

Meanings  
Messages  
+ Myths

The Coverage and Treatment of Suicide in the Irish Print Media

John Cullen

A hand holding a magnifying glass over a newspaper article. The word "suicide" is clearly visible through the lens of the magnifying glass. The background shows blurred text from the newspaper, including phrases like "National Task Force" and "suicide in Ireland".

suicide

'Media treatments tend to report suicide in a way that communicates a message that suicide is a result of personal (incidental) circumstances or clinical or medical reasons, rather than a product of anomie resulting from profound social change.'

#### Acknowledgement

This research project was part funded and supported by the National Office for Suicide Prevention (Formerly the National Suicide Review Group). Edited by Derek Chambers.

ISBN-13:978-0-9553854-0-7

ISBN-10:0-9553854-0-7

Published by the Health Service Executive 2006 ©

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 1.</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Background and Introduction	8
1.2 Literature Review	9
1.2.1 Suicide in Ireland	9
1.2.2 The Media	13
1.2.3 Suicide and the Media	17
1.3 Overview of Methodology	20
<b>Section 2. The Quantitative Approach</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 The Quantitative Methodology	22
2.2 Classification / Taxonomy	22
2.3 Quantitative Data	24
2.3.1. Monthly Frequencies	25
2.3.2. Item Types	25
2.3.3. Sources	25
2.3.4. Source Types	25
2.3.5. Authors	25
2.3.6. Word counts	25
2.3.7. Attached Images	25
2.3.8. Catalysts	26
2.3.9. Geographic Settings	26
2.3.10. Groupings	26
2.3.11. Organisations and Institutions Identified	26
2.3.12. Relevance Rating	26
2.3.13. Classification Scheme	27
2.3.14. Guideline Adherence	33
2.3.15. Applicability for Qualitative Review	33
2.4 Quantitative Findings	34
2.4.1 Monthly Frequencies	34
2.4.2 Types of Items Captured	35
2.4.3 Sources	36

2.4.4 Source Types	37
2.4.5 Author	37
2.4.6 Word Counts	38
2.4.7 Attached Images	38
2.4.8 Catalysts	38
2.4.9 Geographic Setting	39
2.4.10 Groupings	39
2.4.11 Organisations and Institutions Identified	40
2.4.12 Relevance Ratings	41
2.4.13 Classification Schemes	41
2.4.14 Guideline Adherence	43
2.4.15 Appropriateness for Qualitative Review	43
<b>Section 3. The Qualitative Approach</b>	<b>44</b>
3.1 Qualitative Documentary Research	44
3.2 Qualitative Documentary Research Approaches	45
3.3 The Qualitative Method	46
3.4 Results	48
3.4.1 Tone and Language Used	48
3.4.2 Messages	54
3.4.3 Circumstances / Diagnosing Causes	58
3.4.4 Myths	61
3.4.5 Authenticity / Credibility / Representativeness	63
3.4.6 Attached Images	65
<b>Section 4. Discussion and Conclusions</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Section 5. Recommendations for Further Research</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>73</b>
1. Taxonomy / Classification Scheme	73
2. Item titles	76

# Executive Summary

The dramatic rise in suicide in Ireland over the last ten or so years has been most noticeable amongst young males. It has been pointed out that 'the public discourse on suicide in Ireland has been mostly informed by medical and psychological explanations, which analyse the epidemiology of suicide in terms of risk factors, linking suicide alcohol and substance abuse, with mental illness such as depression, and with stress associated with transition to adulthood and role adaptation. Such an approach, while useful in understanding individual cases, has not contributed significantly to our understanding of why the overall pattern of death by suicide in Ireland changed over the final decades of the twentieth century.'<sup>1</sup>

Commenting at the level of individual cases, Durkheim remarked that 'if imitation plays a part in the development of suicide, therefore, suicides should vary with the importance that newspapers have in public opinion. Unfortunately this importance is quite hard to determine.'<sup>2</sup>

This research project utilises an approach which mixes quantitative and qualitative methodologies with a view to developing a robust picture of how the Irish print media reports suicide.

The quantitative approach endeavours to:

- Capture newspaper articles on the subject of suicide
- Classify and catalogue these stories under a number of headings
- Analyse the data produced from this process.

The qualitative research approach involves the close reading of samples of the items collected with a view to understanding the social and cultural messages they impart.

The methodology developed was initially tested on items sourced from the Irish print media over the month of December 2002. Although the intention of this pilot test was to refine the methodology, the findings themselves were noteworthy and contributed to the development of a

---

<sup>1</sup> Kieran Keohane and Derek Chambers 'Understanding Irish Suicides' in *Ireland Unbound: A Turn of the Century Chronicle* (IPA: Dublin, 2002) 36.

<sup>2</sup> Emile Durkheim *Suicide* 1897 Translated by John A Spaulding and George Simpson, Ed. George Simpson (Routledge: Great Britain, 2000), 140.

**'if imitation plays a part in the development of suicide, therefore, suicides should vary with the importance that newspapers have in public opinion. Unfortunately this importance is quite hard to determine.'**

number of potential hypotheses and generated further research questions. The findings of the methodology pilot test are available from the author or through the National Office for Suicide Prevention.

Over the course of the twelve month project (June 2003 – May 2004), 1596 items were captured; an average of 133 items per month. Most items were captured during the month of November (216) and least in May (76).

Some of the overall findings of the present report are as follows.

- Most of the items sourced discussed suicide in terms that are primarily incidental or clinical rather than as a broader social issue that is worthy of analysis as a deeper sociological concern. The majority of items captured were news items.
- Suicide tended to be reported in relation to the topics of depression (210 items, 13.16%), bereavement (165 items, 10.34%) and analyses of suicide trends (138 items, 8.64%).
- Numerous incidences of failure to observe guidelines on reporting suicide were noticed. This was most noticeable with regard to the use of the term 'commit suicide': almost 18% of items analysed failed to observe this guideline by using the term (which is considered insensitive or inappropriate as it can be associated with sin or crime).
- Most items which could be defined as having a specific catalyst related to reports on actual incidences of suicide or attempted suicide.

- Organisations and institutions most mentioned with regard to suicide were the Gardaí, Samaritans and the Irish Association of Suicidology. The former National Suicide Review Group was the sixth most mentioned organisation.
- The social grouping most identified was 'Irish people'. This was followed by 'health professionals', 'people bereaved by suicide' and 'young men'.
- The language used in the majority of items analysed qualitatively evoked emotions that ranged from sadness to horror.
- The language used often communicated a message that suicide was beyond that which is normal, and, possibly, was ridiculous or shameful. However this was more likely to be the case in items which profiled support groups or suicide prevention projects.
- A clear message was communicated that suicide prevention needs to be considered a priority area for funding support and several articles report that suicide prevention received significantly smaller amounts of funding than road safety awareness, while road traffic accidents account for less fatalities in Ireland.
- In the original methodology test report it was remarked that only two writers returned to the topic of suicide more than once, which was taken as a possible indication of a lack of individual journalistic interest in the topic of suicide. Results from the overall project challenge this. Fifty four per cent of items carried an author by-line (862 items). Of these 152 authors (17% of articles with a by-line) returned to the topic of suicide more than once.

From the original pilot test period a set of hypotheses regarding the treatment of suicide in the press were developed. These hypotheses are discussed in the final part of the report and potential avenues of further research and investigation are outlined.

'Suicide is not just a medical or psychological problem of the individual. It is more than that - it is a problem of society.'





# Section 1

## 1.1 Background and Introduction

The media have an important role to play in health education, including informing on the areas of suicide and suicide prevention. Research suggests that the manner of reporting a suicide in the media can lead to future suicides<sup>3</sup>. A number of organisations, including the Irish Association of Suicidology and Samaritans<sup>4</sup>, have produced documents for journalists which provide guidelines for reporting suicide. However, no study to date has been undertaken in an Irish context to investigate whether these guidelines are being adhered to. This report explores the methodologies appropriate to investigating the way in which suicide is reported in the Irish print media by:

- Reviewing similar projects in the international literature
- Reviewing appropriate methodologies for such research
- Developing a suicide-media classification / taxonomy scheme (see Appendix 1)
- Outlining a proposed research methodology
- Developing a data-capture tool
- Reporting on how outputs will be analysed and recorded
- Conducting a twelve-month news monitoring project and reporting on the results of the project.

It must be stated that this report does not assert that one set of research approaches is preferable to another or that sociological models are preferable to others. This research aims to make a specific contribution to understanding how suicide tends to be reported in the Irish media and recognises that suicide is a complex problem requiring multiple contributions from a range of disciplines and perspectives if the problem is to be addressed appropriately. Where mention is made of suicide being discussed in terms that are primarily incidental or clinical, the intention is not to be unnecessarily critical of medical models for addressing the issue of suicide, or to suggest that more preferable alternatives exist. The

---

<sup>3</sup> Elmer Etzersdorfer and Gernot Sonneck 'Preventing suicide by influencing mass-media reporting: The Viennese experience 1980-1996' *Archives of Suicide Research* 1998 (Vol 4, no 1) 67-74.

<sup>4</sup> Irish Association of Suicidology and Samaritans, *Media Guidelines on the Portrayal of Suicide in the Media*, 2006.

intention is to provide an overview of the various understandings which exist on the topic, in an attempt to generate deeper understanding of this complex issue.

## 1.2 Literature Review

### 1.2.1 Suicide in Ireland

'Suicide in Ireland rose dramatically in the 1990s. The increase is especially marked amongst men in their twenties and there is some evidence to suggest that the rise has been greater in rural areas. The grim statistics are well known, and tragic stories of Irish suicides have become all too familiar. The public discourse on suicide in Ireland has been mostly informed by medical and psychological explanations, which analyse the epidemiology of suicide in terms of risk factors, linking suicide alcohol and substance abuse, with mental illness such as depression, and with stress associated with transition to adulthood and role adaptation. Such an approach, while useful in understanding individual cases, has not contributed significantly to our understanding of why the overall pattern of death by suicide in Ireland changed over the final decades of the twentieth century.'<sup>5</sup>

**'Suicide is not just a medical or psychological problem of the individual. It is more than that - it is a problem of society.'**<sup>6</sup>

The growth of the suicide rate in Ireland has generated a new set of research questions on the sociology of Irish suicide. One of the recommendations of the recent *Suicide in Ireland - Everybody's Problem*<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Kieran Keohane and Derek Chambers 'Understanding Irish Suicides' *Ireland Unbound: A Turn of the Century Chronicle* (IPA: Dublin, 2002) 36.

<sup>6</sup> Caroline Smyth, Malcolm MacLachlan and Anthony Clare *Cultivating Suicide: Destruction of Self in a Changing Ireland* (Liffey Press: Dublin, 2003) 4.

<sup>7</sup> Tony Bates, *Suicide in Ireland – Everybody's Problem*, Summary of the Forum for Integration and Partnership of Stakeholders in Suicide Prevention, March 2005.

## 'A sociological perspective enables us to see that private troubles are related to public issues'

report was support for research into a range of issues in Irish society which contribute to suicide. The change in suicide patterns over such a brief time-frame has generated a call for new methods and ways of understanding the problem in the changing context of Irish life. 'A fuller explanation of the increase in the Irish suicide rate is possible if we situate suicides in a broader sociological framework that transcends the life-world of the individual. A sociological perspective enables us to see that private troubles are related to public issues; that the case history of a suicide victim is part of a broader, historical, social pathology. Sociology identifies the characteristic suicidogenic pathologies of modern society in general as egoism and anomie. These problems are exacerbated in Ireland in particular as they coincide and collide with vestigial traditional social forms.'<sup>8</sup> A fuller understanding of suicide in Ireland, therefore, can be obtained by taking a broader sociological approach and asserting the rapid pace of change in Irish society.

'In the contemporary world, it would be difficult to find an example of such deep, intense and rapid transformation as has occurred in Ireland. In less than a half-century, Ireland experienced a metamorphosis which propelled it out of the pre-industrial condition. While failing to generate an industrial order, it has, as a kind of unintended consequence, managed to establish itself as a post-industrial enclave within global capitalism.'<sup>9</sup>

Factors influencing these changes include

- The strong economic recovery experienced in Ireland 'from the prolonged slump of the 1980s to the boom of the 1990s'<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Keohane and Chambers, 50.

<sup>9</sup> Michel Peillon 'Introduction' *Ireland Unbound: A Turn of the Century Chronicle* (IPA: Dublin, 2002) 1.

<sup>10</sup> Brian Nolan, P.J. O'Connell and C.T.Whelan *Bust to Boom?: The Irish Experience of Growth and Inequality* (Economic and Social Research Institute / Institute of Public Administration; Dublin, 2001) 340.

- Return emigration
- Growth of multiculturalism and
- Lessening influence of the Catholic Church.

In recent years many of the hegemonic institutional, professional and social forces which had previously exerted a strong influence on Irish society have been called into question as a result of revelations of abuses of power and corruption. Irish society has changed, and this rate of change accelerated over the last decade.

What is the evidence linking this societal change with the growth in suicide rates? It is possible to compare Irish suicide data with other emerging trends, for example: '...over the period of the economic boom, suicides have increased in line with GDP growth, driven mainly by the deaths of males (83% of suicide deaths in 2000 were male)... Why the suicide rate has risen so rapidly is a topic that requires further research.'<sup>11</sup> If it is posited that the increase in the Irish suicide rate is linked to social and cultural change factors, a research need exists to get inside the 'black box' of what exactly these factors are, why they have developed and how they can be addressed.

Emile Durkheim provided one of the first, and most influential, models for studying suicide, which has become a model for the sociological study of illness and epidemiology.<sup>12</sup> Durkheim's work, *Suicide*, demonstrates that suicide should not be viewed solely as an act of personal unhappiness as 'social factors have a fundamental effect on suicidal behaviour.'<sup>13</sup> When examining the impact of social factors on suicide propensities, Durkheim found that the likelihood of suicide decreases in individuals who are members of groups which are observed to be strongly integrated on grounds of religion, domesticity and politics<sup>14</sup>: 'The only quality satisfying this condition is that they are all strongly integrated social groups. So we reach the general conclusion: suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the social groups of which the individual forms a part.'<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Peter Clinch, Frank Convery and Brendan Walsh *After the Celtic Tiger: Challenges Ahead* (O'Brien Press: Dublin, 2002) 175.

<sup>12</sup> Hilary Tovey and Perry Share *A Sociology of Ireland* (Gill and MacMillan: Dublin, 2000) 230.

<sup>13</sup> Anthony Giddens *Sociology* (Polity Press: Cambridge, 1993) 707.

<sup>14</sup> Durkheim, 208.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 209.

Although suicide is often triggered by incidents in an individual's personal life, Durkheim found that these are often incidental when compared to the society in which an individual must endeavour to locate themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Irish society has undergone massive transformation over the last thirty or so years and is perceived as a late comer to modernisation.<sup>17</sup> 'Change produces social disorganisation, with disruption of societal values and of the institutions and methods of social control. In the transition from a "traditional" to a "modern" society, the shared values that maintained order formerly are eroded but new values have not yet developed to replace them.'<sup>18</sup>

**'In the transition from a "traditional" to a "modern" society, the shared values that maintained order formerly are eroded but new values have not yet developed to replace them.'**

Current suicide rates in Ireland are highest amongst men born around the start of this period of social dislocation: recorded national suicide rates for the period 1996 - 2000 (inclusive), for example, were highest amongst males aged between 20 and 29.<sup>19</sup> Commentators have offered solutions to this trend which often address the societal causal factors:

'The problem of suicide has deep and lasting effects on communities and it is from communities that the solutions will have to come... What we need is to build communities that care, communities of compassion that will be a counter-culture to the competitive individualistic, harsh, brash, consumer-driven culture that is around us.'<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 215.

<sup>17</sup> Tovey and Share, 41.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 260.

<sup>19</sup> National Suicide Review Group *Annual Report 2002: Prevention Across the Regions* p.28.

<sup>20</sup> Stanislaus Kennedy 'Suicide: wake-up call we simply cannot ignore' *The Irish Times* (May 30, 2002) 14.

It is true that members of strongly integrated traditional societies have lower rates of egoistic and anomic suicide but engineering the re-integration of communities is an impossible task. The modernisation of society is irreversible. Keohane and Chambers have found evidence that the rise of anomic suicide is related to the economic boom and the crisis in the Catholic Church.<sup>21</sup> Certain types of communities themselves have become problematic sites: '... the increase in the suicide and attempted suicide rates is most marked in country towns, places that are neither villages where the fabric of community remains relatively intact, nor cities where conditions of anomie have themselves become normalised. Contemporary Irish country towns are in-between places: neither rural nor urban, but hybrid, liminal and characterised by uncertainty and anomie.'<sup>22</sup>

In summary, research has established that

- the suicide rate in Ireland is increasing (particularly amongst young males)
- the changing demographic of suicide in Ireland demands new forms of research to understand it in order that it might be addressed
- linkages between social change and changes in suicide rates have been established
- although the decision to attempt or complete suicide is based on the personal circumstances of an individual, a key determinant is how well the individual is integrated into their society
- social change problematises this relationship of the individual with their society, which can effect their 'place' in social structures.

Although some research has been undertaken on how the media reports suicide, it has proven difficult to identify research which does this in a purely Irish context.

### **1.2.2 The Media**

Although this project seeks to identify and refine a methodology for understanding how suicide is reported in Irish newspapers it is important

---

<sup>21</sup> 'Understanding Irish Suicides' 39.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 41.

to examine media theory in general when developing a methodology such as this. Ives and Torrey report a lacuna in sociological research on the media for the following reasons:

- sociologists tend to be concerned with 'macro' sociological trends and issues, rather than practical aspects of everyday life
- the mass media tends to 'fall on the wrong side of the high culture/popular culture divide'
- the mass media's emergence from the forces of technology and economics are largely neglected by sociology
- media analysis has become the territory of other cognate disciplines such as media, cultural and communications studies.<sup>23</sup>

There is a huge diversity of approaches to media theory. McQuail<sup>24</sup> identified a number of media theories, which are summarised in Table 1.

Media Theory	Description
Social Scientific	'General statements about the nature, working and effects of mass communication, based on systematic and objective observation of media and other relevant factors.'
Normative	'Concerned with examining or prescribing how media ought to operate if certain social values are to be observed or attained.'
Operational	'Refers to the practical ideas assembled and applied by media practitioners in the conduct of their own media work.'
Everyday	'... or common sense theory of media use, referring to the knowledge we all have from our own personal experience with media.'

