with parents/ caregivers of young people with experience of CAMHS took place in Sep. Feedback from this and previous consultations are informing the report for Workstream 2 .First draft presented to the NIMC in Oct. The specialist group will present final report to NIMC. (HSE MH Ops)
- Student support teams in larger primary schools CPD designed. Workbooks ready. Definition of large primary school agreed. Plans for engagement with schools in the new year. Counselling pilot details now live here [www.gov.ie/en/publication/61be8-counselling-in-primary-schools-pilot-cps-p-2023-2025/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/61be8-counselling-in-primary-schools-pilot-cps-p-2023-2025/) (DES)
- An implementation and evaluation group for Cineáltas has been established. The student participation unit has been established in the Department. All schools received a Cineáltas flag and poster during anti-bullying week. Work is well advanced to update the anti-bullying procedures for schools. (DES)





## 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"><li>• Research to establish evidence base and best practice examples of shared care between PC and specialist MH services complete. Included review of Irish and international literature and a number of case studies. 4 Crisis Teams fully operational. Challenge for last site CHO 3 due to recruitment embargo. (HSE MH Ops)</li><li>• Potential supplier has been sourced to develop the guide document. Working through the data in the final report to finalise the brief. (HSE MH Ops)</li><li>• Successful 2 day in person training event held in Dublin at end of Oct. Very positive feedback received. Clinicians reported value of hearing about developments and networking opportunities. The first NCPSHI 5 year data reports were delayed. Final audit report on the assessment rooms in EDs complete. (HSE MH Ops)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk Therapies Working Group have progressed a draft Principles Paper outlining proposed approach across primary care level. The Steering Group for TT in Specialist MH Services held a series of engagement meetings with demonstration sites. Healthlink is now being used for refer to SilverCloud. (HSE MH Ops)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scoping study to identify international bereavement support models provided through the coronial system completed. Research is underway to identify the information needs of children and young adults and their families bereaved by suicide. (HSE MH Ops)</li><li>• Ongoing engagement with NGOs providing bereavement support services. SLA process for 2024 initiated. Consultation with Pieta on implementing SBLO report recommendations. Presented a review of bereavement supports provided through the coronial system in other jurisdictions to the Dept Justice. (HSE NOSP)</li></ul>



## 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"> <li>The NGO progress report for Q2 has been published on the CfL website. The SLA engagement process has been completed with all NOSP funded NGOs. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>CfL newsletter utilising Mailerlite, now in operation. Commenced working with HSE Digital on review and retirement of old content on nosp.ie and connectingforlifeireland.ie, based on analytics. This is in preparation for improved positioning on hse.ie corporate pages, as they are developed in 2024. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>Framework and Action Plan will be published imminently. Information note on whole school guidance under draft and will be shared with schools before Feb 2024. Collaboration internally and externally. (DES)</li> <li>All training available online via the wellbeing CPD directory for primary and post-primary. NEPS continue to liaise with ECSI network on roll out of trainings to schools (reluctant school attendance, trauma informed practice etc). ESCI Rep sits on Wellbeing Interagency Group who met on 23/11/2023 (DES)</li> <li>There were 2 sessions of safeTalk Training to IPAS staff in October attended by 50 IPAS staff members. Also through a dedicated training programme to IPAS accommodation centre staff, at least one person from each centre is encouraged to participate in LivingWorks Start. (DCEDIY)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential supplier has been sourced to develop the guide document. Working through the data from the report to finalise the brief. (HSE MH Ops)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SADA report for 2020 &amp; 2021 is in final editing stage with NSRF &amp; IPS. High level results are being presented to the National Suicide &amp; Self-Harm Prevention oversight group on the 13 Dec 2023. (DoJ/IPS)</li> <li>Progress of this policy development has been hindered with resource and capacity issues. (DoJ)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research into more specific training In-hand. Partially complete and added to list of training for all Depts. Communication for all Departments prepared in conjunction with Mental Health Unit and issued in October 2023. Infographic with the key actions, Moved to Q1 2024 to align with new year.(DoH)</li> <li>In line with the Q3 Update training requirements are reviewed as required by the sector. An end of year request will issue to the sector to identify any particular challenges at year end. (LGMA)</li> <li>48 personnel trained in SafeTALK over Q4, to date. Availability of personnel to undergo training is impacting on this. (DoD)</li> <li>5 Credit suicide prevention module developed in partnership with NSRF, material finalised. UCD Wellbeing module piloted Oct 2023. (HSE NOSP)</li> <li>CAMS training continues to be under review. Establishment of a National Steering Group to enhance ability of the IPS to respond to presentations of Emotional Dysregulation and increase the ability to respond to the immediacy of DHS/suicidality. Roll out of Healthy Prisons initiative across the IPS estate. (DoJ/IPS)</li> <li>safeTALK training delivered internally in DSP throughout 2023 has had a high uptake. To date in 2023, the session was delivered to 260 staff members. (DSP)</li> <li>Promotion of NOSP Training continues to be included in CPD Directory. The Employee Assistance Service continues to be available to teachers, SNAs and all school staff. A free &amp; confidential wellbeing support service is provided by Spectrum Life <a href="http://www.gov.ie/en/service/23acf5-employee-assistance-service">www.gov.ie/en/service/23acf5-employee-assistance-service</a>. (DES)</li> </ul>



