

Press release: New funding for suicide prevention in England

The investment, announced today by the Department for Health and Social Care, Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England marks the start of a 3-year programme worth £25 million that will reach the whole country by 2021.

It forms part of the government's commitment to reduce suicides in England by 10% by 2021 and will support the zero suicide ambition for mental health inpatients announced by Secretary of State Jeremy Hunt in January of this year.

Currently one person every 90 minutes dies by suicide in the UK and approximately two thirds of these are not in contact with mental health services.

The funding, which has been allocated to 8 sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) with a high level of need, will help to ensure people know high-quality confidential help is available within their community. It will include targeted prevention campaigns for men; psychological support for people with financial difficulties; better care after discharge; and improved self-harm services for all ages.

The funds are set to improve suicide prevention strategies, signposting and raising awareness through to improving quality for safer services and will help drive better surveillance and collection of data on suicide, attempted suicide and self-harm.

It builds upon major work from all local authorities to put multi-agency suicide plans in place, and work for a close join up between health services, public health teams and the voluntary sector.

Jackie Doyle-Price, Minister for Mental Health, said:

Every single suicide is a tragedy – which is why this funding is so vital. Working with the Samaritans and others in high risk areas, we will make sure people get the care they need as early as possible, because that is what saves lives. All local areas are developing suicide prevention plans and this work will support our 'zero suicide' ambition in mental health inpatient units.

Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive at Public Health England, said:

Suicide destroys lives and is devastating for the loved ones they leave behind. We need to do everything we can to offer more help to people in distress and this is a big step towards that.

Claire Murdoch, NHS England Director for Mental Health, said:

The NHS is committed to improving mental health services and increasing people's access to help, when they need it the most. Working closely with families, councils, government and charities like the Samaritans, the additional funding and suicide prevention plans confirmed today will mean more people in crisis, in some of the most under-served parts of the country, will be able to get the crucial support they need.

Working closely with those who have been impacted by suicide and those with national expertise, including the Samaritans, the areas to receive funding this year have been identified due to their high level of need and will focus on particularly at-risk groups such as men and those who self-harm.

The areas set to receive funding are:

- Kent and Medway
- Lancashire and South Cumbria
- Norfolk and Waveney
- South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw
- Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire
- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
- Coventry and Warwickshire
- Durham, Darlington, Teesside, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby

Ruth Sutherland, Samaritans Chief Executive Officer, said:

Suicide is an urgent and complex issue with 3 times more people dying by suicide than in road accidents. We welcome these measures as an important first step, targeting those who are most at risk of taking their own life. We will continue to work with the government to help ensure its funding supports multi-agency working to achieve strong prevention measures in all local areas in order to reduce deaths by suicide.

The £25 million investment over 3 years is in addition to significant investment in mental health as part of the NHS Five Year Forward View for mental health to deliver accessible high-quality care. This includes expansion in crisis care for all ages, children and young people's services and services for pregnant women and new mothers which should also support a reduction in suicides.

Background

1. [Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and

providing specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.

2. Please remember if you are reporting on suicides to follow the [Samaritans media guidelines](#) to help prevent copycat suicides from occurring.
3. [Suicides in the UK: 2016 registrations](#) provides data on registered deaths in the UK from suicide analysed by sex, age, area of usual residence of the deceased and suicide method.
4. [Reported road casualties in Great Britain: 2016 annual report](#).

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