Table 1: Media Theories (from McQuail, 2001)

<sup>23</sup> A Sociology of Ireland, 363-364.

<sup>24</sup> Tovey and Share, 363-364.

'The development of the media in Ireland has been very much tied up with the emergence of the nation state and with the 'identity' of that nation.'<sup>25</sup> Ives and Torrey report two distinct trends in the emergence of the media in Ireland. The first trend of media development in Ireland was the establishment of a media sector which had strong ideological elements as a core component. This resulted in a mass media which 'focused on the creation of a particular view of national, religious and cultural identity.'<sup>26</sup> This was challenged with the advent of television in Ireland when extra-cultural media programming in effect challenged the dominant media ideology. 'Since the 1960s television has been seen as an over-arching symbol and carrier of modernity.'<sup>27</sup> The Irish media then has produced two sets of ideological communications: one which focused on the creation of an Irish culture, and one which embraces modernised society.

This research project is specifically concerned with newspapers and the messages they convey. Newspapers did not become a true 'mass medium' until the 20th Century.<sup>28</sup> Readership of newspapers in Ireland is quite strong and has a long history of establishment.<sup>30</sup>

'Ireland... has a flourishing newspaper culture. At the national level, readers have access to a broad range of views from Irish and imported newspapers. There is also a strong local newspaper industry; local newspapers are very much tied to locale with close coverage of affairs in specific parishes and neighbourhoods. Local newspaper publishers have been very assiduous in providing local coverage with 'edition-ising' to reflect particular markets in different areas or suburbs.'<sup>31</sup>

With such a range of different newspaper readership markets in Ireland it would be perhaps unwise to assert whether a single, or group of item sources, are more influential than others. The question of how newspapers influence through messages is important to this project, and one which Durkheim identified as being problematic.

---

<sup>25</sup> Denis McQuail *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* (Sage: London, 2001) 7-9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 369.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 367.

<sup>28</sup> McQuail, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Ives and Torrey, 373.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.



'Moral contagion can be spread in only two ways: either the event which serves as a model is spread orally by what we call public report, or the newspapers disseminate it. Generally the latter are blamed; undoubtedly they do form a powerful diffusive instrument. If imitation plays a part in the development of suicide, therefore, suicides should vary with the importance that newspapers have in public opinion. Unfortunately this importance is quite hard to determine. Not the number of papers but rather that of their readers is the measure of the extent of their influence... Without wishing to attach more importance than it deserves to an argument that we cannot rest on established facts, we nevertheless believe it has enough probability to merit some attention.'<sup>32</sup>

Durkheim's identification of a research need in the area of the influence of the printed media on suicide is one that has yet to be adequately answered. A large body of research in the area of social psychology has determined that the media is hugely influential in shaping behaviours (e.g. violent behaviour) and attitudes (e.g. sexism)<sup>33</sup>, and the media can both negatively and positively influence its consumers. It would be wrong to report that the media can only negatively influence its consumers. In the case of HIV/AIDS for example, the media has proved a hugely useful tool in disseminating cause and prevention messages to at-risk groups.

**'the media is hugely influential in shaping behaviours (e.g. violent behaviour) and attitudes (e.g. sexism), and the media can both negatively and positively influence its consumers.'**

The area of bias has received much attention from media researchers. Research conducted by the Glasgow University Media Group found that 'journalists share certain "consensual assumptions" about the world which

---

<sup>32</sup> Suicide, 140.

<sup>33</sup> Michael A. Hogg and Graham V. Vaughan *Social Psychology* (Prentice-Hall: London, 2002) 172, 349, 436-7.

are rarely questioned.<sup>34</sup> This is a very important concern when researching media treatments of social issues, as it delineates the fairness with which certain subjects are treated (or if they are treated at all). Herman and Chomsky provided a deeper critique of the mass media, stating that instead of being bias free it served 'to mobilise support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity and that their choices, emphases and omissions [italics added] can often be understood best, and sometimes with striking clarity and insight, by analysing them in such terms... That the media provide some facts about an issue, however, proves absolutely nothing about the adequacy or accuracy of that coverage. The mass media do, in fact, literally suppress a great deal...'<sup>35</sup> Devereux's analysis of the content of social issues programming by RTÉ, the state broadcaster, highlights this area of omission with regards to the subject of poverty: '... RTÉ's television coverage is of a reductive kind. The poor themselves remain voiceless and invisible across the range of programme types considered in this analysis. They are replaced by spokespersons and other angel figures who communicate with the television audience on their behalf.'<sup>36</sup> Devereux sees such treatments as ideological 'because it facilitates the continued domination of the powerful over the powerless.'<sup>37</sup> Devereux's research highlights that even when a social issue is treated in the media, the treatment can contribute to the marginalisation of a group, and this marginalisation contributes to lack of understanding about the causes of an issue. From a research point of view, it is just as important to analyse the areas which the media does not report on, as on the areas it does.

### 1.2.3 Suicide and the Media

Smyth et al take issue with some segments of the print media in how they represent suicide in Ireland:

'While we are not proposing that Ireland's media take over the role of parenting our youth, the ways in which programmes like Exploring

---

<sup>34</sup> Tim O'Sullivan, Brian Dutton and Phillip Rayner *Studying the Media: An Introduction* (Arnold: London, 1998) 83.

<sup>35</sup> Edward S. Hermann and Noam Chomsky *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage: London, 1994) xi, xiv.

<sup>36</sup> Eoin Devereux *Angels and Devils: Television, Ideology and the Coverage of Poverty* (University of Luton Press: Luton, 1998) 125.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

Masculinities and suicide itself are represented and discussed have a considerable and significant influence on our collective understanding and appreciation of the suicide phenomenon...

The media generally has a responsibility to cultivate a more informed and empathetic culture. In this, they often fail, with headlines such as those above merely illustrating the easier and more sensationalist way in which to approach this topical issue.<sup>38</sup>

Literature on suicide and the media can be divided into two distinct fields:

- The media's treatment of the topic in terms of the nature of suicide and attempted suicide (for example, suicide as a topic which is bizarre or sensational)
- Analyses of how media treatments of suicide can impact and influence suicidal behaviour.

The former group includes focusing on the ethics of reporting suicide attempts, mainly from a media consumers point of view<sup>39 40 41</sup>, or on celebrity suicides.<sup>42</sup> In these cases, suicides are seen as being extraordinary events and do not discuss the personal circumstances of the deceased or societal aspects of suicide. There is significant research (and disagreement) amongst researchers on the effects which media coverage of suicide has on rates of imitation amongst audiences.

The *main* focus of the latter group questions how and if the media can influence suicidal behaviour. The findings of these studies often find some linkages between media influence and suicide ('...it seems likely that media portrayal of both fictional and real life suicides may in some circumstances lead to small increases in overall suicide rates and larger increases in method specific suicide rates.'<sup>43</sup>) but there is a scarcity of

---

<sup>38</sup> Smyth, McLachlan and Clare, 123.

<sup>39</sup> Howard Chua-Eoan 'Too many eyes in the sky? A Media furor [sic] erupts after L.A.'s competitive local stations capture a suicide - live on television' *Time* May 11, 1998 (vol 151 no 18) 30.

<sup>40</sup> Greg Mitchell 'Seattle scandal gets a jump start' *Editor & Publisher* September 10, 2001, 29.

<sup>41</sup> Anon. 'Suicide Coverage' *The Quill* June 1998 (vol 86 no 5) 5.

<sup>42</sup> Simon Manchip 'That Stupid Club' *British Medical Journal* May 28 1994 (vol 308 no 6941) 1447.

<sup>43</sup> David Gunnell 'Reporting suicide: the effect of media coverage on patterns of self-harm' *British Medical Journal* May 28 1994, (vol 308 no 6941) 1447.

**‘it seems likely that media portrayal of both fictional and real life suicides may in some circumstances lead to small increases in overall suicide rates and larger increases in method specific suicide rates.’**

theoretical models which explain how the media can influence suicidal behaviours. As with coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, studies have found that the media can have a positive influence in deterring suicidal or parasuicidal behaviours.<sup>44 45 46</sup>

One of the key recent works which examines the extent and nature of media reporting of suicide and mental health and illness (as opposed to the influence of the media) is the Australian Media Monitoring Project which quantified and analysed all media coverage of suicide over a 12-month period. The study concluded that 'the reporting of suicide, and mental health and illness, in Australia is extensive across all media types. The nature of the reporting of these subjects varies considerably, as does the quality. In general, good items outnumber poorer items, particularly in the case of mental health and illness. However, there are still opportunities for improving the way in which the media report and portray suicide and mental health and illness.'<sup>47</sup> A number of bodies have prepared guidelines for the media in treating the topic of suicide and some have had a marked impact in deterring suicide attempts.<sup>48</sup> The BBC has developed guidelines for its producers and these recommend avoiding glamourisation, simplification and reporting on technical details of suicide methods. They also contain recommendations on appropriate language to be used when treating the subject in a news or dramatic context.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Elmer Etzersdorfer and Gernot Sonneck 'Preventing suicide by influencing mass-media reporting: The Viennese experience 1980-1996' *Archives of Suicide Research* 1998 (Vol 4, no 1) 67-74.

<sup>45</sup> Anon. 'Suicide fact or fiction' *Psychology Today* November/December 2001 (vol 34, no 6) 14.

<sup>46</sup> Graham Martin 'Media influence to suicide: The search for solutions' *Archives of Suicide Research* 1998 (vol 4 no 1) 51-66.

<sup>47</sup> Jane Pirkis et al *The Media Monitoring Project: A Baseline Description of How the Australian Media Report and Portray Suicide and Mental Health and Illness* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001) 4.

<sup>48</sup> Etzersdorfer and Sonneck.

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/info/editorial/prodgl/chapter8.shtml#imitation>, accessed 5th November 2002.

In an Irish context, Samaritans and the Irish Association of Suicidology released the first edition of Media Guidelines on Portrayal of Suicide (2000), and a revised document is due for publication in 2006. The edition of the this document published in 2006 contains recommendations on phraseology and guidelines on factual reporting. The methodology outlined below contains qualitative and quantitative devices for checking if these guidelines are being adhered to.

### **1.3 Overview of Research Methods**

The two main research paradigms which exist are quantitative research (also known as positivist, objectivist, scientific, experimentalist, traditionalist research) and qualitative research (also known as phenomenological, subjectivist, humanistic or interpretivist research).

Quantitative research adapts the approach used in the natural sciences and seeks the causes and facts of phenomena. Quantitative research methods emphasise precision, objectivity and rigor. It assumes that social reality is externally observable.

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with understanding social reality from the perspective of groups or individuals who experience it in particular contexts. It is perhaps useful to simplify the central tendencies of each type of research as follows: quantitative research tends to use large samples, test hypotheses and use data that is precise. Qualitative research uses smaller samples, aims to be generative of theory and use data that is rich and subjective.

It is not unusual for social or media research to mix these and other methodologies (known as triangulation) in order to produce a clearer picture of the subject under investigation. This is the approach which was developed for this project's methodology. The sections below outline the separate quantitative and qualitative research approaches which this project used.

The quantitative approach endeavours to:

- Capture newspaper articles on the subject of suicide
- Classify these stories under a number of headings
- Analyse the data produced from this process.

The qualitative research approach will attempt to closely read samples of the items collected with a view to understanding the social and cultural messages they impart.

Before beginning this exploration, it is important to comment on the research material being investigated. These materials are printed items in newspapers and periodicals (for a more in-depth description of types see 'item type' in the Quantitative Methodology section below). The material is essentially documentary. Documentary research is one that has an acknowledged caché in media research, and is growing in importance as an avenue of investigation in studies on social issues and suicide. 'With increases in information available through the means discussed..., documentary research will become more popular and relevant. It will, therefore, alongside other methods, yield ever more valuable insights into societies and the dynamics of social life.'<sup>50</sup> Tovey and Share identify three separate approaches used to analyse media texts:

- The semiotic approach 'which attempts to interpret the media as a series of "signs" that may relate in various ways to an underlying "reality"'
- Content analysis which ultimately involves categorising and counting various aspects of media messages
- Ideological research, e.g. 'how particular sets of signs, symbols and textual elements relate to broader issues of power in society; or on questions of genre - how does a particular TV show or magazine story fit in with the expectations that the audience has developed from previous exposure to similar media products.'

---

<sup>50</sup> Tim May *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process* 3rd Edition (Open University Press: Buckingham, 2002) 198.

# Section 2. The Quantitative Approach

## 2.1 The Quantitative Methodology

### *Collection*

The main methods of collecting documentary items (hereafter referred to as items) from newspapers for a study on a particular social issue are:

- Collecting all newspapers over a selected time-frame, scanning all content and reporting on coverage
- Employing a news monitoring agency to scan for, cut and deliver all appropriate items.

The second method is less cumbersome, time consuming and expensive, but has some drawbacks. From a research perspective, the researcher cannot be entirely sure that all appropriate items have been isolated, and cannot place the item in the context of surrounding items (i.e placement on page, distraction of articles and images in proximity).

For the purpose of developing and testing the research methodology below, outputs from a commissioned news monitoring agency solely were utilised. The data collection time-frame for the overall project was June 2003 to May 2004.

## 2.2 Classification / Taxonomy

Durkheim was concerned with the classification of suicide from a very early stage in his seminal work:

'A scientific investigation can thus be achieved only if it deals with comparable facts, and it is the more likely to succeed the more certainly it has combined all those that can be usefully compared. But these natural affinities of entities cannot be made clear safely by such superficial examination as produces ordinary terminology: and so that scholar cannot take as the subject of his research roughly assembled groups of facts corresponding to words of common usage. He himself must establish the groups he wishes to study in order to give them the homogeneity and the specific meaning necessary for them to be

susceptible of scientific treatment... Our first task then must be to determine the order of facts to be studied under the name of suicide...The essential thing is not to express with some precision what the average intelligence terms suicide, but to establish a category of objects permitting this classification, which are objectively established, that is, correspond to a definite aspect of things.'

Practically every area of theoretical and applied science have developed detailed classification schemes relevant to their field of investigation. Many organisations also develop their own schemes which are customised to meet their needs. It would be unwise to adapt a general classification scheme in order to execute a project such as this, with its distinct set of aims. Using a custom-built classification scheme will afford this project a taxonomical structure which is easily understood by those to whom the research might be of interest.

Durkheim's thinking on the categories of suicide has provided the basis for the classification scheme below. The categories of suicide which he identified are summarised in Table 2.

Type of Suicide	Description
Egoistic	Caused by excessive individualism (lack of integration with social forms such as religious groups, domesticity, political society, etc.)
Altruistic	Caused by sense of duty to a group. Durkheim subdivided altruistic suicide into Obligatory suicide (where society expects it), Optional suicide (where the individual puts themselves before the needs of the group) and Acute or Mystical suicide
Anomic	Results when the rules by which society operates become incoherent or unobserved, resulting in the isolation of the individual



Fatalistic	'It is the suicide deriving from excessive regulation, that of persons with futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline.'
------------	---

Table 2: Durkheim's classification of suicide

Durkheim saw the four main categories of suicide as being oppositional. Egoistic suicide is the opposite of altruistic suicide: 'One is related to the crude morality which disregards everything relating solely to the individual: the other is closely associated with the refined ethics which sets human personality on so high a pedestal that it can no longer be subordinated to anything.' Durkheim also perceived anomic and fatalistic suicides to be opposites. Durkheim summarised his categories thus:

'Egoistic suicide results from man's no longer finding a basis for existence in life; altruistic suicide, because this basis for existence appears to man situated beyond life itself and [anomic suicide] results from man's activities lacking regulation and his consequent sufferings.'

These divisions were the central organising principle for the classification scheme. As will be described below further subdivisions to these headings were made on the grounds of aspect, grouping and setting during the refining of the research methodology in December 2002 and throughout the main research project (June 2003 to May 2004).

### 2.3 Quantitative Data

This methodology can easily be adapted to any software application that is used for collecting or analysing data such as spreadsheet software, databases or statistical analysis software such as Minitab or SPSS. The tool has been tested using Microsoft Access because of its widespread usage. The headings below describe the data fields used in each record.

### **2.3.1 Monthly Frequencies**

The month in which each item was published.

### **2.3.2 Item Types**

This indicates the type of media document which the item corresponds to.

### **2.3.3 Sources**

The title of the newspaper from which the item was obtained.

### **2.3.4 Source Types**

The 'type' of source (i.e., daily broadsheet newspaper, Sunday tabloid etc.).

### **2.3.5 Authors**

The author of the item.

### **2.3.6 Word counts**

The approximate word count for the item.

### **2.3.7 Attached Images**

Photographic or graphic images related to the article are identified.

### **2.3.8 Catalysts**

This field is used to indicate the context from which the item was generated. For example, it could be an academic study, a celebrity suicide or a policy response from government. For want of a better term, it is the inspiration for the piece.

### **2.3.9 Geographic Settings**

Areas, region or other geographic settings are identified in this field. These groupings replicate entries in schema 3 below.

### **2.3.10 Groupings**

Social groups or sections of society are identified in this field (e.g. young men).

### **2.3.11 Organisations and Institutions Identified**

All institutions and organisations identified in the text of the items are included in fields 12 to 15, see Table 13 section 2.4.11.

### **2.3.12 Relevance Rating**

This data field attempts to capture the depth of relevance of the item to the topic of suicide. A three point scale is used:

- 1 = Strong relevance
- 2 = Medium relevance
- 3 = Low relevance.

### 2.3.13 Classification Scheme

As mentioned above, the central organising principle of the classification scheme is Durkheim's taxonomy. The four levels of this classification are outlined in Table 3.

During the pilot study, items identified were analysed to ascertain if the main elements of their content adhere to the categories in schema level 1. They were then coded accordingly. One additional category has been added for the purpose of developing a taxonomy which was tested. 'Test' refers to all items which do not fall into the main categories. These were analysed at the end of the testing process to ascertain how they can best be incorporated into the final draft schema. At the pre-test taxonomy design stage it was felt that items treating topics such as attempted suicide and parasuicide might fall into this category. The original categories and their related coding are outlined in Table 3.

Category	Coding
Obligatory Altruistic Suicide	Alt (Ob)
Optional Altruistic Suicide	Alt (Op)
Acute or Mystical Altruistic Suicide	Alt (Ac)
Egoistic Suicide	Ego
Anomic Suicide	Ano
Fatalistic suicide	Fat
Test	Tes

Table 3: Classification Level 1 categories

The level 2 schema attempts to shed light on the level 1 schema by describing the main classification heading according to the aspect which is discussed. A list of potential aspects and their related coding is presented in Table 4.