## Goal 6: Reduced access to means

### 6.1 Access to drugs used in intentional overdose

- Medical Council Over-prescribing working group draft report to be published in January 2024. Document currently under review by DoH and NOSP. DoH working with EPA re development of National DUMP Campaign. Funding options being explored. Next meeting scheduled for 29/11/2023. (DoH)
- Baseline survey preliminary analysis completed and presented to key stakeholders. Launch event for educational materials held on October 17. Dissemination of materials ongoing until end of Q1 2024. Webinar arranged for Q1 2024 for the IloP. (DoH)

### 6.2 Lethal methods

- Through the CCMA RCCH Committee the sector is represented on the advisory board tasked with developing a toolkit for a number of high risk areas to be identified. The sector will support NOSP as the work progresses. (LGMA)
- Ligature Risk-Reduction Steering Committee completed a review of international practice. The group wrote to heads of service advising that we adopt the approach that colleagues in NHS Wales have taken and apply it here, at least in the short to medium term. (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"><li>Have worked with HSE Procurement on issuing tender for CfL evaluation, and will have contracts signed by the end of the year. Evaluation of Observatory delayed until IPSDS 2019/20 data cleaned. (HSE NOSP)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>National Centre for Clinical Audit approved advancement of a feasibility study to establish National Probable Suicide Registry. Meeting in Q4 to review incident specific review tool for community mental suspected suicides. (HSE MH Ops)</li><li>DIAG December meeting rescheduled; IPSDS outputs awaiting NOSP signoff - process agreed. (HSE NOSP)</li><li>On-going production of report from the Self-Harm Assessment and Data Analysis (SADA) project with support from NOSP. Appointment of joint funded SADA Project Officer to assist in more detailed interrogation of available data. This will assist with data quality and translate to more effective policy and protocol development. (DoJ/IPS)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As per Q2 and Q3 the department is liaising with the CSO regarding the publication of their annual report on suicide statistics. Their report is to be published before the end of Q4 2023. (DoJ)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>HEA continues to fund the work of the NSRF in relation to C-SSHRI. (HEA)</li><li>Rescheduled DIAG &amp; ExAG meeting - to accommodate CfL evaluation team present in Q1 2024. (HSE NOSP)</li><li>The dying to farm project has recruited a researcher and commenced work and 2nd round of funding was allocated to manualising the Safety planning group intervention. (HSE NOSP)</li></ul>



## 3. At a Glance: Needs Attention (5 Actions)

### Goal 3

*Action 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.*

48 Personnel trained across the DF in Q4, to date. Impacted by availability of personnel to undergo the training. Proposing the integration of SafeTALK training into Recruit training and Potential NCO training.(DoD)

*Action 3.1.4 Evaluate as appropriate targeted initiatives and or services for priority groups.*

Delay in data analysis. (HSE NOSP).

### Goal 4

*Action 4.1.3: Ensure that those in the criminal justice system have continued access to appropriate information and treatment in prisons and while under Probation Services in the community. The Irish Prison Service and the HSE National Forensic Mental Health Service will complete an agreed memorandum of understanding on improved links through the NFMHS Prison In-reach Service and the Probation Service will engage with the HSE on maintaining and developing access to community psychiatric services.*

This has been delayed but there is a meeting scheduled to progress clarification and discussion on agreement of the MOU. (DoJ/IPS)



## 3. At a Glance: Needs Attention (Con't)

### Goal 5

*Action 5.3.1 Through the Death in Custody/Suicide Prevention Group in each prison, identify lessons learned, oversee the implementation of the corrective action plan, and carry out periodic audits.*

There has been a delay in accessing the data. The SADA report for 2020 & 2021 is in final editing stage with NSRF & IPS. High level results are being presented to the National Suicide & Self-Harm Prevention oversight group on the 13 Dec 2023. (IPS/DoJ)

*Action 5.3.3 Implement the IPS Prisoner Release Policy, to ensure care, treatment and information is provided, including identifying the appropriate mental health services in each area for those leaving prison. This will include appropriate links with the community mental health services.*

Updating IPS seclusion policy with new NICE guidance progress development has been hindered with resource and capacity issues. (IPS/DoJ)



## 3. At a Glance: Off Track (4 actions)

### Goal 1

*Action 1.1.2 Develop and implement a HSE Mental Health Promotion Plan.*

Q4 Steering group meeting cancelled due to Industrial Action underway in the HSE. (HSE H&W)

### Goal 2

*Action 2.3.3 Deliver a range of mental health promotion programmes in community, health and education settings aimed at improving the mental health of the whole population and priority groups.*

Further editing required on content of the new online HSE Balancing Stress programme. Request for Tender for developing online health and wellbeing training for early years practitioners being drafted in consultation with DCEDIY. (HSE H&W)

### 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.*

The deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol between the HSE and An Garda Síochána has been approved by the Garda Data Protection Office, with minor edits. It has not yet been signed. (HSE NOSP)

### Goal 7

*Action 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.*

DIAG December meeting rescheduled. Delay in finalising IPSDS outputs. (HSE NOSP)







# HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention – December 2023