Category	Coding
Addiction	Add
Advice	Adv
Anxiety	Anx
Assisted suicide	Ass
Attempted suicide	Att
Awareness	Awa
Bullying	Bul
Business	Bus
Campaign	Cam
Child abuse	Chi
Communities	Com
Compensation	Cop
Conflict	Con
Counselling	Cou
Crime	Cri
Depression	Dep
Disability	Dis
Divorce	Div
Economics	Eco
Education	Edu
Euthanasia	Eut
HIV/AIDS	HIV
Isolation	Iso
Legal issues	Leg
Media	Med
Mental health	Men
Mental illness	Mel
Murder/Suicide	Mur
Parasuicide	Par
Physical abuse	Pha
Physical health	Phh
Policy	Pol
Political act	Pla
Prevention	Pre

Private sector	Pri
Protest	Pro
Public sector	Pub
Religion	Rel
Research	Res
Science	Sci
Separation	Sep
Sexual abuse	Sxa
Social issues	Soc
Terrorism	Ter
Trends	Tre
Unemployment	Une
Violence	Vio
Voluntary/community sector	Vol
Work	Wor

Table 4: Classification Level 2 categories (Aspect Schema)

The level 3 schema attempts to shed light on the level 1 schema by describing the main classification heading according to social groups which were the main focus of discussion of the item. A list of the original potential aspects for testing and their related coding is presented in Table 5.

Category	Coding
Academics	Aca
Activists	Act
Addicts	Add
Alcoholics	Alc
Athletes	Ath
Campaigning groups	Cam
Celebrities	Cel
Children	Chi

Co-habiting couples	Co-
Counsellors	Cou
Editors	Edi
Families	Fam
Farmers	Far
Female Children	Fem
Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual people	GLB
Health Professionals	Hea
Irish people	Iri
Journalists	Jou
Legal professionals	Leg
Male children	Mal
Middle-aged adults	Mda
Middle-aged men	Mdm
Middle-aged women	Mdw
Military	Mil
Older men	Olm
Older people	Olp
Older women	Olw
People with depression	Ped
People with mental disabilities	Pem
People with mental illness	Pei
Physical abuse survivors	Phy
Police	Pce
Political groups	Pol
Sexual abuse survivors	Sas
Single people	Sin
Suicide professionals	Sup
Suicide survivors	Sus
Support groups	Sug
Terrorists	Ter
Young adults	Yoa
Young men	Yom
Young women	Yow

Table 5: Classification Level 3 Categories (Groupings)

The level 4 schema attempts to shed light on the level 1 schema by describing the main classification headings according to the space (temporal or geographical) which is the main focus of discussion of the item. A list of potential aspects is presented in Table 6. No coding was proposed for this set of categories.

Although it may appear that these categories overlap at points, it is important to note that the most accurate category must be applied to each item analysed. If new aspects are identified they can easily be added to the relevant category list. This facilitates growth of the taxonomy as new areas of investigation arise. New categories were added during the methodology test, and throughout the twelve month data collection and analysis period.

On Thursday, May 30, 2002 an article by Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy appeared in the Opinion and Analysis section of the Irish Times. The piece (titled Suicide: wake-up call we simply cannot ignore) discussed the growth of the Irish suicide rate, particularly in relation to young males and called for a community based response to the problem. Under the taxonomy outlined, this item would be classified as Ano : com : yom : Ireland.

Category
17th Century
18th Century
1900-1950
1900s
1910s
1920s
1930s
1940s
1950-present
1950s
1960-present
1960s
1970-present
1970s



1980-present  
1980s  
1990-present  
1990s  
19th Century  
2000-2003  
2000s  
Africa  
Asia  
Australia  
Autumn  
Canada  
Christmas  
Connaught  
Europe - Country  
Global  
Ireland  
Ireland - rural  
Ireland - rural towns  
Ireland - urban  
Leinster  
Midlands  
Munster  
New Year  
North America  
Northern Ireland  
South America  
Spring  
Summer  
UK  
UK and Ireland  
Ulster  
USA  
Winter

Table 6: Classification Level 4 Categories (Settings)

### **2.3.14 Guideline Adherence**

As reported above, the Samaritans/IAS Media Guidelines on Portrayal of Suicide (2000) recommend avoiding phrases such as:

- A successful suicide attempt
- An unsuccessful suicide attempt
- Commit suicide
- Suicide victim
- Just a cry for help
- Suicide-prone person
- Stop the spread/epidemic of suicide.

**‘With a view to testing this methodology, one inappropriate phrase was selected ('Commit suicide'), and records for items which used this phrase were recorded’**

The methodology has the potential to identify and quantify non-adherence to these guidelines. With a view to testing this methodology, one inappropriate phrase was selected ('Commit suicide'), and records for items which used this phrase were recorded in a numerical data field: Guideline Check. A numerical field was used in order to identify the number of times each item used the phrase. During the twelve month data collection period all of these fields were observed for adherence.

### **2.3.15 Applicability for Qualitative Review**

If the piece met the standards for a qualitative review, a check box was ticked. The constructs for qualitative analysis are identified in the section on qualitative review (below).

Devereux cites Sarankantakos' concept of interpretivity as a distinguishing feature of qualitative analysis.

'In short, he meant that social reality only became societal through interpretation and that it was constructed through the assignment of meaning and was not given objectively. Sarankantakos' notion of interpretivity, however, while it acknowledged the importance of the polysemic nature of texts, did not rule out the possibility of a researcher being able to identify the preferred meanings of a text. Thus the possibility of identifying dominant ideologies remained.'

The quantitative section of this methodology will attempt to capture items appropriate for qualitative review. The criteria for qualifying for qualitative review is that the document must communicate content which reports, opines or otherwise expresses social or cultural values. In short they must contain the 'frames' outlined in the qualitative section below.

## 2.4 Quantitative Findings:

### 2.4.1 Monthly Frequencies

Over the course of the twelve month project 1596 items were captured; an average of 133 items per month. Frequency of items captured by month are reported in Figure 1.

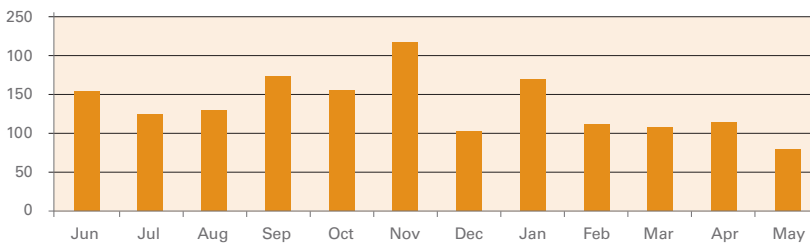


Figure 1: Items captured per month

Most items were captured during the month of November (216) and least in May (76). Titles of all items are included in Appendix 2.

## 2.4.2 Types of Items Captured

The types of items identified over the course of the project are reported in Table 7.

	Frequency	Percent
Advice column	13	.8
Arts item	2	.1
Book review	11	.7
Campaign	2	.1
Clinical case study	2	.1
Editorial	34	2.1
Event promotion	1	.1
Feature article	18	1.1
Film review	3	.2
Interview	116	7.3
Investigative report	9	.6
Letter	48	3.0
Medical article	64	4.0
Missing person information appeal	3	.2
News article	919	57.6
Obituary	2	.1
Opinion piece	75	4.7
Photograph caption	13	.9
Public notice	226	14.2
Quotation	4	.2
Radio review	2	.1
Review of year	2	.1
Stand-alone photograph	3	.2
Supplement	1	.1
Television review	22	1.4
Vox pop	1	.1
Total	1596	100.0

Table 7: Item Types

The vast majority of item types (57.6%) were news report items.

### 2.4.3 Sources

Sources were varied and widely distributed, but the newspapers which afforded the topic of suicide most coverage were the Irish Examiner (100 items) and the Irish Mirror (99 items). The top twenty sources for relevant items over the period of study are reported in Table 8, and a full list is included in Appendix 3.

Source	Frequency	Percent
Irish Examiner	100	6.3
Irish Mirror	99	6.2
Irish Independent	79	4.9
Irish Times	76	4.8
Star	72	4.5
Evening Echo (Cork)	50	3.1
Evening Herald	48	3.0
Medicine Weekly	43	2.7
Irish Sun	41	2.6
Sunday Independent	34	2.1
Irish Medical News	29	1.8
Sunday World	28	1.8
Bray People	24	1.5
Roscommon Herald	23	1.4
Limerick Leader	20	1.3
Donegal Democrat	19	1.2
City Tribune	16	1.0
Kildare Nationalist	16	1.0
News of the World	16	1.0
Newsletter	16	1.0
Tullamore Tribune	16	1.0

Table 8: Sources Most Cited

#### 2.4.4 Source Types

	Frequency	Percent
Daily or national broadsheet	289	18.1
Local or regional publication	759	47.6
Magazine	23	1.4
Medical publication	112	7.0
Religious publication	4	.3
Sunday national broadsheet	83	5.2
Sunday tabloid	50	3.1
Tabloid (Daily national)	266	16.7
Trade magazine	10	.6
Total	1596	100.0

Table 9: Source Types

Almost half of the items (47.6%) on suicide appeared in local or regional publications.

#### 2.4.5 Author

In the original methodology test report it was remarked that only two writers returned to the topic of suicide more than once, which was taken as a possible indication of a lack of individual journalistic interest in the topic of suicide.

Results from the overall project challenge this. Fifty four percent of items carried an author by-line (n=862). Of these 152 returned to the topic of suicide more than once. The most items captured by a single author was 12 (an average of one per month).

## 2.4.6 Word Counts

The mean word count for items sourced over the twelve month period was 488.6 (over 70 words higher than reported in the methodology test). The minimum item word count was 15 and the maximum recorded was 13515.

## 2.4.7 Attached Images

Images were attached to 589 or 36.9% of items. The majority of these were photographs of journalists, interviewees or exteriors.

## 2.4.8 Catalysts

A full list of catalysts is presented in Appendix 4. Catalyst types are reported in Table 10.

	Frequency	Percent
Conference	36	2.3
Court cases or legal hearings involving suicide	129	8.1
Fundraising for suicide research and prevention	49	3.1
Health advice regarding suicide (non-alcohol related)	85	5.3
Health advice regarding suicide (regarding alcohol)	23	1.4
Other	247	15.5
Public lecture / presentation	127	8.0
Public services dealing with suicide	183	11.5
Reports on actual incidences of suicide or attempted suicide	318	19.9
Research or statistical updates on suicide	273	17.1
Suicide bereavement projects or services	126	7.9
Total	1596	100

Table 10: Catalysts for Items

Most items which could be defined as having a specific catalyst related to reports on actual incidents or attempted suicide.

### 2.4.9 Geographic Setting

	Frequency	Percent
Ireland General	588	36.8
Leinster	344	21.6
Munster	173	10.8
Connaught	134	8.4
Northern Ireland	113	7.1
UK	100	6.3
Ulster ROI	86	5.4
USA	27	1.7
Europe	10	0.6
Denmark	6	0.4
Australia	4	0.3
Global	3	0.2
Mid-East	3	0.2
New Zealand	2	0.1
Asia	1	0.1
Korea	1	0.1
South America	1	0.1
Total	1596	100

Table 11: Geographic Settings

### 2.4.10 Groupings

The grouping most identified was 'Irish people', followed by 'health professionals', 'people bereaved by suicide' and 'Young men'. The top twenty groupings identified are reported in Table 12 below.



	Frequency	Percent
Irish people	156	9.8
Health professionals	144	9.0
Suicide bereaved	127	8.0
Young men	108	6.8
Young adults	92	5.8
People considering suicide	91	5.7
People with depression	88	5.5
Suicide professionals	78	4.9
Celebrities	74	4.6
Support groups	54	3.4
Men	50	3.1
Children	47	2.9
Young women	45	2.8
People with mental illness	39	2.4
People accused of a crime or people with criminal convictions	35	2.2
Political groups	34	2.1
Prisoners	31	1.9
Families	28	1.8
Mothers	20	1.3
Sexual abuse survivors	18	1.1
Sportspeople	18	1.1

Table 12: Groupings most named

#### 2.4.11 Organisations and Institutions Identified

Over the course of the project there were 3728 mentions of organisations and institutions. All of these are reported in Appendix 5 to this report. The top ten reported institutions are listed in Table 13 below.

Organisation	Frequency	Percent
Gardaí	131	3.5
Samaritans	113	3.0
Irish Association of Suicidology	103	2.8

Aware	95	2.5
Midland Health Board	74	2.0
National Suicide Review Group	49	1.3
National Suicide Research Foundation	47	1.3
National Parasuicide Registry	46	1.2
South Eastern Health Board	44	1.2
Fine Gael	38	1.0

Table 13: Most Mentioned Organisations and Institutions

### 2.4.12 Relevance Ratings

In this category, 1043 items (65.4%) received a relevance rating of 1; 249 (15.6%) received a relevance rating of 2, and 304 (19%) received a relevance rating of 3.

### 2.4.13 Classification Schemes

Level One Classifications reported as follows.

	Frequency	Percent
Altruistic (obligatory)	2	.1
Altruistic (optional)	1	.1
Anomic	100	6.3
Clinical / Medical	518	32.5
Egoistic	7	.4
Fatalistic	35	2.2
Incidental	933	58.5
Total	1596	100.0

Table 14: Level One Classification Results

The majority of classifications reported suicide as something which is 'triggered' by events in an individuals life.

Level Two Classifications reported as follows. Due to the large amount of results, only fields which reported more than 1% coverage are included in this table.

	Frequency	Percent
Depression	210	13.2
Bereavement	166	10.3
Trends	138	8.6
Research	107	6.7
Prevention	89	5.6
Mental Illness	64	4.0
Alcohol / Drug abuse	62	3.9
Attempted suicide	59	3.7
Methods	49	3.1
Pharmaceuticals	45	2.8
Sexual abuse / Rape	40	2.5
Murder / Suicide	38	2.4
Crime	33	2.1
Parasuicide	33	2.1
Bullying	32	2.0
Financial issues	32	2.0
Education	31	1.9
Media	28	1.8
Physical health	25	1.6
Policy	25	1.6
Counselling	24	1.5
Legal issues	22	1.4
Assisted suicide	20	1.3
Religion	19	1.2
Mental health	18	1.1
Private sector	18	1.1
Social issues	18	1.1
Sport	17	1.1

Table 15: Level Two Classification Results

Suicide tended to be reported in relation to the topics of depression (210 items, 13.16%), bereavement (165 items, 10.34%) and analysis of suicide trends (138, 8.64%).

Level 3 and 4 classifications have been reported earlier in this section.

#### 2.4.14 Guideline Adherence

Guideline adherence is reported in Table 16.

Guideline	Lack of adherence
A successful suicide attempt	.3%
An unsuccessful suicide attempt	.1%
Commit suicide	17.6%
Suicide victim	4.3%
Just a cry for help	.8%
Suicide prone person	.1%
Stop the spread / epidemic of suicide	2.4%

Table 16: Guideline Adherence

There is grounds for concern about the continued usage of the term 'commit suicide' which appeared at least once in 281 items. There is also high levels of usage of terms 'suicide victim' (69 items) and references to suicide as an 'epidemic' (38 items).

#### 2.4.15 Appropriateness for Qualitative Review

Overall, 367 items (23%) were deemed appropriate for qualitative review.

# Section 3. The Qualitative Approach

## 3.1 Qualitative Documentary Research

'For some researchers a document represents a reflection of reality. It becomes a medium through which the researcher searches for a correspondence between its description and the events to which it refers. Yet if we can read off the accounts of a document, separate from the methods we employ to achieve this, are we not suggesting, once again, that there are social facts which exist independently of interpretation.'<sup>51</sup>

There are a number of ways to approach documents from a research perspective. A quantitative analysis as outlined above can assist in capturing information about a set of documents, but a qualitative analysis can provide richer data on the actual cultural messages which a document can communicate. One example of how qualitative documentary research does this is by examining documents, not just in terms of what they communicate, but also in terms of what they leave out.

'What people decide to record is itself informed by decisions which, in turn, related to the social, political and economic environments of which they are a part... Documents then may be interesting for what they leave out, as well as what they contain.'<sup>52</sup>

'Documents are now viewed as media through which social power is expressed. They are approached in terms of the cultural context in which they were written and may be viewed as "attempts at persuasion". Approaching a document in this way "tells us a great deal about the societies in which writers write and readers read".'<sup>53</sup>

The collection of a set of media documents affords an opportunity for a cultural qualitative review. Ericson, Baranek and Chan's examination of news sources on criminality and justice<sup>54</sup> interpreted 'news as not only reflecting but also actively constructing our sense of the social reality to

---

<sup>51</sup> May, 182.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> R. Ericson, P. Baranek and J. Chan Representing Order: Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media (Buckinghamshire: Open University Press, 1991).

which it refers.<sup>55</sup> This is supported by other writers such as Chomsky, Herman and Devereux who's qualitative analyses have uncovered that media sources have as much to do with constructing social realities as they have in impartially reporting them.

### 3.2 Qualitative Documentary Research Approaches

May outlines a number of qualitative research approaches to documents. These are summarised in Table 17.

Approach	Question
Authenticity	Is the data or opinion expressed based on established fact?
Credibility	Is the data discussed free from distortion, error and evasion?
Representativeness	Is the document 'typical' of usual representations of a topic?
Meaning	What is the document and what does it tell us?

Table 17: Approaches to Documents (from May, 2001)

McQuail defines 'framing' as:

'A term with two meanings. One refers to the way in which news content is typically shaped and contextualised by journalists within some familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning. A second, related, meaning concerns the effects of framing on the public. The audience is thought to adopt the frames of reference offered by journalists and see the world in a similar way. This process is referred to as agenda-setting.'<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> May, 187.

<sup>56</sup> McQuail, 495.

Framing is a very useful qualitative methodology for analysing the content of media items. Entman summarises the aspects of framing in the media as:

- Defining problems
- Diagnosing causes
- Making moral judgments
- Suggesting remedies<sup>57</sup>

These headings are useful when examining how media communicates content to audiences and creates a social reality. Items identified in the quantitative review containing the above framing aspects were selected as candidates for qualitative review.

### 3.3 The Qualitative Method

When researching media messages about national management cultures, Communal and Senior developed a methodology which collected a number of newspaper items (specifically job advertisements), isolated items which were suitable for qualitative analysis and randomly selected items for analysis from these.<sup>58</sup>

Communal and Senior selected 10 items from each set of 100 collected overall for qualitative analysis and treated them under a set of appropriate headings and constructs.

This project will adopt a similar methodology. Ten percent of the items identified as suitable for qualitative analysis will be randomly selected and treated under the headings below. These headings are suggested by the literature on media analysis from Denis Quail and Tim May.

#### *Tone and language used*

Is the language pained, sympathetic, pitying or moralising? The use of this

---

<sup>57</sup> Cited in McQuail, 343.

<sup>58</sup> Communal, C. and Senior, B. "National culture and management: messages conveyed by British, French and German advertisements for managerial appointments" *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol.20 No. 4 (1999) 26-35.)

heading may indicate the presence of moral judgments in terms of the framing aspect discussed above.

### *Messages*

This will incorporate the framing aspect of suggesting remedies. Solutions to the growth of suicide rates in Ireland will be presented.

### *Circumstances*

This will incorporate the 'defining problems' framing aspect.

### *Diagnosing causes*

A framing aspect discussed above, demonstrating what the author, or another authority feel are the roots of the problem of suicide in Ireland.

### *Myths*

The Samaritans / IAS media guidelines provide another key area of interest for qualitative analysis. These guidelines urge that in reporting on suicide, the media should debunk the common myths about suicide. These myths are

- Those who talk about suicide are the least likely to attempt it
- If someone is going to kill themselves, there is nothing you can do about it
- Suicidal people are fully intent on dying
- If someone has a history of making 'cries for help' then they won't really do it for real
- Talking about suicide encourages it
- Only mentally ill/clinically depressed people make serious attempts at suicide
- Suicide is painless
- A good pumping out in the Casualty Department will teach those who make silly gestures a good lesson they won't forget
- Once a person is suicidal, they are suicidal forever
- Suicide can be a blessed relief not just for the individual, but for those that surround him or her<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Irish Association of Suicidology and Samaritans.



One of the headings for qualitative review thus is to analyse if the body of documentation selected debunks or confirms myths about suicide. It must be pointed out, as stated earlier, that new guidelines are forthcoming and it is hoped that this work will inform their development.

#### *Authenticity / Credibility / Representativeness*

These areas will be treated together to discuss the validity of the information imparted.

#### *Attached Images*

The assessment of images (particularly photographs) has been long asserted as important in documentary research: '... although existing on the borderline between the 'aesthetic' and 'documentary' [photographs] may be records of events.'<sup>60</sup> Photographs in newspapers are important addendum to news pieces which, rather than adding to a story, enhance or strengthen the contours of the frame established. Attached images sourced by this research will be assessed in terms of how they contribute to the other framing elements.

### **3.4 Results:**

**'Suicide. Even the word has a sinister ring to it. It sends a shiver down the spine. So many people are struggling to cope with the death by suicide of a loved one.'**

#### **3.4.1 Tone and Language Used**

- Terminology

The majority of the items considered for qualitative review emphasise the sadness of suicide as an issue, particularly in terms of the loss suffered by

---

<sup>60</sup> May, 179.

bereaved families. In some cases, the urge to express sadness and the upturn in suicide numbers amongst young men might possibly contribute to a contravention of suggested terminology. For example, one piece selected for qualitative review in November uses the phrase 'the scourge of suicide' which is similar in tone to the 'epidemic of suicide' which the IAS / Samaritans guidelines warn against.

One piece begins by firmly situating suicide in a realm that is patently 'otherly'

'Suicide. Even the word has a sinister ring to it. It sends a shiver down the spine. So many people are struggling to cope with the death by suicide of a loved one.'

An interesting anti-suicide research angle emerged in some of the items reviewed. One writer, commenting on suicide rates amongst twins, remarks in a local publication:

'The research was carried out in Denmark and published in the British Medical Journal, so it must be true. It doesn't say how much the research cost, but then it never does. When these boffins get their hands on a good research project money is no object. There are always individuals, learned societies, charitable trusts and other odds and sods willing to splash out money on something which is harmless but keeps scientists busy for a year or so. I am surprised more people aren't into this research racket.'

One letter writer to a newspaper stated that research was not necessary to solve the growth in suicide trends in Ireland, but action was needed. There appears to be a perception that research on the causes of growth in suicide rates is unnecessary and that more adequate service provision is required.

- Judgments

Although most of the items secured projected a tone that emphasised sadness, strong moral judgments were evident in some of the items selected for qualitative review:

'Suicide is an ostensibly cowardly act that frees the perpetrators of their burdens, while leaving their loved ones with a legacy of grief and guilt. By contrast, time is running out for mother-of-three [named woman], who is riddled with cancer. In her situation, I would probably spiral into a morass of self-pity. But she has chosen to get super-fit and take part in marathons. So far she has raised £312,000 for charity. Some might say she has a lot more to feel suicidal about than [named suicide] ever did, yet she has chosen a more positive path.'

One item selected for qualitative review adopted a value-based pitying tone in it's opening statement:

'Offering support to those desperate souls contemplating taking their own lives the Southern Health and Social Services Board has funded a two-day training course on suicide intervention'.

It is interesting that this tone, primarily projected through the phrase 'desperate souls' is affected by the journalist, particularly in the light that the training course on which the course is based is directed towards professionals working in the field.

Another item printed the photograph of a man who had killed himself following his arrest on suspicion of downloading child pornography:

'This is the face of one of Ireland's top bankers who hanged himself because he could not face the prospect of child porn charges.'

A letter to the Irish Medical Times attempted to re-dress this view:

'... stigma and lack of information are far more common reactions to suicide than complacency... Frequency of discussion of suicide helps when it is responsible and promotes understanding rather than sensationalising or reports inappropriate detail on the issue. In addition, positive reporting can help break down stigma and increase understanding of suicide and other emotional health issues.'

- Sensationalising

The majority of the items considered for qualitative review emphasise the sadness of suicide as an issue, particularly in terms of the loss suffered by bereaved families. However, in one 'cluster' of stories concerning the suicide of a fictional teenage girl in an Irish produced soap opera, there is evidence of language that is somewhat more sensational. The stories, usually carried in tabloid publications, preview the story-line which concerns a student who is raped by a fellow student and kills herself. The school's authorities are blamed for driving the student to this course of action as a result of exam pressure and classroom discipline. Terms such as 'shock', 'gritty' and 'rocked' are used to describe the 'horrendous event'. The story clusters run parallel to another cluster of items that recount the real story of a family bereaved following the suicide of their daughter in the aftermath of sexual abuse. The tone and language of the items in this cluster, particularly amongst items which interview the girl's family, are expressive of anger and loss.

## **Terms such as 'shock', 'gritty' and 'rocked' are used to describe the 'horrendous event'**

As before, where items which tend to explore the topic of suicide, particularly through the perspective of those who have been bereaved by a suicide, the language and tone tends to emphasise sadness and a search for meaning, for example: 'Anyone who has suffered through the suicide of a family member or friend is invited to a special public information meeting and open night to help share the load.' Some types of news reportage, however, adopt a sensational tone which perhaps emphasises the otherness of suicide. An example of this is the headline in one of the items selected for qualitative review which reports on an attempted suicide by a prisoner: 'Shock for Fergie: Killer aide in jail suicide attempt'.

- Criminality and Violence

Some items associated suicidal behaviour with mental illness (as is discussed in the items on 'myths' below). In two of the items selected for qualitative review in November, for example, a suicide and an attempted suicide were framed in strong terms which linked it with criminal insanity, violent behaviour and cowardice:

“Reserve Constable [name] was covered by the man’s blood directly onto his face. He had no idea whether the man’s blood was infected,” the citation said.... “This was a truly horrendous incident. Yet despite the horror, Constable [name] didn’t hesitate... What a credit to the Police Service he is. If ever one of our awards was thoroughly deserved, this one is,” he said.

'Detectives believe the 44-year-old crazed psychopath hanged himself after finding there was no escaping his sickening and bloody past... An inquest into [name's] death five days ago found that the notorious “House of horrors” slaying suspect calmly committed suicide after smoking a cannabis joint. The violent and depraved beast was found hanging from the rafters in a farmhouse shed in [named area]...'

'A crazed father has drowned himself in a river, leaving his battered former lover for dead'

'A MAN killed himself when he drove a car into a river - after thinking he had MURDERED his ex-girlfriend in a vicious attack.'

'THREE bodies, one a MURDER victim, were recovered yesterday from a notorious suicide spot.'

- Bracketing

One entire short item (quoted in its entirety below), framed the issue of suicide in terms that were colloquial and subjective, despite reporting statistical data accurately.

'More Irish people commit suicide than are killed on our roads, shock figures reveal. Last year's grim road toll was 342, down from 377 the previous year. But over 450 people took their own lives - that's a shocking one for every 75 deaths nationwide. Many are lads aged 15 to 34, with male suicides doubling in 20 years. Still more try, but fail, to kill themselves - there was almost one attempted suicide every day last year in Kilkenny alone, although only 12 succeeded. Three-quarters took an overdose, while others tried drowning, hanging, poisoning or cutting themselves. The worrying rise is revealed in the 2003 annual report of the National Suicide Review Group. A 12-month nursing project has now been set up to improve A&E services provided to people who are there through self-harm.'

Another article bracketed a phrase connected with suicide prevention in the case of celebrity couple separating:

"Boozy football ace George Best will be put on "suicide watch" by worried pals as wife Alex jets off to star in 'I'm a Celebrity'".

Why the term suicide watch is bracketed in this way is not clear, but it could be interpreted as an overstatement or understatement in the context of the story. What is clear is that the phrase is made to stand out in the opening sentence.

This bracketing is also evident in one tabloid item which reported on fan mail being sent to an Irish celebrity from a suicidal fan, placed in the emboldened sub-headline, which read 'spooky' in the middle of the text of the item.

Another item stressed a concern surrounding media phraseology around items concerned with suicide:

'The [columnist's] attention was caught by the phrase "suicide tactic" during the course of a recent news broadcast on the TV.

What miffed the [columnist] most was that the word "'tactic" suggested first, that suicide was a choice, when really those who have committed the act probably felt they had no other choice, and secondly

that the decision to commit suicide was done to hurt or effect someone else-as a tactic in some great (or not so great) plan.

The [columnist] is quite unhappy that such a phrase might be constructed, especially when around 10 people from the town every year use the river on our doorstep to end their lives.

**‘Surely, it is about time society addresses the very human devastation of suicide rather than try to just write it away.’**

Another UK item adopted a slightly cynical tone towards an admission of suicide ideation.

‘One of the women who claim they were sexually assaulted by Leicester City soccer stars is trying to flog the story of her attempted suicide. [Name], 36, had her stomach pumped after a pills overdose in Spain. She has already let herself be pictured in a Sunday paper for £30,000.’

In summary, suicide tends to generally be reported in terms that are sombre, serious and sad. There is evidence of ‘bracketing’ in relation to several items, which might possibly be construed as attempts to frame, or reflect, the reader's emotional response to these items.

### **3.4.2 Messages**

A message communicated by several writers is that suicide is an act undertaken by 'selfish' people.

Another strong trend emerging in the items sourced, and captured in some of the items selected for qualitative review, is the growing trend of suicide amongst older people. The grouping are largely referred to as ‘the elderly’ in the items sourced. A leading health professional with a strong

interest in suicide in Ireland is cited as reporting greater levels of predisposition to, and completion of suicide

## **‘Another item highlighted the imbalance between reportage quantities on suicide and fatal road traffic accidents.’**

An interview with a health professional who herself has experienced depression, communicates a distinct message about remedying depression through drugs.

‘In the past 20 years [name] has become one of the top people in her field. Her father who was anti-medication changed his mind after reading her book. He was diagnosed manic depressive and put on lithium. “He’s now a crusader! I think he wishes he’d done it ages ago. His life would have been very different.”’

One of the items selected for qualitative review challenged the position of a much publicised piece which advocated a turning away from social scientific research perspectives, to positivistic natural science. An extensive response to this was made by two academics in a letter to the Irish Times, which articulated the need for more sociological and cultural understandings of suicide.

Depression and alcohol abuse are repeatedly reported as being primary causes of suicide. For example two items which appeared in local newspapers suggested remedies by limiting these factors:

‘Indeed, some of the folklore which builds up around this linkage is, in strict medical terms, disinformation. An educator needs to inform a young person that, as a matter of medical information, alcohol is a depressant and not a stimulant - and so it can hasten a seriously deprived person on the path to suicide.’

‘For every 1% increase in alcohol consumption in any country, the suicide rate goes up by something from 1.5% to 1.9%. This is crucial to



understanding some of our present problems. We differ from the rest of Europe and America where the trend for youth suicide is on the way down. One particular American move had a quite stunning effect - appearing to cause a full 12% drop in suicides: this was the raising of the minimum legal age for the purchase of alcohol (from 18 to 21 years).'

A TG4 documentary appears to have provided a catalyst for exposing the boundaries between the parallel medical and sociological narratives on the causes and remedies for approaching suicide. For example, one review lists arguments from proponents of both paradigms. One mental health professional is cited as stating 'I believe that suicide is a societal problem and not solely a public health problem.'

'The documentary also asks if the medical profession - which often addresses depression with drugs and "happy pills" to treat the symptoms rather than tackling the root causes - is also partly to blame.'

'In the documentary experts express the view that the Celtic Tiger is responsible for putting too much pressure on young men to succeed.'

A speaker at a national sociology conference provided a means of perhaps aligning these paradigmatically divergent viewpoints: 'Psychologically speaking, alcohol misuse and suicidal behaviour were the same. Both are aimed at changing consciousness of misery. Both change the consciousness of worrying, negative thoughts, negative feelings, anxiety and stress. Both can be considered to be stress management techniques.'

Some of the items implied that people who kill themselves are selfish. In one item selected for qualitative review in December, a formerly suicidal man speaking about his recovery states:

'People say those who commit suicide are selfish. I do understand having come through what I have - they're not selfish when they're doing it. In that split second it's not a selfish act, you're just a blank. I don't know if I wanted to kill myself. I just wanted to go to sleep. I wanted it to stop.'

**‘A speaker at a national sociology conference provided a means of perhaps aligning these paradigmatically divergent viewpoints: “Psychologically speaking, alcohol misuse and suicidal behaviour were the same. Both are aimed at changing consciousness of misery.”’**

This was exacerbated in reports of a man convicted of multiple murder which connected the act of suicide with arrogance and evil. One editorial headline read ‘A selfish act of an evil man’. Another states:

**‘Evil Harold Shipman played God to the end... killing himself to prove he had the power to take life one final time. The arrogant beast - who poisoned at least 262 patients with lethal overdoses of diamorphine - proved he would control his own destiny too. By hanging himself with bed sheets in the cell at Wakefield Prison where he was serving 15 life sentences, he has condemned hundreds of families to a lifetime of agony by taking his murderous secrets to the grave.’**

The day following the publication of these remarks, another item was published in the same source, which reported on the suicide of a young man charged with a sexual offense. By comparison the tone of the piece was sedate, making one reference to his crime, and mentions his ‘heartbroken parents’.

This is interesting as the source in particular seems to choose how it represents suicide in terms of how it fits with the general frame of each story. The case of Dr. Harold Shipman was a well-known media item; prison sources would not release the name of the man in the latter story as a matter of policy. Because the victim in the latter story cannot be identified in connection with his crimes, the suicide becomes the story. The item ends with the words:

'There were two suicides in Irish prisons last year. There are an average of 2,300 prisoners behind bars at any one time.'

It is difficult to imagine some of the angrier commentaries on the Shipman suicide ending with this reflective, general tone. Suicide as a subject seems to be a mutable construct which can be used variously according to the needs of the source.

One of the pieces selected for qualitative review was an interview with a suicide expert who identified social change as a significant factor in suicide trends, and who pointed out that actual remedies remain difficult to implement.

“What could be at the root of this is that changes in life and in social values tend to be felt more strongly in rural than in urban areas. Traditional social values of the type that tended in the past to keep communities together have been reduced by the increase in individual behaviour.

“Certainly, areas such as Kerry would have felt more strongly the weakening of these sort of traditional values by the encouragement of greater individualism during the 1980s and 1990s...

To try to reduce the suicide rate in Kerry would be a “real challenge, “ ..., although he suggested one possibility would be to see it as a social and not just a medical problem.’

There was some coverage over the month of October on the reaction of individuals and organisations to reported cuts in spending on suicide research and other projects. The topic of government funding for suicide research and prevention arose frequently throughout the body of the items.

### **3.4.3 Circumstances / Diagnosing Causes**

A tendency to emphasise overly-simplistic cause-and-effect connections between suicide and other mental health conditions and behaviours was evident amongst the items selected for qualitative review.

**A tendency to emphasise overly-simplistic cause-and-effect connections between suicide and other mental health conditions and behaviours was evident amongst the items selected for qualitative review.**

'If left untreated, depression can lead to suicide.'

'Without effective treatment, bipolar disorder may lead to suicide (usually in the depressive phase) making it one of the most serious and deadly psychiatric illnesses.'

'Drink and not clinical depression is responsible for one in three suicides in this country.'

'A teen student killed himself because his life was blighted by acne, an inquest heard yesterday.'

However, other items suggested that the connections were more complex:

'Alcohol reduces inhibition and impairs judgments, as well as exacerbating depression and mental illness; and a good proportion of people who commit suicide have been drinking beforehand. This appears to be particularly the case in impulsive suicides. But these are complex issues and there are no simple answers.'

'It's a tricky region. Nobody in Ireland believes there's anything in the brain that can explain suicide. They say it's about what's in the mind, it's about conscience, it's a moral issue to do with right or wrong... In decades past depressive feelings in young adulthood came and went. However, in the past 20 years almost all external inhibitory influences over suicide - the decrease of the Church's influence, decriminalising suicide, increased alcohol use. We have put no counterbalance in place to assist in early detection or help for those in the early stages of a suicidal crisis.'

One piece in a Sunday publication carries the following information:

'The report refers at length to the concept of anomie, which describes the unbalancing of social forces that affects individual action. Anomie implies an upsetting of the balance or normality in a previously accepted way of life. It is based on the notion that society usually exercises control over individual behaviour and desires through social rules and norms. When these rules and norms break down, individual behaviour or desire may not be controlled or regulated and the level of so-called deviant or unacceptable behaviour, including suicide, increases.'

Another piece in a daily national broadsheet publication referred to the growth in male suicide rates as possibly being exacerbated by a legal system prejudiced against separated fathers.

The qualitative review reported a range of defining causes. These included:

- aging
- bullying (three items suggested that one fifth [22% was also mentioned] of suicides are the result of bullying).
- addictions ('Alcohol "makes it easier to commit suicide")
- learning difficulties
- neurological problems
- people with higher levels of impulsive behaviour
- traumatic loss in life
- alcohol or drug abuse
- depression
- accessing suicide websites
- lack of spirituality or religious faith
- changes in traditional lifestyles (particularly amongst members of the farming community)
- separation
- secularisation of Irish society
- punishment beatings
- teenage pregnancy

The belief of the Irish Association of Suicidology that 'the problem of suicide must not be over "medicalized"' (reported in a medical publication on September 3rd) was challenged in a piece by a writer commenting on the topic of suicide contagion. There were several reactions to this piece,

including one letter item which was selected for qualitative review, that challenged the medical science research perspective:

'As survivors of the suicide of a loved one we were astonished and offended by [named writers] article... Not talking about suicide doesn't make it go away. Suicides will always occur because some people simply will not accept help. To label all of them "mentally ill" or "troubled souls" doesn't help. Of course suicide prevention is important but it will not be achieved through stigmatising. The causes for suicide are very complex, each case is different. Despite some "copy-cat" suicides it is not a "contagious disease".

A commentary in a medical publication identifies 'egoistic suicide' as a contributing factor to the suicides of high-profile individuals. A local newspaper cites a public health doctor's statements to a health board on anomie as a factor contributing to the rise in suicide figures:

'Dr. [Name], responding to the members' comments said that while it was difficult to pinpoint the reasons, suicide did seem to increase during times of profound change in society, such as, for example, when the role of men became less distinct, or when the prevalence of religion changed.'

### **3.4.4 Myths**

Generally speaking, very few myths were perpetuated in the items sourced and selected for qualitative review.

However, while the following statement from the mental health activist quoted below was most certainly not intended to contribute to supporting the myth - Talking about suicide encourages it - the manner in which the statement was reported could be interpreted as such:

"For those who want to make a suicide attempt, the attention surrounding the fact that the Boyne is a good river to take your life in, could encourage future attempts.'

Another statement by a tabloid journalist provides stronger support for the following myths:

- If someone is going to kill themselves, there is nothing you can do about it
- Suicidal people are fully intent on dying.

The journalist states that 'Dr. Kelly was already pre-disposed to the final act of self-inflicted violence.' This myth is also reflected in a quotation from the mother of the man who killed himself referred to above: 'When you're on the road to suicide there is no way of getting off it.'

Similarly, another statement by a tabloid journalist could be viewed as supporting the above myths:

The journalist states:

'The simple fact is that, whatever their circumstances, some people have it within them to commit that final act, and others don't. The Government and the media must look at the excesses of their behaviour and learn lessons, but there's only one person ultimately responsible for Dr. Kelly's suicide. And that's the man himself.'

One of the myths around suicide identified by the Irish Association of Suicidology and the Samaritans is 'Only mentally ill / clinically depressed people make serious attempts at suicide'.

Two items selected for qualitative review during November perpetuated this myth to varying degrees. The first states: 'There are around 300, 000 people suffering from this illness [depression] that, if left untreated, can lead to suicide.' The second is a preview of an episode in an Irish television drama series which reports that a character will attempt suicide in a forthcoming episode. The preview makes no mention of mental illness until the very last sentence which creates a firm and definitive link between suicide and mental illness. The function of this sentence is to perpetuate an assumption or given that mental illness is part of the anatomy of suicide: 'Viewers can watch Fiona creep to the edge of insanity in the fourth episode of The Clinic on RTE ONE tonight at 9.25pm.'

In one item which appeared in a local newspaper, however, this was firmly disputed:

'Despite popular belief, depressed individuals account for less than a quarter of suicides in Ireland. The Samaritans also claim that only 13% of callers have expressed suicidal feelings.'

Another item selected for qualitative review in November perpetuates two related myths identified by the Irish Association of Suicidology and Samaritans:

- If someone is going to kill themselves, there is nothing you can do about it
- Suicidal people are fully intent on dying

The item quotes a government minister commenting on a particular case: 'Preventing suicide when somebody was disposed towards it and whose mind may be unbalanced is very difficult.'

The first myth identified in the Samaritans / IAS guidelines is:

- Those who talk about suicide are least likely to attempt it

One senior figure in an Irish national organisation (not directly concerned with suicide) stated in an interview on the topic of suicide: the more people talked about suicide it would act as a deterrent'. However the myth was identified as such in an item on suicide in a national newspaper:

'[Name] is quick to debunk the myth that people who talk about committing suicide don't actually do it. She points out that 80% of people who take their own lives have given some kind of warning beforehand.'

### **3.4.5 Authenticity / Credibility / Representativeness**

Most items correctly cite suicide rates, but one item selected for qualitative review stated that 'almost 500 people' took their own lives last year (referring to 2002). The actual official, provisional figure was 451.



Another item selected for qualitative review contained a syntax error which could lead to a misunderstanding of the facts:

'A staggering 451 young Irish men took their own lives last year, 20% of these were aged between 15 and 24. '

Another writer reported that 'Around 400 men commit suicide annually in the Republic'. The same writer, noting that most of these are young men comments 'Marriage is able to reduce suicide and provides a better life for the coming generations.'

It seems that the figure of '452' had taken root amongst journalists with regard to a figure for the total number of suicides in 2002. However, there were some examples of this number being misreported.

'Speaking at a recent inquest in Naas, [name] said there were between 400 and 500 suicides each year among young men aged between 15 and 35.'

Another article quotes a counsellor as follows.

'Articles following Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain's suicide led to the copycat deaths of several young men and women, she claimed'.

This is an example of another assertion which appears to have 'taken root' with regard to the Cobain suicide. As two Irish psychologists pointed out in a letter to a national newspaper, suicide deaths in the immediate aftermath of Cobain's death were lower than for the same period in the previous year.

Although Durkheim did uncover distinct correlations between social change and economic status, it is not yet proven that drops in economic growth correlate directly with growth in the suicide rate.

One spokesperson was cited as stating:

'If we go into a recession, a big social change, it's likely the suicide rate will rise. If the economy levels ease off it may decrease'.

US research cited in a daily tabloid linked teenage sexual activity with suicide ideation, but the item points out that the research was commissioned by individuals with vested interests.

Another piece cites Danish research which said that 'the biggest risk factor for suicide was mental illness.' This re-enforces the medical/clinical view of suicide instead of viewing it as a growing social problem related to anomic states resulting from profound social change.

Another item demonstrates how an authentic statement of fact in relation to suicide in Ireland can be misrepresented. A spokesperson for the Irish Association of Suicidology states that 'Those [older people] who are most at risk are older people who are isolated living in rural areas, are divorced or widowed, are physically or mentally ill or depressed.' The headline for this article, however, reads: 'Isolated elderly men most at risk of suicide.' This appears to be a statement of who the major 'at-risk' group are. Statistically, younger men are most at risk of suicide in Ireland.

In a few cases the names of the National Suicide Review Group and the National Suicide Research Foundation were given incorrectly.

### **3.4.6 Attached Images**

**'The trend of tabloid publications printing photographs of dehumanised subjects and broadsheet publications printing 'suicide angels' was observed.'**

The trend of tabloid publications printing photographs of dehumanised subjects and broadsheet publications printing 'suicide angels' was observed. One item, presented 'action shots' of rescue crews recovering bodies from the bottom of a cliff. Another showed a picture of a male model screaming in pain in relation to a men's health report. One

photograph of an aerial view of a forensic investigation was captioned: 'Grim find... police at woodland death scene.'

In non-tabloid publications the images tend to be of volunteers or professionals working on bereavement or research projects. In a very few cases are photographs of people who have killed themselves used, but family members are often represented: for example, one item presented a close-up shot of a female's pained face as she carried the coffin of a male relative who died by suicide.

Photographs selected for review in November 2003 support this. Two of the images selected are discussed here:

The first shows the upper body (but not the head or face) of a young woman who has numerous cuts on her arms as a result of self-inflicted injury. The young woman's face, however, has itself been 'cut' out of the frame by the photo-editor but an insert of a woman covering her face is included. A photograph in another item is a large family photograph of a young mother who attempted suicide. All of the family's faces are 'blurred out'. Once again the effect of these photographs are to place attempted suicide and self-harm firmly in the realm of the 'other' in society.

One interesting contrast is that surrounding the fictional suicide of a rape victim and an actual genuine case during the same month. Photographs concerning the former case are stills from the television programme showing the attack on the woman and subsequent overdose. In the latter case, photographs are of the girl smiling with family pets and of her grieving family. It could be argued that the former instance creates a linear 'cause-and-effect' narrative.

Another item, concerned with self-harm amongst young females presented a series of photographs of female celebrities and models who had admitted to feelings about negative self-image in interviews. None of these images, however, was counter-balanced with a realistic portrayal of self-harm.

Numerous incidences of failure to observe guidelines on reporting suicide were noticed. This was most noticeable with regard to the term 'commit suicide' - almost 18% of items analysed failed to observe this guideline.



## 4. Discussion and Conclusions

The initial quantitative research test found that most of the items sourced discussed suicide in terms that are primarily incidental or clinical rather than as a broad social issue that is worthy of analysis as a deeper sociological problem. The findings of the full research project supported this finding. As has been stated before in this report, this does not mean that clinical or medical models are insufficient responses to matters associated with suicide. Nevertheless, allowing more discussion of sociological or cultural frameworks for understanding suicide could lead to greater understanding of the issue.

The majority of items captured were news items and suicide tended to be reported in relation to the topics of depression (210 items, 13.16%), bereavement (165 items, 10.34%) and analysis of suicide trends (138, 8.64%).

**Numerous incidences of failure to observe guidelines on reporting suicide were noticed. This was most noticeable with regard to the term 'commit suicide' - almost 18% of items analysed failed to observe this guideline.**

Most items which could be defined as having a specific catalyst related to reports on actual incidences of suicide or attempted suicide. Organisations and institutions most mentioned with regard to suicide were the Gardaí, the Samaritans and the Irish Association of Suicidology.

The social grouping most identified was 'Irish people'. This was followed by 'health professionals', 'people bereaved by suicide' and 'young men'.

The language used in the majority of items analysed qualitatively, evoked emotions that ranged from sadness to horror. The language often communicated a message that suicide was beyond that which is normal,

and possibly ridiculous or shameful. However there were distinct differences in language used in items which profiled support groups or suicide prevention projects. A clear message was communicated that suicide prevention needs to be considered a priority area for funding support and several articles report that suicide prevention received significantly smaller amounts of funding than road safety awareness. Road traffic fatalities accounting for considerably less fatalities.

In the original methodology test report it was remarked that only two writers returned to the topic of suicide more than once, which was taken as a possible indication of a lack of individual journalistic interest in the topic of suicide. Results from the overall project challenge this. Fifty four percent of items (862 items) carried an author by-line. Of these 152 (18%) returned to the topic of suicide more than once.

## **Conclusions**

In the original methodology test a set of hypothesis regarding the treatment received by the topic of suicide in the press were developed. These hypotheses are discussed below in relation to the completed 12-month data set

### **Hypotheses Proven 'True' by the Research**

- One  
Media treatments tend to report suicide in a way that communicates a message that suicide is a result of personal (incidental) circumstances or clinical or medical reasons, rather than a product of anomie resulting from profound social change.
- Two  
Suicide tends to receive coverage in the context of 'live' media items.

- Three  
Guidelines on the reporting of suicide tend to be ignored in 18% of print media outputs.  
(True in particular in relation to using the phrase 'commit suicide' – less so in relation to other guidelines).
- Four  
Organisations identified most in relation to suicide tend to be voluntary groups, public service organisations and health boards.  
(This was the general tendency).
- Five  
Language used in items tends to present incidences of suicide as shocking and extraordinary. Language used in items profiling prevention projects and groups in the voluntary and community sector emphasise support and help.

### **Hypotheses Found to be 'False' by the Research**

- Six  
Young men are the social grouping identified most in relation to suicide.  
(Although 'young men' are among the social groupings most identified, the group with most associations in the body of media items was 'Irish people').
- Seven  
Guidelines tend to be ignored more in Sunday broadsheets and national tabloid newspapers.  
(This was not found to be the case. Lack of adherence to the phrase 'Commit suicide' in particular was noticeable in all publication types).
- Eight  
There is a noted lack of journalistic interest in the topic of suicide on an individual level.  
(Not the case in the 12-month project period).

- Nine

The main catalysts for items treating suicide tend to be conferences, research and voluntary/community sector prevention projects. (This was not found to be the case. The most prevalent catalyst were reports on actual incidences of suicide or attempted suicide).



## 5. Recommendations for Further Research

An extensive body of print items on suicide has been captured over the course of this project. The availability and classification of these items provide opportunities for media and suicide researchers to look deeper into these data and explore the issue at a more interpretive level.

The researcher who conducted this research became aware over the course of the project of his own perspectives on the topic which might in fact obscure opportunities to examine this at a deeper level.

Possible presenting opportunities arising from this project include:

- An examination of the data at the level of ideologies in media framing of a social problem.
- A focused critical analysis of the language used in reporting suicide items.
- An investigation into how visual images are used in the print media in connection with suicide.
- An examination of how the discourses created in the body of media items actually influence the understandings of individuals on the topic of suicide.
- An examination of how journalists conceptualise suicide in their work.
- An action-research project on how journalists can be influenced to adopt appropriate terminologies when treating suicide in their writing.
- The development of a framework for ongoing monitoring of press coverage of suicide and mental health issues.

# Appendix 1

## Taxonomy / Classification Scheme

This document contains the fully updated classification scheme for the Messages, Meanings and Myths: The coverage and treatment of suicide in the Irish print media project.

All updates have been incorporated over the course of the compilation of the monthly reports delivered as part of the project.

The Durkheim Schema is the central organising principal of all items received from the news monitoring process. It is based on Emile Durkheim's conceptualisation of four central and oppositional categories of suicide.

Three supplementary Schemas are used in order to provide a greater degree of explanation as to the content of items. These address the aspect from which the topic of suicide is discussed, key groupings discussed in each item, and the temporal or geographical setting of the item.

### Level 1: Durkheim Schema

Category	Coding
Clinical / Medical	Cli
Incidental	Inc
Obligatory Altruistic Suicide	Alt (ob)
Optional Altruistic Suicide	Alt (op)
Acute or Mystical Altruistic Suicide	Alt (Ac)
Egoistic Suicide	Ego
Anomic Suicide	Ano
Fatalistic Suicide	Fat

### Level 2: Aspect Schema

Category	Coding
Abortion	Abo
Accidents	Acc
Addiction	Add
Advice	Adv
Alcohol / Drug abuse	Alc
Anxiety	Anx
Assisted suicide	Ass
Attempted suicide	Att
Awareness	Awa
Bereavement	Ber
Bullying	Bul

Business	Bus
Campaign	Cam
Child abuse	Chi
Communities	Com
Compensation	Cop
Conflict	Con
Counselling	Cou
Crime	Cri
Depression	Dep
Disability	Dis
Divorce	Div
Economics	Eco
Education	Edu

Euthanasia	Eut
Financial issues	Fin
Health promotion	Hep
HIV /AIDS	HIV
Information technology/ICT	
Isolation	Iso
Legal issues	Leg
Media	Med
Mental health	Men
Mental illness	Mil
Methods	Met
Murder / Suicide	Mur
Pacts	Pac
Parasuicide	Par
Pharmaceuticals	Phc
Physical abuse	Pha
Physical health	Phh
Policy	Pol
Political act	Pla
Postvention support	Pos
Prevention	Pre
Private sector	Pri
Protest	Pro
Public section	Pub
Religion / Spirituality	Rel
Research	Res
Science	Sci
Separation	Sep
Sexual abuse / Rape	Sxa
Social issues	Soc
Sport	Spo
Stress	Str
Terrorism	Ter
Trends	Tre
Unemployment	Une
Violence	Vio
Voluntary / Community sector	Vol
Work	Wor

Artists	Art
Athletes	Ath
Business people	Bus
Campaigning groups	Cam
Celebrities	Cel
Children	Chi
Clergy	Cle
Co-habiting couples	Co
Counsellors	Cou
Editors	Edi
People experiencing existential crises	Exi
Families	Fam
Farmers	Far
Fathers	Fah
Female children	Fem
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual people	GLB
Health professionals	Hea
Historic or fictional figures	His
Immigrants/refugees/ asylum seekers	Imi
Irish people	Iri
Journalists	Jou
Legal professionals	Leg
Male children	Mal
Men	Men
Middle-aged adults	Mda
Middle-aged men	Mdm
Middle-aged women	Mdw
Military	Mil
Mothers	Mot
Older men	Olm
Older people	Olp
Older women	Olw
People accused of a crime or people with criminal convictions	Pcc
People considering suicide	Pes
People with depression	Ped
People with mental disabilities	Pem
People with mental illness	Pei
Physical abuse survivors	Phy
Police	Pce
Political groups	Pol
Prisoners	Pri
Professionals	Pro
Sexual abuse survivors	Sas
Single people	Sin
Suicide professionals	Sup

### Level 3: Group Schema

Category	Coding
Academics	Aca
Activists	Act
Addicts	Add
Alcoholics	Alc

Suicide survivors	Sus
Support groups	Sug
Teachers	Tea
Terrorists	Ter
Unemployed people	Une

Women	Wom
Young adults	Yoa
Young men	Yom
Young women	Yow

#### Level 4: Setting Schema

Category
17th Century
18th Century
1900-1950
1900s
1910s
1920s
1930s
1940s
1950 - Present
1950s
1960 - Present
1960s
1970 - Present
1970s
1980 - Present
1980s
1990s
19th Century
2000-2003
2000s
Africa
Asia
Australia

Autumn
Canada
Christmas
Connaught
Europe - Country
Global
Ireland - general
Ireland - rural
Ireland - rural towns
Ireland - urban
Leinster
Middle East
Midlands
Munster
New Year
North America
Northern Ireland
South America
Spring
Summer
UK
UK and Ireland
Ulster
USA
Winter

# Appendix 2

## Item titles

*Note: Some item titles appeared more than once as indicated in brackets*

"Facing up to suicide" (3)  
"For two or three years I drank and drank until I fell down"  
"Please stop" appeal from heartbroken mother  
"Smash" actor in suicide alert  
"The bottle": a scientific barometer of suicide (2)  
"We don't want any other family to suffer the way we have suffered for four years"  
[Diary] (4)  
[Photograph caption]  
[Photograph caption] Funds for support group  
[Series of articles on suicide] (2)  
[Untitled Photograph]  
[Untitled comment]  
[Untitled events listing]  
[Untitled photo caption] (5)  
[Untitled Quote] (2)  
[Untitled] (15)  
£1.5 million project announced  
1 in 3 Dublin women hit by depression  
1,100 parasuicides in south-east  
10% of schizophrenia sufferers 'will commit suicide'  
10,000: World Wide Worry  
100 prisoners 'tried to kill themselves'  
13 million for Suicide Prevention and Research  
14 year old's suicide fact [sic]  
14,000 cases of self-poisoning in four years  
170 of those who attended A&E in Louth had self-inflicted injuries  
200 Meath suicides in last five years  
275 pubs forced to close for underage drinking violations  
2fm star and writer tops bill for public seminar on suicide  
4.5m allocated for suicide prevention  
40% of male GP visits at behest of women  
50 facts that make you want to change the world  
55% of young know of peer suicide attempts  
5m cliff plan to improve tourist safety  
6:1 Male Female Suicide Ratio  
8,500 were treated in A&Es for self-harm injuries  
A better way to die?  
A challenge that goes beyond statistics  
A chance not to be wasted  
A Cold Coward: A Selfish act of an evil man  
A cry for help our country must heed

A greater awareness needed  
'A light in the darkness of depression' Galway Candle Campaign  
A lonely existence in a fast world  
A lonely pint for the man who was once the toast of Tralee  
A modest proposal  
A mothers story  
A Series of tutorials for postgraduate trainees and a continuing education exercise for medical specialists  
A tragedy to touch us all  
A tragic death  
A wake-up call to the authorities  
A whole new way of looking at depression and suicide, from cult figure Dorothy Rowe  
A&E dealt with 14 kids who attempted suicide  
A&E treats over 31,000 in Tralee  
Abbey Inn hosts charity head, beard, moustache and leg shave  
Abuse deal and cutbacks a double blow  
Accused found hanging in cell  
Achill Golf Club News  
Achill Island Golf Club win the final of the All Ireland Golf Final in the Three TOS (sic) Championship  
Achill par excellence  
Acne Lad suicide  
Action oriented strategy for suicide prevention  
Actions speak louder than words in Athy  
Addiction bill hits 4.3 billion  
Adolescent suicidal behaviour and mental health service provision  
Alarm at the number of suicides in the Midlands  
Alarming trend of self harm by women  
Alcohol a major factor in 60 per cent of inquests  
'Alcohol a potentially legal psychoactive drug'  
Alcohol 'a threat to wellbeing of nation'  
Alcohol and suicide link strengthened  
Alcohol counselling  
Alcohol 'makes it easier to commit suicide'  
Alert on suicides  
Alert over health risk  
Always just a phone call away  
Am I a hypochondriac or ... am I clinically depressed?  
Amy recalls night of terror (2)  
An answer to male suicides  
An intimate audience  
An open night to share the load of suicide tragedies  
Anger at suicide cash cut  
Anti-abortion campaigners disrupt pro-choice meeting  
Antidepressants to carry warning of suicide risk  
Anti-drug group publish brochure  
Anti-suicide adverts are welcomed  
Appeal for missing man  
Ards suicide rate one of highest in NI  
Are exams failing our kids?  
Are we happy?

ASIST suicide awareness training course  
Assessment of suicide risk in different age group  
Assisting those at risk of suicide (3)  
Asylum topic winner for students  
Athlone abuse case priest tracked to Brazil  
Attempted suicide is a prison epidemic  
Attempted suicide on a speed camera  
Attempted suicide on the rise in urban areas  
Attitudes to suicide is explored in new TG4 Documentary (2)  
Autumn schedule of courses at Pastoral Centre in Letterkenny  
Aware  
Aware Candle Campaign  
Aware candles to create 'light in darkness of depression'  
Aware Daisy Days  
Aware Lecture  
AWARE of depression  
Aware Public Lecture to address link between suicide and depression (2)  
Aware's candle in the dark  
Baby hoax mum out of danger  
Ballinahinch film offers a better understanding of suicide issues  
Ballymun baby hoax suspect recovering  
'Ban Bray Machines'  
Banned driver back at wheel because mother was suicidal  
Bans or beds  
Barbs a Fair bunny boiler  
Beachy Hell  
Becoming a doctor  
Being a man could be the death of you as Irish males die youngest in Europe  
Being a man is bad for your health  
Belvedere's good shepherd bows out  
Benefit Night  
Bereaved  
Bereaved by suicide (3)  
'Bereaved by suicide' booklet reprint  
Bereavement group meeting  
Bereavement support (5)  
Bereavement Support Service  
Bereavement support volunteers receive certificates from Health Board  
Bertie Backs War on Bullying  
Bertie's gaffe upsets suicide son's mum  
Best of Times  
Best on suicide watch  
Bid to cut bullying  
Bid to stop spate of teenage suicides  
Black dog circles the globe  
Blind trust in doctors is unwise  
Blurring the lines  
Body of US actor who slated Tullamore Hospital recovered  
Booklet for those affected by suicide

Booze is increasing youth suicide rate  
Boy, 15, is found hanged in forest: Two teenagers commit suicide within matter of days  
Boyle college hosts talk on depression by Aware  
Boyle students given talk on depression by Aware  
Boys' death prompt call for support  
Boys Don't Cry  
Brain damaged teen in custody 'wants to go home'  
Brain-damaged child jailed due to lack of resources  
Break the stigma of suicide  
Britain fears plague attack  
Broadcaster Magee plunders 50-year memory bank for sporting epiphanies (2)  
Bullies made me feel suicidal...going to clubs all glammed up hid my pain  
Bullies: Die or we kill your parents  
Bully Torment  
Bullying and suicide issues not on the agenda  
Bullying at work fear  
Bullying causes 20pc suicides  
Bullying's long legacy  
Bumper crowd compete on sun-drenched course  
Buried Together: Shotgun couple laid to rest  
Butchered: Botched birth mum tells of agony and heartbreak  
By his own hand: a question for us all  
Call box for cliffs of death  
'Call could be life-and-death'  
Call for army suicide probe  
Call for hospital audit after suicide  
Call to extend bereavement counselling service  
Call to improve access to mental health services  
Call to make suicide epidemic a political issue  
Calls for medical forum  
Campaign in Mid-West targets violence against women  
Campaign is set to heighten awareness of suicide danger  
Campaign on suicide triggers welcomed  
Campaign to shed light on depression  
Candle Campaign for Aware on 21st  
Car 'Leap' Fatal  
Care crisis  
Carla Grief at 'suicide'  
Carthy 'a classic suicide by cop'  
Carthy provoked Gardai to shoot him, says psychologist  
Carthy wanted suicide by copy, says FBI agent  
Catalytic converters may reduce suicide  
Cathy's grief for tragic Timmy  
Causal association between cannabis and psychosis: examination of the evidence  
Centre set up in NI following suicides  
Certificates presented to suicide support volunteers (2)  
Certificates presented to volunteers for Midland Suicide Bereavement Support Service (3)  
Chanal called me his persecutor. I don't mind that. He proved his guilt by committing suicide  
Chance to hear guru's message of hope



Changes ring in at Shandon Street  
Changing the face of bipolar disorder  
Changing values at root of suicide crisis  
Charity Walk to Help Prevent Suicide  
Charity warns of exam pressure affecting students  
Charmaine pulls on running shoes for suicide bereavement group  
Chatroom 'played a part' in man's suicide  
Cheque presented to Suicide Research Foundation  
'Child psychiatry services need urgent expansion'  
Child suicide shock  
Childline launches Boys Allowed  
Children and SSRIs  
Children as young as 10 attempting to commit suicide  
Children as young as five at Lourdes parasuicide unit  
Children of 12 attempting suicide, states report  
Chinese woman's death was suicide  
Choice: Male suicide  
Christians must be open-minded on sexuality debate, says bishop  
City and Council ahead of national average for self-harm  
City girl's sale bid  
'City rocked by a rape'  
Claremen on brink of suicide  
Clinical Focus - Depression Diagnosis and treatment in the community  
Colm's sad scene  
Combined acute treatment for bipolar depression  
Coming back from the brink  
Coming soon  
Common drugs used for most suicide attempts  
Common drugs used in suicides  
Common risk factors in suicide prevention  
Company 'knew drug did not help depressed children'  
Compensation 'leads to false abuse claims'  
Complacent attitude of society to suicide?  
Computer game bid to stop kids' suicide  
Concern as suicide rate in West grows  
Concerned about suicide?' (2)  
Concerned about suicide? Maybe you can help (2)  
Connolly warns against drug abuse complacency  
Conor's tragic death shocks community  
Conquering stress will help save lives  
Consequences R Real  
Controversial new mental health plan to go before ERHA  
Coolgreaney House: Working Together for Better Health  
Coping with conflict seminar in Derry  
'Coping with suicide'  
Coping with suicide booklet launched  
Coping with the terrible trauma  
Cork facility for mentally ill stalled by lack of funding  
Cork women want manifesto acted upon by candidates!

Coroner fears over high number of drownings in Drogheda  
Coroner praises rescue workers  
Corrie love rat roy's suicide bid  
Corrie's Roy tries to end it all  
Counselling in greater demand than ever: poll  
Counselling service for abused men to reduce waiting list in 2004  
Counselling service gets nationwide recognition  
Course tackles suicide  
Court bars band from holding onstage suicide  
Court changes would better reflect actual suicide rates  
Court told of suicide bid by girl, 13, after rape ordeal  
Courtney on Suicide Watch  
Cover-up in soldier suicide cases - claim  
Coward: Irish priest slams evil Shipman after killer doc found hanging in his cell  
Cowley clashes with Vintners over blood alcohol level  
Crawford calls on Minister to fund Suicide Prevention Programmes  
Crime probe halts inquest into suicide  
Cult star Elliott, 34 in suicide [sic]  
Cultivating suicide? Destruction of self in a changing Ireland (2)  
Cut in suicide research funding 'nothing short of criminal'  
Dad finds son, 12, hanging on moor: Boy dies as he walked dog  
Dad of 4 tries to murder his wife before hanging himself  
Dad speaks out on missing son heartache  
Dad's plea for lost son  
Dads who kill  
Daisy days  
Damages for man whose wife drove off Galway pier  
Damilola trial girl is suicidal  
Dana's ding-dong debating duel  
Dark Days of the Black Dog  
Dark days of TV Clinic Star  
Date set for Kelly suicide probe hearing  
Day and night - not nine to five - for artist Andreas  
Dead Modern  
Dead teen's mum vows to save other victims  
Dead-end job idea cleans up  
Dead-end street  
Deadly net danger  
Dear Mum, thanks for everything  
Death by DIY gun  
Death case duo sought  
Death crash mum slams suicide slurs  
Death of jockey was "loss to community"  
Death of prisoner in cell  
Death Row  
Death wish 2003  
Debt dad hospital hanging  
'Decades of hell': 325,000 agreed  
Decision to cut suicide research budget 'nothing short of criminal'

Decline in religion may be a factor in increasing suicide rate  
Deep anger at sudden closure of Addiction Unit in St. Brigid's Hospital, Ballinasloe  
Deepcut probe findings delayed  
Defeating Depression (2)  
Deliberate self-harm cases are increasing  
Depressed young men are turning to alcohol  
Depression  
Depression - the facts  
Depression & suicide is there a link?  
Depression and suicide in doctors  
Depression and suicide is there a link (sic)  
Depression drug ruled unsafe for children  
Depression in old age  
Depression in the elderly in general practice  
Depression is rising among women  
Depression lecture to heighten awareness locally  
Depression: An unpreventable epidemic?  
Deputy repeats call for new suicide prevention programmes  
Detecting depression in primary care  
Detecting suicidal feelings  
Detectives seek extradition of suicide 'helper'  
'Did media want to see this man hung, drawn and quartered in Tullamore?'  
Disgrace; Suicidal Falls Rd man is turned away from Mater three times; Suicide Shock; Hospital send man home three times  
'Dismantling' of Monaghan Psychiatric Service Feared  
Disposing of unused medicine properly  
Docs warned on drug suicide risk  
Doctor helped patient to die  
Doctor highlights dangers of over-use of paracetamol  
Doctor says suicide can attract hero status  
'Doctors failed our suicide son': Justin took his life after being turned away from four health centres  
Doctors favour assisted suicides  
Doctors find suicide rate a cause for alarm  
Dole link to suicide  
Domestic violence - shock figures  
Don Baker to attend Killarney suicide conference  
Donegal suicide figures treble in twenty years (2)  
Don't let the Boyne claim another life  
Don't let them die  
Don't tease, please  
Down... but not left-out  
Downturn may lead to more suicides  
DPP decides on Euthanasia Charge  
Drink Driver Attempted suicide  
Drink link to suicide  
Drink not recognised as big factor in suicides  
Drink price hike urged to stem suicides  
Drink scourge prime cause of depression and suicide  
Drink tax hike 'could stem suicide rise'

Drink culture fermenting a social crisis, expert warns  
Driven by Demons  
Driven to distraction  
Driven to pills suicide by KFC bullies  
Driver dies from self-inflicted stab wound  
Drowning suicides double  
Drownings suicide link  
Drug Concern  
Drug Suicide Warning  
Drugs main suicide tool  
Drunk girl's suicide bid  
Dual diagnosis - the close relationship between alcoholism and depression  
Dublin hospital to explore drink-depression link  
DUMP campaign aims to reduce suicide and accidental poisoning  
DUMP those pills  
Dunganon population is on the increase  
Dungarvan Fashion show to aid Aware  
Eamonn offers a sympathetic ear to callers in need of support  
Echo praised for rights coverage  
Egan to seek Fine Gael Town Council nomination  
Elaine Moore  
Elderly men 'most likely to commit suicide'  
Election profiles  
Elvis cousin dead  
Employers face stress death charges  
Encouraging responsible reporting of suicides  
End of a long and lonely road  
End torture of workers  
Epidemic of suicide must be tackled  
European Week against pain  
Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide (E/PAS) Two Years One  
Ex is talking about suicide  
Exam pals' grief for suicide student  
Ex-Brothers concerned at 'false' claims  
Existential suffering and euthanasia  
Exoo unaware of extradition  
Expert rejects 'suicide by cop' theory  
Experts to speak on suicide trauma  
Experts want psychological services in schools to tackle suicide  
Extradition for death rap cleric  
Face of the porn boss  
Facing the problem of suicide  
Facing up to suicide (8)  
Facing up to suicide in Ireland (2)  
Fair City suicide shock  
Fair City's TV rapist gets public backlash  
Faith could cut this tragic toll  
Faith loss suicide link  
Fall in religious practices linked to suicides

False facts  
Families bereaved by suicide  
Families to unite over river deaths  
Family appeal for help after tragic suicide  
Family issue appeal following tragic death of Mullingar teenager  
Family of suicide man want inquiry  
Family want to put tragic episode behind them (2)  
Family's grief  
Farmers in suicide poll fears  
Farmers say depression is rife - survey  
Father appeals for sightings of missing son who left suicide note  
Father of suicide victim says search for son a disgrace  
Father speaks over missing son's suicide  
Father's plea as inquest told of son's tragic death  
Festival time in the North  
Fifty suicides puts West ahead of national average  
Fight suicide - treat depression (3)  
Fighting fit  
File under 'domestic' is not the right response to murder  
Film puts suicide into sharp focus  
Final Question  
Five Hundred People a Year Attempted Suicide in Midlands (2)  
Flannery took his own life inquest told  
Flu sufferers warned not to take too much paracetamol  
Focus on Depression  
Focus on Halitosis  
Fol request on prisons would cost over 10, 000  
Former Christian Brother jailed for years of Letterfrack sex abuse  
Former headmaster released from jail  
Forum Diary  
Free advice weekly from Psychic Sarah  
Fresh start  
Frightening Figures  
From boom days to doomsday  
From Despair to Hope: A Christian Perspective on the tragedy of suicide  
Front-line staff should prepare for suicides to aid their coping  
Full impact of parental alcoholism not recognised  
Fund raising run for respite centre  
Funding needed for suicide prevention policies  
Fund-raising essential for suicide research  
Funds raised for suicide research  
Funeral of young Raphoe man  
Funny Business  
G.A.A. stars strike a blow for men's health  
GAA legend Paidi vows to quit drinking  
Galtees trek for suicide  
Galway mother featured in TG4 documentary on suicide  
Galway video of golden sports moments hits shops for charity  
Garda rescuers awarded medal

Gardai appeal for information on man's identity  
Gardai seek to extradite US preacher accused of suicide role  
Gardai try to get US suicide activist  
Gareth O'Callaghan to address Suicide Seminar  
Gareth O'Callaghan is to be keynote speaker at major western session on suicide incidence  
Gareth O'Callaghan to address seminar on suicide  
Geraldine Chambers inquest hears of suicide pact  
'Geraldine was determined to commit suicide and I decided to do it too'  
Girl hangs herself over bullies hell  
Girl of 3 in Suicide Fall  
Girls agreed suicide pact - inquest told (4)  
Girls are triple overdose risk  
Girl's suicide heralds bad news for Principal Barry  
Give your man an NCT  
Global Injury Inquiry  
Glossing over it all  
Go to work on the bully boys  
God bless son... I hope you find the peace you were searching for  
Golf club signs up for charity tournament  
Golf clubs rally around new charity  
Golfers around Gorey asked to tee off for 3Ts competition  
Golfers tee off for suicide project  
Government cuts on suicide research 'nothing short of criminal'  
Government failures putting children at risk  
Government lashed over suicide research funding  
Government under attack on mental illness and suicide concerns  
GP suicide prevention meeting  
GPs could face action over anti-depressants  
Graduate hanged himself following job rejection  
Grief for exam students after suicide of pal  
Grief-stricken son three himself off ferry  
Grieving mum lashes Bertie for name gaffe  
Grieving Mum's fury at teen helpline snub  
Grim Statistics reveal a mental health crisis  
Group formed on men's health  
Group hoping to reduce risk factors and raise awareness (3)  
Groups split over drink crackdown  
GROW - keeping the revolution going  
GROW vital to our community  
Growing support for establishment of suicide support group  
Gun Control reduces suicide numbers  
Gun control would have an impact on the number of suicides - psychiatrist  
Gun Controls  
Happy new you?  
Hard men in suicide link claim  
Has Ireland sold it's soul for riches  
He couldn't live with his guilt  
He had heart disease  
Head shave in aid of suicide awareness

Health board backs medical collection  
Health Board Initiative on suicide and self-harm  
Health Board Left Teen to Face Jail  
Health board officials planning to prioritise suicide prevention following dramatic rise in Kerry deaths  
Health board starts new training course  
Health boards cut spend on recruitment ads  
Health boards review care at Pilgrim House  
Health in the City  
Health seminar to mark women's day  
Health Timebomb  
Heart disease remains the main killer in Cork  
Heartbreak dad give compo to charity  
Help combat suicide  
Help for families' suicide loss  
Help the kids  
Helping the suicidal  
Helping those families bereaved by suicide  
Helping to cope with trauma of suicide  
Helping to defeat depression  
'Helpline for teens could have saved my sons life'  
Helpline over body organs  
Heroine rescued  
Hidden Neglect  
High death risk among young hospitalised diabetes patients  
High house prices linked to suicide  
High rate of suicide in Cork  
High stress  
High stress levels pose suicide risk  
High suicide rate linked to alcohol, says professor  
Higher male death rates in Cork and Kerry  
Hike price of booze  
Hillwalk funds drive to fight a national scourge  
Hoax Kid Probe is not over  
'Hoax' mum fights for life: Baby hoax suspect is found in a coma  
Home drugs factor in suicide bids  
Honesty is still the best policy, eh Jose?  
Hooligans target lifesavers' haven  
Hopeful of funding  
Hormones, hazy heads and even hazier memories  
Hospital ward's second suicide  
Hotline after boys' suicide  
Hotline from the Top  
House of horror man kills himself  
How depression can lead to suicide  
How drink is driving our teens to suicide  
How much more tragedy can they take  
How suicide leaves devastating effects (2)  
Hundreds mourn shotgun couple  
Hungover Ireland

Huntley is given 3 guards  
Husband awarded 110,000 for triple tragedy  
Husband awarded 110,000 over death of wife and children  
Husband fails in murder-suicide bid  
Husband wants me 'put away'  
I am the fall guy  
I didn't rape Leonda  
'I feel suicidal, please help me'  
I felt he had let me down, this big strong man I adored  
I gave my body an NCT  
I have a happy marriage and a good job yet I think about suicide  
I have lived my life & have nothing more to do  
I have lived my life and have nothing more to do: suicide pact teen told friend  
I know the pain he is suffering  
I Love those Gal Golfers  
'I passed within feet of him every second day'  
I saw the shotgun pointed at me.. I ducked and then heard the shot  
'I spent 30 years working as a prostitute on the streets of Dublin'  
'I suppose I could have you snuffed out'  
'I was bullied for five years because I was fat and had a Kerry accent, I thought about killing myself'  
'I was torn apart and made to be someone I wasn't'  
'I wish to God that he was with me now'  
I would have slashed my wrists: How conditions in prison left farmer close to suicide and despairing of young inmates  
I'll driller kill myself  
IAS aim to focus on suicide in older people  
Illicit drug use linked with suicide increase  
I'm a crime-scene cleaner  
I'm really worried my adult daughter may be expressing suicidal tendencies  
Impassioned plea to tackle suicide crisis  
Important training course on suicide prevention  
Improve care for depressed students - union  
Infection Explosion  
INLA is blamed for rise in Belfast suicides  
Inmates in suicide bid  
Inner emptiness driving adolescents to suicide  
Innovative, patient-friendly services  
Inquest hears girl was shot in the back  
Inquest hears of vain attempt to save city drowning victim  
Inquest into patient's death adjourned  
Inquest told Donegal girl died in suicide pact  
Inquests reveal that eight males died by suicide  
Inquiry into suicide of Kelly under way  
Inside the heads of a generation living without constraints  
Inside the mind of an alcoholic  
Ireland has second highest suicide rate worldwide among young males  
Ireland in the 1950s  
Ireland ranks second in EU male suicide survey  
Ireland sane is Ireland sober



Ireland sees faster drop in death rates  
Irish Association Suicidology [sic] 8th Annual Conference on Suicide and Older People  
Irish men 'still have heads in the sand' on health  
Irish regulator to monitor situation  
Irish soccer team launch daisy days 2003 (2)  
Irish society chooses 'style over substance'  
Irish students more prone to suicide  
Irish suicide shock  
Irish Teens top boozing league  
Irishmen die younger than continentals  
Is fear an t-imreas ne an uaigneas  
Is this what's meant by an information economy?  
Isolated elderly men most at risk of suicide  
'It's been so hard on her'  
It's good to talk about how you are feeling  
It's no Kerry joke: accident death rate is the highest  
It's time minds and hearts were stirred on suicide  
I've been a manic depressive since I was 16, but I don't want to be a victim any more  
Jail suicide: 'Could have been avoided'  
Jailed for 'suicide' M1 stunt  
Jailed teen sues stated over alleged sexual abuse  
Jealous Bestie's 'Suicide Watch'  
Jesus Jimmy we did it  
Jilted teen blasted ex then blew his head off  
Jilted teen turned gun on himself after he shot ex-girlfriend  
Jimmy Magee launches Greatest Sporting Memories Video  
Jimmy Magee Video Winners  
Jockey Dies  
John Deasy  
Judas and the Taking of Christ  
Judge accuses the media of driving people to commit suicide  
Judge agrees to be lenient to man with suicidal record  
Judge praises teenager for efforts to give up heroin  
Jury clears man of threatening to kill wife and son  
KDYS aims to have youth worker in every village  
Keeping your man in top shape  
Kelly mum 'suicide'  
Kenny concerned at rising young male suicide rate  
Kerry suicides add to workload of corners  
Kerry women healthier than men - report  
Kildare coroner warns number of suicide among young men is of huge concern  
Killer doc Shipman found dead in prison  
King of Pain  
Lack of facilities endangers suicide profile children  
Launch of new booklet  
Leargas - Living on the edge  
Learning how to treat suicidal behaviour  
Learning to live with suicide  
Lecture in Ballagh on link between depression and suicide

Lecture on suicide  
Lecture to be held about depression  
Lecture to explore problem of depression and suicide (2)  
Left lover in suicide  
Leixlip Town Council grant to suicide & bereavement  
Leixlip town council hosts talk on suicide and bereavement  
Less funding for higher mortality suicides than RTAs  
Let's not kid ourselves  
Let's talk about youth suicide  
Letter to the editor  
Letterkenny man hangs himself in London after job rejection  
Life is for Living  
'Lifeline' in Arklow  
Lightening Depression  
Lighting up the darkness  
'Limerick effect' blamed for self-harm  
Living like men  
Living links in a new beginning  
Living with suicide  
Local company marks Magee's 50 years in Sport  
Local golf clubs tee off for Suicide Research Project  
Local groups benefit from funding schemes  
Local volunteers join the Midlands Suicide Bereavement Support Services  
Locked up against our will: involuntarily put into a psychiatric hospital  
London inquest into death of Letterkenny man  
Longford's 'forgotten constituents'  
Lost Derek Dead for 3 months  
'Lotto' rapist ruined my life: Philomena's story of courage after being abused by sick 'uncle'  
Low suicide with twins  
Lower suicide risk for twins: study  
Lundbeck mental health seminar  
Macra na Feirme survey on attitudes and opinions of young farmers  
Macra na Feirme Survey on Attitudes of Young Farmers  
Major conference on suicide effects to be held  
Major lecture on 'Depression and Suicide' in Armagh (3)  
Major Regional Suicide Seminar  
Major wanted sex in the car the day after I tried to kill myself  
Majority of men say that their lot is 'getting worse'  
Making single mothers work might not be such a bad idea  
Making that critical lifesaving difference  
Male Health and machismo  
Male risk of suicide  
Male suicide  
'Male suicide not purely drink-led'  
Male suicide rise linked to plight of lone fathers  
Male suicide should be an issue in schools, says educationalist  
Males account for 80% of suicides - CSO  
Man accused of robbing woman  
Man dies after bridge plunge (2)

Man found dead in Nenagh House  
Man in fireball suicide horror  
Man kills self after wife murder bid  
Man shoots his wife then turns gun on himself  
Man shot himself in city centre car park, inquest told  
Man stole neighbour's underwear  
Man who shot himself was awaiting trial on sex offenses, coroner told  
Man whose wife committed suicide gets 110,000  
Managing alcohol problems in young people in primary care  
Man's body found after three months  
Man's suicide blamed on bank debts  
Man's suicide by Gardai bid  
Manual to help men live longer  
Margaret and Ellen rewarded for trojan work  
Marie meets Pdraig Harrington who asks - How is Leslie Walker?  
Master of monologue missing in action  
McDowell digs deeper into bunker  
McGrath attacks Government for 'failing' mentally ill young  
Meath men are seriously lazy - and it's bad for their health  
Medical devices to tackle prison deaths  
Medication linked to suicide decrease  
Medicine Man  
Meeting on links between suicide and depression  
Men accused of sexual crimes present new risk factor for suicide  
Men stare into the heart of hopelessness  
Men taking risks with their health  
Men's health awareness evening  
Men's Health in Ireland - They Die Younger Don't They?  
Men's Health in Ireland is the worst in Europe  
Men's health issues  
Men's health seminar  
Men's Health Under Scrutiny at Seminar  
Men's Health: The Facts Laid Bare  
Mental Health  
Mental health care badly lacking  
Mental health charities slam Sky One's dire billboard boob  
Mental health courts call as jail suicide bids rise  
Mental Health Public Speaking  
Mental health seminar hears wife's story of life after husband's suicide  
Mental health service criticised in Dail  
Mental Health Service 'Deficit'  
Mental Health... In Focus: The Samaritans  
Mental Illness - The Neglected Quarter  
Mental illness study results 'frightening'  
Mentally ill suicide fear  
MHB Certificate Presentation  
MHB Suicide Rate Higher  
Midland Health Board support for families and individuals bereaved by suicide (2)  
Midland suicide bereavement support network volunteers receive certificates (2)

Midland suicide bereavement support service (11)  
Midland support centre expands  
Midlands group raises 7,200 for suicide awareness (2)  
Midleton Suicide Bereaved  
Minister defends efforts to save suicide-prone Irish  
Minister ignoring 'epidemic' of suicide  
Minister Launches DUMP  
Minister O'Malley launches DUMP campaign  
Misconceptions about suicide  
Missing in Ireland  
Missing man may have been hanging for months  
Modern Ireland: Young farmers have their say  
Monaghan / Cavan Suicide Bereavement Support Group (2)  
Morally, intellectually and practically.. Punishment shootings are a busted flush  
More die by suicide than in crashes  
More drown by suicide than accident says water safety body  
More funding essential to tackle suicide  
More than 2,300 children poisoned by household drugs last year  
Mortgage Minders  
Most anti-depressants unsuitable for children due to suicide risk  
Most suicidal adolescents are ill  
Mother 'driven to suicide' by battle for murdered son  
Mother launches helpline petition  
Mother vows to keep teen helpline promise  
Mothers' agony at loss of sons  
Mountjoy governor speaks out on bullying  
Mountjoy's new remote control  
Mum plans Dail vigil  
Mum unhappy with Martin letter  
Mum's pledge to help save suicidal teens  
Murder accused had 'attempted suicide'  
Murder-suicide leaves five dead  
'My daughter died because of her rape ordeal'  
My friend is blamed for her husband's suicide  
'My Life of Hell'  
My suicide son's cries for help 'were ignored'  
My tears for Timmy  
'My wife died of a broken heart'  
Nationalist Fury over treatment of soldier  
Navy man on a mission  
Nearly 600 non-fatal suicide attempts in MHB area in 2002  
Neville slams Government response as 'criminal'  
New campaign aimed at helping young men facing a spiral of despair  
New data shows Seroqual to be an effective treatment for mania in bipolar disorder  
New fear for girls in self-harm warning  
New Group to help ease burden of depression  
New hospital for Thurles marked with meeting  
New row over missing organs: Suicide victims' brains removed  
New scheme to aid GPs in early detection of psychosis

New suicide support group is set up for bereaved  
New suicide task force set up  
New support group for sufferers of depression  
New training programme being assessed  
New types of campaigns needed to combat suicide, says doctor  
News for the Parishes  
No funding allocated for early psychosis service  
No psychiatric health service for troubled teens  
No Stopping suicides at the Cliff  
No such thing as a hopeless case - says nun who set up Galway centre for alcoholics (2)  
'No suspicion' in Navan Death  
North West lags behind in support for suicide cases  
North-east in shock over river deaths  
'Not only did he rape her, as far as I am concerned he murdered her as well'  
NSPCC call for counselling services in all schools  
Numbed by grief: Heartbreak for family and friends of tragic boy who took his own life  
Number of prison suicides increasing  
Number of suicides rising steadily  
Nurses learn about suicide  
Nurses train to aid self-harm patients  
Nurses train to aid suicidal patients  
Nurses Train to cope with suicide  
Nursing conference told alcohol and suicide linked  
O'Gorman gives credit where it's due  
Once heroic navies abandoned by Ireland  
One bright star in a vacuous world  
'One day on the bus home he started with new fat jokes, it hurt me but I just laughed along, then he called me a slut'  
One in 10 Irish pregnancies is terminated in an abortion clinic  
One in five suicides linked to bullying at work  
One in six Irish people have thought about suicide  
One in six people contemplate suicide  
One in ten Irish suicides is among the elderly  
One in three Westmeath babies born out of wedlock  
One suicide every 82 minutes in U.K. and Republic of Ireland  
Ongoing attempts being made to reduce suicide  
Online 'pharmacy' alert after suicide  
Only fear and the pain for my family hold me back from suicide  
Open letter plea  
Open verdict in drowning inquest  
Ordinary Man (2)  
Our daughter should never have died  
Our mental health is no laughing matter  
Our relief Huntley lived to face trial: Parents glad as suicide bid fails  
Our teen girls are hurting  
Over 75% of health board staff stressed  
Overdose suspected in death of man (28)  
Overwhelmed: Teacher Jane killed herself after work pressure got to her  
Oszy son in suicide bid

Painkillers law 'is lax'  
Paracetamol rules 'useless' in preventing suicide  
Paramilitary link to male suicide rise  
Parasuicidal tendencies  
Parasuicide Figures  
Parasuicide in NEHB Decreases  
Parasuicide victims more likely to be females  
Parasuicide worry in Kerry  
Parents' fear after boy (8) threatens suicide (2)  
Parents unhappy with redeployment of ADHD specialist  
Parents urged to be alert to suicide signs  
Party time is the hardest of times  
Patient care probe after river suicide  
'People left suicidal by barrage of queries from revenue commissioners'  
PGA aiming to aid fight with suicide  
Phone Box planned for Moher Cliffs  
Phone call from the edge of the Abyss  
Pick of the week ahead  
'Pill led to suicide'  
Pilot plan cutting suicide bids  
Planning strategy on suicide prevention  
Plans to get AWARE locally  
PM's TV quiz on Dr. Kelly suicide  
PNA fury at suicide funding  
Poignant films help raise awareness of suicide  
Police link seized guns and weapons to suicides  
Police Officer wins bravery award  
Political youth wings look to get young people active  
Poor at greater risk of suffering early death  
Poor diet a factor in male deaths  
Poor Prison Conditions Under Fire  
Poor Use of Suicide Phrase  
Postcards from the Edge  
Prepared to end it all?: Debate on end of life care gathers momentum  
Prescribing: Association between antidepressant prescribing and suicide in Australia  
Pre-teen depress rise alarms doctors  
Prevalence of psychiatric illness will increase as population ages  
Priest's suicide help for disturbed  
Prison a 'failure'  
Prison cell phone scandal  
Prison death rate highest in mountjoy  
Prisoner (22) found hanging  
Prison's new bid to beat suicide  
Probe as second suicide hits unit  
Probe into Creeslough man's death  
Probe into suicide bid at hospital  
Probe over prison cell hanging  
Prof. Patricia Casey to address Aware 10th Anniversary Lecture  
Professional 'cutting edge' or suicide link? (3)

Programme can reduce early suicide ideation  
Programme focuses on suicide and the young  
Programme will help identify potential suicide victims (2)  
Project encourages youth to develop social awareness  
Projects face axe if extension [sic] not funded  
Prozac 'linked' to librarian's suicide  
Psychiatric nurses body defends escorts  
Psychiatric nurses threaten to walk out  
Psychiatric patient given bail to get further treatment  
Psychiatric services at prison on point of collapsing  
Psychiatric staff safety will not be at risk due to smoking ban  
Psychiatrist says binge drinking linked to suicide  
Psychiatrist to be investigated over woman's death  
Psychological distress in families - Irish children behavioural problems (sic)  
Public lecture in city to explore suicide, anxiety and depression  
Public lecture on depression  
Public lecture on depression and suicide link  
Public lecture on 'Depression in the Community'  
Public seminar in Roscommon on suicide  
Public seminar on suicide  
Public seminar will focus on preventing suicide  
Public shame  
Public Speaking Regional Final (2)  
Punch Drunks  
Punishment beatings 'drive teens to suicide'  
Put own lives on line to save others  
Put suicide at top of election agenda (2)  
Putting your mind to climbing out of a black hole  
Quick thinking by taxi driver and gardai averted suicide bid  
Quotes of the week (2)  
Racism, alcoholism, and the treatment of non-EU doctors  
Raising a rod to beat yourself with  
Rape child kills herself: suicide note names sick sex beast  
Raped at 10, took her own life at 13, the tragic short life of Leonora  
Real support for farmers in crisis  
Reasons to smile  
Rescue from drowning was an 'extreme act of bravery'  
Reducing alcohol consumption will cut suicide rates, says expert  
Reel action in battle to cut suicides  
Regional public seminar on suicide (2)  
'Rejection Suicide'  
Reluctance in Irish men to seek help  
Remembering Fiona  
Report highlights need to target health promotion in men  
Report on suicides of Irish prisoners awaited  
Report slams child abuse investigation  
Resources and Services  
Results of Bailieborough suicide survey point to over-dependence on alcohol  
Return of unused medicines urged

Revealed: the secrets of Diana's last tapes  
Revealing survey on attitudes and opinions of young Irish farmers  
Revenue's haul from tax defaulters exceeds 1bn  
Ringing in the season's pain  
RIR 'ignored' sectarian harassment of Catholic  
Rising rate of suicide for probe  
'Risk of suicide may be related to area of brain'  
'Risk to suicide victims parents'  
Road map' of brain function could yield new pill for suicide prevention (2)  
Robbery accused in suicide attempt  
Ronan rows in to support suicide bereavement group  
Rooms for heroin users a first step  
Roy's Justice  
Rubbing shoulders with Ronan  
Rude Health - the Human Touch  
Rural idyll gives way to the harsh realities  
Sad Reading  
Safety Group to target suicide by drowning  
Saintfield film maker's view of local suicide  
Samaritan phone link plan for suicide cliffs  
Samaritans appeal for new volunteers to run Newbridge branch  
Samaritans' half century  
Samaritans may put phone at Cliffs of Moher  
Samaritans promoted awareness in Tullamore  
Samaritans providing emotional support  
Samaritans seek new volunteers  
Samaritans seeking more volunteers for Athlone service  
Samaritans slam pressure on teens  
Samaritans to sign on at Cliffs of Moher  
Samaritan's Vision  
Samaritans: contacts increased by 53%  
Scandal linked to suicides  
Scandal of Suicide Toll  
School bullies must be taught lesson  
Schools can help tackle suicide  
Schools suicides shocker  
Science Spin  
Sean's death spurs on his family to help prevent others suffering suicide tragedy  
Second ordeal for gun tragedy mum  
Second suicide at city hospital  
Seeking help when in trouble is a sign of strength (2)  
Seeking serious study on suicidal Seroxat  
SEHB honours cardiac emergency care committee  
SEHB Regional Suicide Resource Office Annual Report 2002 Published  
SEHB Release suicide report (3)  
SEHB releases suicide prevention report  
Self harm by teenage girls 'tip of the iceberg'  
Self harm study out  
Self-harm fear



Self-harm pilot launched in South East region  
Self-harm rate among teen girls worse than boys  
Self-Harm: The plea for help written out in blood  
Seminar to focus on problem of suicide and young people at risk  
Sex abuse boy to be treated in Sweden  
Sex abuser avoids prison after victim threatened suicide if he was jailed  
Sex claims left Leslie suicidal  
Sex rap prisoner found dead in cell  
Shades of Gray  
Shay Given lends support to Aware campaign  
SHB highlight services for Depression Awareness Week  
SHB wants plan to curb suicides  
Shipman Played: He hangs himself after six-minute farewell call to his ever-loyal wife  
Shock at death of 24-year-old A'leix man  
Shock figures reveal 300 suicide attempts by prisoners in Irish jails in the last three years  
Shock for Fergie: Killer aide in jail suicide attempt  
Shock suicide figures  
Shooting tragedy is recalled at inquest  
Shooting tragedy of jilted teen and girl  
Shop Stab Rap Man in Suicide Bid  
Shoplifter attempted suicide  
Shortage of adolescent psychiatric beds critical  
Shot man 'is critical'  
Shot soldier 'unlikely' to have killed himself  
Should big boys play the crying game  
'Show off' drink driver jailed for 4 years  
Shrink clobbers mass binge fests  
Signs of a serious sickness (2)  
Silent Hep C Hell for female addicts  
Simple ways to beat the booze  
Singer Baker to talk on suicide  
Sinn Fein backs Sainsbury Report  
Six people attempt suicide every week  
Sligo's Samaritans face changing and more demanding challenges  
Small psychiatric teams rely more on drug therapy  
Society failing its young people  
Soham accused back in prison after suicide attempt  
Soldier's family press for probe  
Solid Ground  
Son asks his mother to kill him  
'Son said he'd no life without his kids'  
Southern region has highest suicide rate  
Spalding Gray  
Spate of rapes paints ugly picture  
Speakers lined up for seminar on depression  
Specialist Training  
Spectre of suicide must be addressed  
Spiral of Despair  
Spotlight on suicides

Star in suicide attempt  
Stars pack 'Punch' at racing's new HQ  
State 'ignoring suicide surge'  
State 'must focus school programme' to tackle suicide  
State seeks extradition of minister over death  
Stigma surrounding self harm 'needs to be lifted'  
Strangers, history and suicide  
Street Cred  
Stress in the veterinary profession  
Stricter laws on gun control 'would lower suicide rate'  
Student blues club helps fight depression  
Student driven to suicide by acne  
Students put their heads on the line for mental health  
Study cites growing suicide rate in men  
Study finds Irish men are heading for an early grave  
Study shows 4% of men plan own death  
suicide Shocker  
Suffer not the little children  
'Suicidal' cop left will pills - by PSNI  
Suicidal elderly take longer to respond to treatment  
Suicidal feelings and depression are not the preserve of adults  
Suicidal heart of the Ardoyne  
Suicidal midlands  
Suicidal patients sent to A&Es  
Suicidal prisoner sues jail bosses  
Suicidal teenager in jail because he has nowhere to live  
Suicide (5)  
Suicide - Facing up to suicide - Suicide in Ireland  
Suicide - is enough being done?  
Suicide - taking paracetamol off the shelf  
Suicide - the taboo subject  
Suicide - time for new skills  
Suicide & Depression Awareness Night  
Suicide a priority for the Southern Health Board  
Suicide Alert (2)  
Suicide alert campaign targets teens  
Suicide and depression (2)  
Suicide and depression awareness night (2)  
Suicide and modern society  
Suicide and 'paths' to recovery  
Suicide and self harm bids are highest in city  
Suicide and self harm must move up the political agenda - Egan (2)  
Suicide anguish has to be faced  
Suicide anguish 'ignored'  
Suicide as unit short of nurses  
Suicide attack on Jerusalem bus kills eight  
Suicide Awareness Fundraising Event (2)  
Suicide awareness hits the big screen  
Suicide Bereaved - Middleton Local Association

Suicide bereaved work brings honour for two Carlow women  
Suicide Bereavement (6)  
Suicide bereavement groups extended  
Suicide bereavement support (5)  
Suicide bereavement support group  
Suicide bereavement support group meeting (5)  
Suicide blackspots targeted  
Suicide boy was 'killed'  
Suicide by cop theory over police shooting  
Suicide campaigns may be missing mark  
Suicide club offers help for the bereaved  
Suicide concerns in case of missing father of two  
Suicide counsel for bus and loco drivers  
Suicide Counsellors receive certs (2)  
Suicide dad in murder bid  
Suicide dad leaves his ex-lover for dead  
Suicide DJ bids to aid victims  
Suicide drama is full of life  
Suicide Drowns  
Suicide eclipses accidental drowning  
Suicide fear for action whose depression arose after treatment at Tullamore hospital  
Suicide fear for Sophia's mother  
Suicide fear for 'staring' Conrad  
Suicide fears over Britney death video: 'Copycats' warning  
Suicide Figures rise in West  
Suicide figures up 30%  
Suicide films  
Suicide findings  
Suicide girl (14) felt she had nothing to live for  
Suicide girl: I've nothing to live for  
Suicide Group  
Suicide Group to meet in Newcastle  
Suicide help centre burglary  
Suicide helpline  
Suicide hubby's 999 phone call  
Suicide ignorance is our biggest shame  
Suicide in mass link  
Suicide in old bath  
Suicide intervention skills workshop held  
Suicide intervention workshop (2)  
Suicide 'is a real concern among the elderly'  
Suicide is Dane-Less  
Suicide is major public health problem that is not isolated from society  
Suicide is not always a tragedy, sometime it is a choice  
Suicide is the main killer of under-25s  
Suicide jump man is saved  
Suicide knifing horror  
'Suicide line' plan for Cliffs  
Suicide Link

Suicide linked to soaring house prices  
Suicide live at concert tonight  
Suicide man's mum calls for inquiry  
Suicide must be tackled  
Suicide must be tackled head on - say students  
Suicide mystery of 'baby hoaxer'  
Suicide notes give little comfort and few answers to girl's family  
Suicide now more common than traffic accident fatalities  
Suicide of 999 man  
Suicide of bullied girl, 13  
Suicide of rape girl  
Suicide of rape girl (13) sparks plea for fast-track counselling  
Suicide of schoolboy is blamed on bullying  
Suicide of the bow who was bullied for being too clever  
Suicide pair to face the courts  
Suicide preacher Exoo faces murder charge  
Suicide prevention a priority for SHB  
Suicide prevention centre is vandalised  
Suicide prevention measures needed: Distressed young men struggling to cope  
Suicide prevention plan for mid-west  
Suicide Programme  
Suicide rate 2nd highest  
Suicide rate and the need for answers  
Suicide rate has doubled in 20 years (3)  
Suicide rate in adolescents trebles in just one decade  
Suicide rate in west is now over average... with men most at risk  
Suicide rate should make us ask questions about society  
Suicide rates (2)  
Suicide rates are 'tip of iceberg'  
Suicide rates continue to be 'alarmingly high'  
Suicide rates continue to rise  
Suicide rates in developing countries under-reported  
Suicide rates in West ahead of national average  
Suicide report: Clarification  
Suicide research funds cut as deaths rise  
Suicide resource officer's post will be filled  
Suicide response  
Suicide risk for the jobless  
Suicide risk linked to Carthy's gun permit  
Suicide risk lower  
Suicide scandal  
Suicide seminar (18)  
Suicide seminar attracts over 350 people  
Suicide seminar in Roscommon  
Suicide shock (2)  
'Suicide' son was so happy  
Suicide statistics: Shameful neglect in costing lives  
Suicide stress  
Suicide Study

Suicide study to look at genetic link  
Suicide support (3)  
Suicide support group launched  
Suicide Support Group resumes its meetings  
Suicide support group to meet in Newcastle Centre  
Suicide support group to meet in Ballynahinch  
Suicide support group's Ballynahinch meeting  
Suicide support meeting (2)  
Suicide support [sic] group meetings  
Suicide survey results 'frightening'  
Suicide suspected in bodies find  
Suicide Talks (2)  
Suicide teen's mum rejects bungling bertie's apology  
Suicide Threat from fan  
Suicide victim's mum releases heartbreaking farewell letter  
Suicide warning  
Suicide warning for Donegal and Derry  
Suicide watch  
Suicide watch in Temple Bar area  
Suicide workshop  
Suicide: denying the truth  
Suicide: scandal of mental health funding  
Suicide: the final decision is yours  
Suicide: The Male's last refuge  
Suicide: the pain that is left behind  
Suicide: Thoughts from one left behind (7)  
Suicide: When hope runs out  
Suicide: Why is it taking so many young lives today?  
Suicides alert  
Suicides among young increase  
Suicides battle  
Suicides cash row  
Suicides Drown  
Suicides epidemic 'ignored'  
Suicides feel love rather than despair  
Suicides net pact  
Suicides shocker  
'Suicides' spark call for help signs at death cliffs  
Suicides warning  
Suicidology Conference (2)  
Super-weed  
Support for Families Bereaved by Suicide (4)  
Support for those bereaved by suicide  
Support group formed in response to Newbridge suicides  
Support Meeting (22)  
Supporting One Another' to prevent suicide (3)  
Surge in suicides  
Survey finds 17pc of elderly feeling suicidal  
Survey highlights need to tackle substance abuse in Ireland

Survivors, celebrities and stolen fur coats  
Swimming to USA  
System failures blamed for Huntley suicide bid  
Tackling our depression toll  
Taking Natural Drugs  
Taking their lives in the troubled water of death  
Talk it out  
Talk on depression to help sufferers  
Talk on suicide prevention  
Talk on suicide to address key areas of concern in Kildare  
Taoiseach's name error devastates mother of suicide son  
TB Deaths continue to climb - CSO  
TD wants total ban on 'lethal' pain-killer sales  
Teacher training on suicide urged  
Tearful Leslie's plea to his fans  
Techno night in Ardcroney to aid depression  
Teen death bids shock  
Teen girl used bra in suicide attempt  
Teen girls harm risk  
Teen sent to care facility  
Teen sex link to suicide - survey  
Teen shot ex-lover as she sat in bed then killed himself  
Teen started fire in a 'cry for help': Garda station blaze horror  
Ten will drown this Christmas  
Ten-year-old try suicide  
Teresa in top form  
Terrorism war lords blamed for outbreak of suicides in North  
TG4 to screen lecturer's documentary on suicide  
Thanks to Fermoy from AWARE  
That Final Step: Suicide Defined  
The act of suicide (2)  
The aftermath of suicide  
The Anorexia Bulimia Puzzle  
The bright side of depression  
The children dying to get some help  
The dark side of Kerry as Ireland's suicide blackspot  
The Darkest Moment  
The difficulties around prescribing drugs and alternative medicine  
The empathic doctor  
The gamblers who get caught in the web  
The hands of time go around in circles  
The Irish Tenors give concert for suicide  
The long goodbye  
The Lost Generation  
The man who is too nice for politics  
The Minister has responsibilities too you know  
The moods and manias of an often unquiet mind  
The National Suicide Research Foundation  
The Net Killers

The other side of suicide prevention (2)  
The pain of those who cut  
The question that is so rarely answered: Crumlin women's bid to help deal with suicide  
The scary trend of logging on to log off  
The scourge of bullying: Bullying is a form of abuse that is sadly becoming more prevalent in today's society  
The silent killer  
The Silent Killer: Depression: Families are left to battle on their own  
The speed of life that brings tragedy  
The unspoken death penalty  
There are easier ways to find happiness than by multiplying our wants  
There are people who can help with your depression (2)  
'There is always someone to talk to' - the Samaritans  
'These deaths are ignored by the public at large'  
Thugs damage local library; truck ploughs on to golf links  
Thirteen weeks of torment  
This little girl's death should shame us all  
This woman killed herself: But is a cult responsible for Joanne's death?  
Those who look to Boyne for Escape need more support  
Three Heroes Prevent Suicide  
Tied up to die in car  
Time to weed out the joint approach  
'Tis the season of SADS  
To the citizens of Mitteleurop, on the occasion of your arrival in Ireland  
Top hurler's sad suicide stuns village  
Top Hyundai Exec in Suicide Jump  
Top psychiatrist for Tullamore lecture  
Top psychiatrist helps to mark ten years of AWARE  
Tories urged to oust rogue councillor  
Townshend pondered suicide over kid-porn  
Tragedies highlight darkness of Christmas for some  
Tragedy after suicide pact  
Tragedy of Jockey Tim  
Tragedy of the mother State forgot  
Tragedy strikes in Carrigstown this week  
Tragic Couple had planned to move into their dream new home  
Tragic dad gives compo cash away  
Tragic death of Knockatallon Man  
Tragic girl, 14, in suicide pact  
Tragic Jackie  
Tragic Jim's body is found  
Tragic notes offer little solace to family (2)  
Tragic Roscommon couple expected to visit Donegal  
Tragic suicide of young father in search of help  
Tragic teen dies in his cell after drug overdose  
Tragic teens helpline snub  
Tragic teens swore secret suicide pact  
Tragic toll for men  
Training to tackle high suicide rate

Trevor mum sues: France to pay for suspect's suicide  
Troubled 10-year-olds 'resorting to suicide'  
Troubled boy with no suitable place to be sent to US unit  
Troubled teen placed in care after time in jail  
Troubled teenagers at risk of suicide  
Troubles in the head  
Trust concern at case delay  
Trust launches suicide alert campaign in cinemas  
Tullamore aware asks public to support daisy days  
Tullamore business assists Athlone Samaritans in new project (2)  
Turning our boys into modern men  
Turning the tide of suicide  
Twins have lower risk of suicide, claims study  
Two of my sons took their own lives in the same year  
Two tragic deaths  
UK expert warns Council on power lines  
Ulster's dope smoking kids  
Unique therapy for patients with bipolar depression  
Unpalatable truth about eating disorders  
Up to 300 prisoners attempted suicide  
Verdict on buses star  
Victim lets off beast  
Victims Unit offer seminars to clergy and faith workers  
Violence 'sparked 14 suicide bids'  
'Vitriolic attacks' on psychiatry criticised  
Voluntary service helps people to cope with suicide bereavement  
Volunteers tell of increasing suicidal calls  
Wake-up call  
Warning on suicide among the elderly  
Warrants out for pair in 'assisted death' case  
Was Dr. Kelly a Dying Man?  
Was it suicide bid?  
Was Shipman's suicide the final act of betrayal?  
Waterford man gets life for murder of his wife  
Waterford seminar on 'facing up to suicide'  
Wayne was so gentle... we'll never know why he killed Cliona  
We must debate suicide: Charlie McClaffery  
'We must get suicide helpline'  
We must take steps to tackle suicide  
We needed support but there was none  
Weighing up the odds  
We'll never know why?  
Well, I'll go eat my DVD player  
We're at end of the line: Mum's suicide phone plea  
We're living longer and heading for a baby boom  
Westdoc services were refused after Garda call  
Westmeath students chosen among nation's young social innovators  
What's really shocking about this picture...  
WHB vows to tackle suicide and road deaths head-on



When Children Die  
When depression is denies  
When depression is not obvious  
'When my brother committed suicide, my world was torn apart'  
When one suicide leads to another  
Where it all finishes...  
Who knew about Brother Tobin?  
'Whose children are they anyway?'  
Why are teens cutting themselves?  
Why are we killing ourselves?  
Why back problems can be a very lonely condition  
Why being a bloke is bad for you  
Why Bertie IS to blame for our men behaving badly  
Why dads' army is on the march  
Why did my son commit suicide?  
Why is it that we have such high levels of suicide here?  
Why men die first..  
Why special days are a nightmare for some  
Why the prevention of suicide is 'everybody's business'  
Widow calls on Blair to reflect  
Wilbur wants to Kill Himself  
Winging it (4)  
Witness says 'suicide by copy' claim does not allow for mental illness  
Woman claims garda sexually assaulted her after 999 call  
Woman faked suicide attempt in prison cell, Ballinasloe court told  
Woman queried over hoax calls is found comatose  
Woman 'sorry' for hoax  
Woman's killer dies in suicide  
Women more likely to attempt suicide - Irish study  
Work Aims to improve cliff safety  
Worked to death!  
Workshop on the issues of suicide  
Wrist slash duo will be deported  
www.turning the tide of suicide.ie [sic]  
Xmas blues: Thousands to call charity helpline  
You can help  
You hope until the end your loved one will still be alive.. It's such pain when you know they are dead  
Young doctors more prone to depression  
Young farmers concerned by depression and suicide  
Young men face 'frightening' suicide risk - health experts  
Young mens' 'resistance to professional help seeking'  
Young people have more on their minds than we realised  
Your health and You: Depression  
Youth suicide (2)  
Youths aims to prevent suicide  
Youths lash out at 'racist Ireland'



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive