



National
Office for
Suicide
Prevention

Annual Report 2018



Connecting for Life



This report was printed in August 2019 and is available;

* To download at www.nosp.ie or www.connectingforlifeireland.ie

* To order at www.healthpromotion.ie

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Foreword

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) is strongly grounded within the Mental Health Community Strategy and Planning function of the HSE, and in 2018, continued to build robust working relationships with other strategic and operational functions across our health services. A foremost sense of common purpose and of shared ownership must be maintained, if the challenge of reducing suicidal behaviour in Ireland is to be effectively met.

Significant changes are underway across our health services - reconfiguring services into six new health regions will mean health service staff can plan hospital and community services together, thus ensuring more integrated care, at regional and local levels. This will support the implementation of Sláintecare and our efforts to get health services, as close to people's homes as possible, with the majority of care delivered within the community and not in acute hospitals.

In the context of mental health and suicide prevention, this is particularly salient. The ongoing delivery and development of suicide prevention services and initiatives, in line with Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020, will continue with refreshed impetus across these new structures.



The core work of the NOSP in 2018 was the coordinated implementation of the strategy; “working towards a vision of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide and where communities and individuals are empowered to improve their mental health and wellbeing”.

The budget and expenditure of the NOSP has increased significantly in the last six years, from just over €5m in 2012, to €12m in 2018 – reflective of the abundance of improvement initiatives underway. Almost 60% of expenditure of the office, supported frontline services and organisations working in the area of suicide prevention and mental health promotion.

The importance of cross-sectoral collaboration and connectedness in this work, cannot be understated. The NOSP sustains partnerships with over 20 lead agents for the strategy (across health services and government departments) and over 28 NGOs working on suicide and self-harm prevention initiatives or services. I would like to thank all involved for responding effectively to the evolving mental health needs of a changing society and for delivering very measurable benefits, many of which are outlined in this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Healy', written over a light blue circular graphic element.

Pat Healy

HSE National Director

COMMUNITY STRATEGY & PLANNING

Foreword

Since launch in 2015, Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020, has provided us with a clear context and evidence-informed roadmap for the reduction of suicide in Ireland, and the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) continues to work to realise the strategy's vision of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide.

Into 2019, and with many organisational changes and improvements underway in our health services, there remains a firm commitment within the HSE and the NOSP, to the ongoing implementation of Connecting for Life, through consistent and visible leadership.

2018 was an important year for the NOSP and for Connecting for Life. Reaching the mid-way point of the strategy's span provided an opportune moment to take stock of progress to date and reflect on priorities for the remaining duration of the strategy. During the year, significant work progressed to conduct the Interim Strategy Review of Connecting for Life.

This process affirmed that the strategy remains relevant and contains the core evidence-informed suicide prevention approaches which are fundamental to a national strategic response to reduce deaths by suicide. Its findings, published early in 2019, will continue to inform and prioritise efforts up to 2020, and beyond.

An additional five local Connecting for Life Action Plans were launched during 2018 – the last of 17 such plans to be embedded nationwide. This was a notable milestone in the continuance of Connecting for Life – implementation structures have been now rooted across all local areas, to effectively deliver Connecting for Life actions, now, and for the years ahead.



I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of regional HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention in establishing extensive and robust Connecting for Life structures in each of their areas. The work of the NOSP is focused on supporting these structures and on ensuring we can successfully track, monitor and support this implementation.

The NOSP reports that almost 13,000 people attended suicide and self-harm training programmes within their communities in 2018. Programmes such as safeTALK, ASIST, Understanding Self-harm and STORM, remain principal enablers in developing and empowering suicide-safer communities in Ireland.

This annual report also draws attention to some of the initiatives and activities of agencies who work in partnership with the HSE, and in alignment with the goals, objectives and actions in Connecting for Life. We acknowledge this work and are reminded that the key to preventing suicide doesn't lay with any single agency or intervention alone. We are very thankful for all the collaborative efforts, expertise and specialised approaches of these multiple agencies and groups, who continue to share the vision of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Meehan', written over a light grey circular background.

John Meehan

HSE Assistant National Director

MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY STRATEGY & PLANNING AND
HEAD OF NATIONAL OFFICE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION



*Connecting
for Life Vision*

An Ireland where fewer
lives are lost through suicide,
and where communities and
individuals are empowered
to improve their mental
health and wellbeing



Connecting for Life

Connecting for Life Goals

Better understanding of suicidal behaviour

Supporting communities to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour

Targeted approaches for those vulnerable to suicide

Improved access, consistency and integration of services

Safe and high quality services

Reduce and restrict access to means of suicidal behaviour

Better data and research

Connecting for Life Outcomes by 2020

Reduced suicide rate in the whole population and amongst specified priority groups.

Reduced rate of presentations of self-harm in the whole population and amongst specified priority groups.



Shane O'Donnell, Dr Noel Richardson, Dr Cate Hartigan, Jason McAteer and John Meehan, at the launch of the Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland Report, March 2018. Funded by the HSE NOSP, this research from the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) formed part of the Middle-Aged Men and Mental Health Project. It explored;

- The specific mental health and wellbeing needs of at risk and vulnerable middle-aged men
- The extent of the difficulties that these men are facing
- Perspectives of both service providers and at-risk groups of middle-aged men
- The key issues that impact on their mental health
- Any barriers/opportunities for engagement with this target group
- Examples and models of practice that have worked elsewhere.

photo: Sasko Lazarov/Photocall Ireland

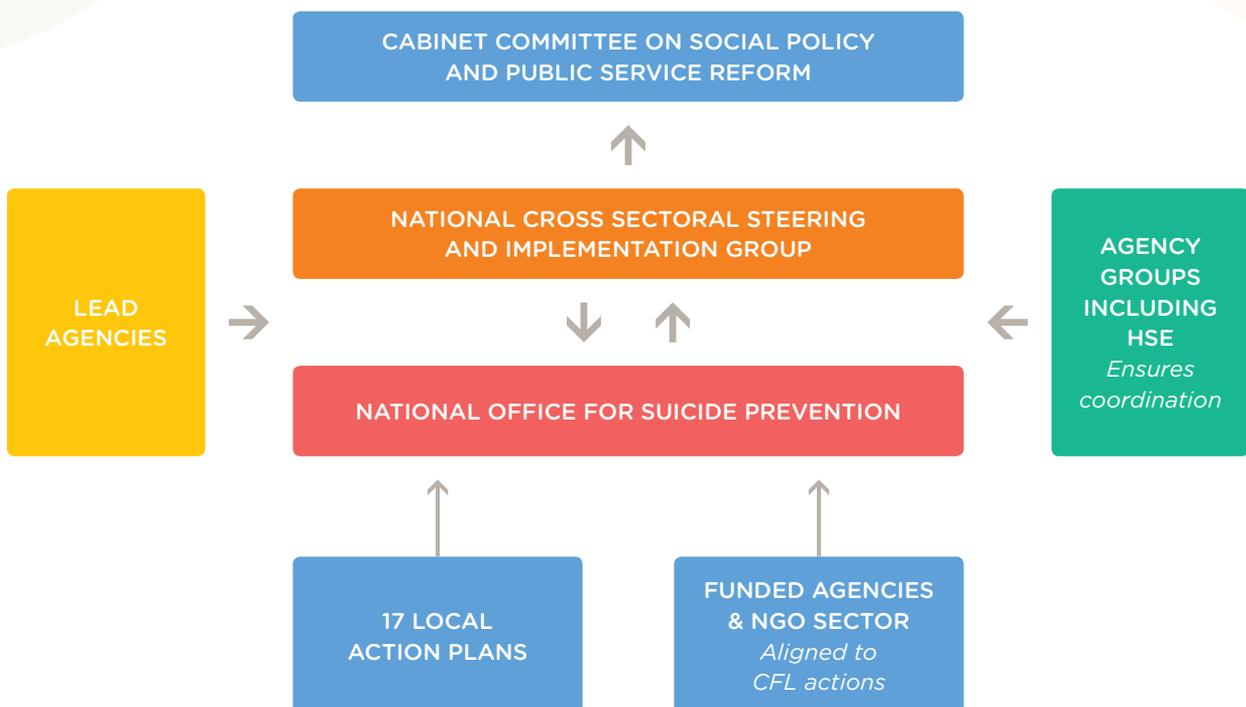
Section 1

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention *NOSP*

The Role of the HSE NOSP

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) sits within the Mental Health Community Strategy and Planning function of the HSE and works closely with the HSE Mental Health Community Operations function and many others. Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020 underpins the work of the NOSP and outlines the core functions of the office, namely;

1. The NOSP is a lead agency for 16 Connecting for Life actions - driving improvement initiatives that advance efforts to deliver on the actions assigned to it, in the strategy.
2. In addition, the NOSP is a joint lead on two further actions and a supporting partner on 21 actions. The office supports or resources projects related to these actions, in collaboration with the lead agencies who are assigned to them.
3. The NOSP has a pivotal role to play in driving the implementation of Connecting for Life. The strategy mandates NOSP to support, inform, coordinate and monitor the implementation of Connecting for Life across the HSE, government departments, statutory agencies and NGOs (non-governmental organisations). As a whole-of government strategy, Connecting for Life requires the office to provide a strategic view of progress against outcomes and targets and to report on these to the National Cross-Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group, on a quarterly basis. This reporting structure is illustrated below.
4. The NOSP also works in synergy with colleagues across the HSE, government departments and within the NGO and community sector, in an advisory and supportive role, on activities or projects aligned with the Connecting for Life Strategy or on suicide and self-harm prevention and awareness.





The first report on episodes of self-harm recorded in Irish Prisons arising from the innovative Self-Harm Assessment and Data Analysis (SADA) Project, for 2017, was published in 2018. The SADA project was developed by staff in the Irish Prison Service (IPS), in collaboration with the National Office for Suicide Prevention and the National Suicide Research Foundation.

Pictured at the launch were Patricia Gilheaney (Inspector of Prisons), Minister Jim Daly and Michael Donnellan (Director General, Irish Prison Service).

photo: Photocall Ireland

Working in Partnership

The World Health Organisation (WHO) specifies strong partnership working as a core element of suicide prevention strategies at national, regional and local levels¹. Furthermore, the WHO cited Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020, in its 2018 publication, National Suicide Prevention Strategies – Progress, Indicators and Examples². This report aims to support countries in continuing the progress that is being made in preventing suicide and to inspire governments and policy-makers to establish or revise national suicide prevention strategies that are adapted to engage local communities.

In Ireland, firm partnership working remains the foundation of suicide prevention work. Suicide prevention is best achieved when individuals, families, health and community organisations, workplaces, government departments and communities work collaboratively to build a range of suicide prevention initiatives, services and supports.

As implementers of Connecting for Life, the NOSP actively coordinates, supports and endorses the suicide prevention work of many partners across the statutory, voluntary and non-statutory sector. The office provides guidance to over 20 HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) around the country, who are charged with developing local Connecting for Life action plans which reflect the national strategy.

In 2018, the NOSP provided specific Connecting for Life-related funding to 27 agencies, charities or non-governmental organisations, to deliver on work aligned with the goals and actions in Connecting for Life. Almost 60% of NOSP's expenditure is to these frontline services and initiatives.

¹ Preventing suicide: a global imperative. World Health Organization. (2014).

² National suicide prevention strategies: progress, examples and indicators. Geneva. World Health Organization. (2018).

Aware

LGBT
Ireland

GAA

Suicide or
Survive

Headline

SpunOut.ie

Turn2Me

Dublin
Simon
Community

National FRC
Mental Health
Promotion
Project

BeLonG To

Men's
Health Forum
Ireland

Irish College
of General
Practitioners

The National
Suicide
Research
Foundation

First
Fortnight

Pieta House

Childline

Samaritans

Union of
Students in
Ireland

Exchange
House

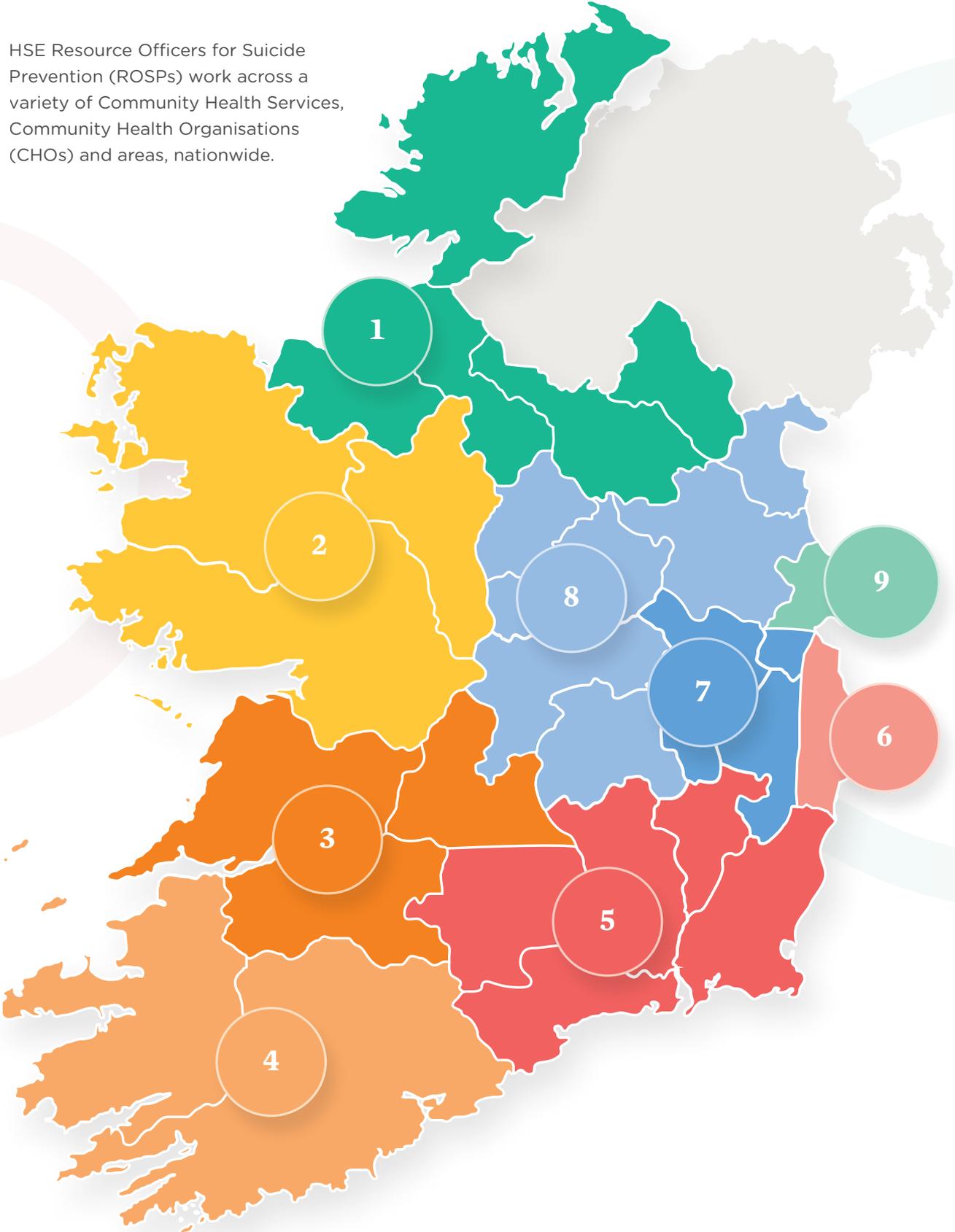
See Change

Transgender
Equality
Network
Ireland

Mojo Project

HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention

HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) work across a variety of Community Health Services, Community Health Organisations (CHOs) and areas, nationwide.



1. CHO (1)

Donegal

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Galway City and West/South County Galway

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For information or to register for any Suicide Prevention Training programmes in Galway/Mayo/Roscommon (safeTALK, ASIST, Understanding Self-Harm or STORM) please use the link:

www.bookwhen.com/srotraininggmr

3. Mid West Community Healthcare

Limerick

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4. Cork Kerry Community Healthcare

Cork

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For all training enquiries please email SP.enquiries@hse.ie or phone 028 40402

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5. South East Community Healthcare

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www.connectingforlifecarlow.ie / www.connectingforlifekilkenny.ie /
www.connectingforlifesouthtipperary.ie / www.connectingforlifewaterford.ie /
www.connectingforlifewexford.ie /

For all suicide prevention training enquiries in Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, Carlow and South Tipperary please email trainingsro@hse.ie

6. Community Healthcare East

Dublin South East and Dún Laoghaire

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7. Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare, West Wicklow

Kildare, West Wicklow

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section continued ➤

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8. Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare

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www.connectingforlifelongfordwestmeath.ie

Louth, Meath

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Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation,

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For information or to register for any Suicide Prevention Training programmes in Laois/Offaly/ Longford/Westmeath/Louth/Meath (safeTALK, ASIST or Understanding Self-Harm) please use the link: www.bookwhen.com/suicidepreventiontrainingmidlands

9. CHO Dublin North City and County

Dublin North City and County

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Section 2

Connecting for Life During 2018

Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of Connecting for Life

MONITORING

Monitoring refers to the routine tracking and reporting of priority information about the strategy - its inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The monitoring function of Connecting for Life's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system will use continuous processes of collecting and analysing data on specified indicators to provide key stakeholders with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress at any given time (and/or over time) relative to respective targets and outcomes.

The NOSP monitoring function will use a continuous process of collecting and analysing usable actionable data on specified indicators, to facilitate data driven decision making.

There are two key interrelated types of monitoring: implementation monitoring and results or outcomes monitoring. Implementation monitoring tracks the means and activities used to achieve a given outcome and outcome monitoring tracks the results or effect of the work.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is usually understood as the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of a specific initiative or programme within the strategy, or the strategy itself, to determine its merit or worth. The evaluation function in Connecting for Life is viewed as a continuously available mode of analysis that helps the NOSP programme managers and other key stakeholders gain a better understanding of all aspects of their work - from design through implementation and on to completion and subsequent consequences. Data from the monitoring systems ultimately feeds into an overall evaluation.

Connecting for Life Interim Strategy Review: an Independent Review of Implementation Progress by Strategy Leads*

In 2018, in line with best practice, the HSE NOSP requested the Connecting for Life Evaluation Advisory Group (EAG) to undertake an independent assessment of progress made by government departments and agencies under the strategy, to identify potential for improvements and to provide actionable, realistic, results-orientated recommendations to drive the work. More specifically, the review sought to;

- Provide an independent assessment of (top-down) strategic progress to date by examining implementation advancement across all 69 Connecting for Life actions
- Identify what is working well and where the challenges to implementation lie (i.e. what are the implementation enablers and barriers)
- Help set strategic priorities for the next two years to increase the likelihood of Connecting for Life achieving its intended outcomes and impact
- Identify long-ranging strategic goals and actions for Connecting for Life beyond 2020.

As part of the review process, the NOSP's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Team compiled seven Connecting for Life Progress Reports - one for each strategic goal. Included were summaries of progress to date for each action, informed by analyses of data obtained from the Implementation Monitoring Dashboards and interviews with key stakeholders.

The EAG assessed implementation progress towards the Connecting for Life strategic goals. For most of the actions, moderate to good progress was determined. While the Interim Strategy Review clearly shows that progress has been made in implementing the strategy, it recognises that there is still work to be done before the seven strategic goals and all their actions are fully achieved and its vision for an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide is realised and sustained. Consequently, the EAG recommend that the Department of Health extend the time frame and funding for Connecting for Life to 2024.

*
All publications available on www.connectingforlifeireland.ie

NOSP M&E Publications in 2018*

Connecting for Life Implementation Strategies and Structure (December 2018)

In July 2018, the M&E Team, as part of the evaluation of the implementation of Connecting for Life, set out to identify the evidence-informed implementation strategies used by the HSE (the lead agency with most strategic commitments) to drive the work, and to review national implementation structures.

To this end, all relevant stakeholders were invited to take part in a survey and share their reflections on their experiences to date. Findings showed that broad range of evidence-informed implementation strategies have been used at a national and local/area level including;

- Planning strategies to help stakeholders gather data, build buy-in, initiate leadership and develop the relationship necessary for successful implementation
- Educational strategies of various levels of intensity
- Restructuring strategies that facilitate implementation by altering staffing/ professional roles, physical structures and/or data systems
- Quality management strategies that focus on putting data systems and supports networks in place, to continually evaluate and enhance implementation of the strategy.

Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services: Findings of a Survey (August, 2018)

A key objective of Connecting for Life is the development and implementation of guidance for suicide prevention services governing service quality. In January 2018, the M&E Team conducted a survey with the 23 funded non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and projects involved in co-creating the Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for Suicide Prevention.

The survey sought to assess respondents' current understanding, perceptions towards, and readiness to engage with the implementation of the Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services and other Governance Frameworks. Findings from this survey revealed that the majority of partners recognised;

- The 'need for the BPG'
- Its 'fit' with organisational priorities and structures
- That 'organisational and leadership support' was available for the implementation of the guidance.

* All publications available on www.connectingforlifeireland.ie

Externally Contracted Evaluations

Review of the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland: Summary (May 2018)

The National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI) monitors the incidence of hospital presenting self-harm in the Republic of Ireland. Established in 2000 by the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), the NSHRI has had full coverage of all adult and paediatric hospitals in Ireland since 2006. It is the only national self-harm registry in the world and formed the basis of recent WHO guidance on best practice in establishing and maintaining self-harm registries.

In September 2017 the NOSP's M&E Team commissioned Professor David Gunnell and Jon Hallett (University of Bristol) to undertake a review of the NSHRI as part of Connecting for Life strategic objective "To improve access to timely and high quality data on suicide and self-harm". The work was carried out between December 2017 and April 2018.

The review had seven specific objectives all of which are addressed in the summary document. Key findings include that the NSHRI data and reports are valued by practitioners and policy makers throughout Ireland. Registry data is key to monitoring aspects of Connecting for Life in action. Furthermore, the NSHRI data has shone a light on the problem of hospital presenting self-harm in Ireland, leading to a number of national programmes, most notably the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for the assessment and management of patients presenting to the Emergency Department following Self-Harm and the National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) service.

23 recommendations are presented in the summary report by review objective and thematically. In addition, the recommendations that require immediate or short-term action within the next 12-18 months are highlighted.

Dissemination

Dr Gemma Cox presented on "Implementation Matters: Using data to drive implementation of a national Suicide Prevention Strategy Connecting for Life (CfL)" at the 17th European Symposium on Suicide & Suicidal Behaviour, in Ghent, Belgium (September 2018).

Dr Anita Munnely presented on "Using Monitoring and Evaluation to bridge the gap between science and practice" at the 9th European Society for Prevention Research Conference in Lisbon, Portugal (October 2018).

Strategy Coordination, Quality and Education

The Strategy Coordination, Quality and Education Team supports government departments and state agencies to implement their Connecting for Life actions - through stakeholder engagement, the development of implementation plans, working group coordination and project / programme management.

The Team is also responsible for;

- The development and implementation of quality standards at a national level
- Overseeing the implementation of the National Education and Training Plan for suicide prevention
- Collaboration with NGO partners who are funded for initiatives which align to Connecting for Life actions
- Working closely with HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention around the country to ensure that regional activities correspond to national goals and that national activities support local needs.

Education and Training

The HSE NOSP is the coordinating body of suicide prevention training programmes in Ireland. Through collaborative working both nationally and locally with a range of stakeholders and partners, the NOSP works to support community capacity to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour.

safeTALK is an internationally recognised half-day training programme that supports participants to recognise and engage persons who might be having thoughts of suicide, and to connect them with community resources. The programme stresses safety while challenging taboos that inhibit open talk about suicide.

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is a two-day skills based workshop that equips participants for an effective suicide intervention role. The emphasis is on first aid - helping a person at imminent risk to stay safe and seek further help.

In December 2018, it was estimated that approximately 12,930 individuals had taken part in one of the Connecting for Life-identified suicide prevention training programmes. safeTALK was the most frequently delivered training programme, completed by approximately 68% (n = 8,753) of participants. ASIST was the next most frequently delivered programme with 22% (n = 2,793) of participants completing this training. Almost 9% (n = 1,130) of participants completed Understanding Self-Harm training.

In partnership with the Department of Education safeTALK training was delivered across four Education Centres in 2018. The completion of safeTALK and ASIST training is a requirement of the BA in Applied Policing for all Garda Trainees in the Foundation Programme at Templemore Training College. In 2018, 1,249 Garda Trainees completed both programmes.



Suicide assessment and mitigation training

In 2017 the HSE NOSP and Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) carried out a study of 469 GPs which explored their experiences of patient suicide. The survey identified a need for enhanced training on assessment, developing a safety plan and referral guidelines. The HSE NOSP and ICGP then worked on a practice support and development programme to address some of the needs identified in the survey.

Connecting With People (delivered by 4 Mental Health Ltd) was contracted as the training partner for the initiative and the programme was to be implemented over a three year period through a train-the-trainer model. A Logic Model and Implementation Plan were developed for the roll out of the training.

In 2018, 17 GP trainers were recruited and trained by 4 Mental Health. They in turn delivered training to a total of 175 GPs. The initiative will be evaluated in 2019 and 2020.

NOSP also has a partnership with 4 Mental Health and the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland to train trainee psychiatrists in suicide assessment and mitigation. This aims to help participants to develop a fuller understanding of suicidal behaviour and the practical steps to take toward suicide mitigation. Participants also learn of the clinical value of empathy and how to challenge stigma and its role in suicide prevention.

Best Practice

Goal 5 of Connecting for Life aims to ensure safe and high-quality services for people vulnerable to suicide. A key action (5.1.1) under this goal is to 'develop quality standards for suicide prevention services provided by statutory and non-statutory organisations, and implement the standards through an appropriate structure'.

Developed from an evidence based set of guidance, the Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for Suicide Prevention Services, supported by a training programme and online self-assessment tool to support monitoring and evaluation, is key to achieving this goal.

A collaborative approach with partner non-governmental organisations (NGOs) continued in 2018. Engagement events were held with NGOs in February and with Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention in May. Five NGOs agreed to become learning sites and test the draft guidance and participated in a two-day training programme in April. The testing took place over May and June 2018. A process of collating all the learning and feedback took place towards refinement of the draft guidance. The Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services will be completed in 2019 and a phased approach to implementation will then take place with NGO partners.

Communications

Achieving the outcomes set out in Connecting for Life remains a complex undertaking. Effective communication - about the strategy, priorities, implementation plan, and specific roles within all of these - remains an essential ongoing enabler of success.

The Communications function in the NOSP, continues to proactively engage, inform and improve awareness of Connecting for Life developments and initiatives, for lead agencies, stakeholders and the general public in 2018. The team regularly circulates information across multiple channels including at www.connectingforlifeireland.ie, through publications, email newsletters and via [@NOSPIreland](https://twitter.com/NOSPIreland) on Twitter. In 2018, work continued to review and redevelop many public information leaflets and booklets on mental health and suicide, in line with current standards in Plain English and accessibility (available on www.healthpromotion.ie).

The Communications function in the NOSP also supports and collaborates on communications activities or campaigns delivered by other Connecting for Life lead agents, partner agencies or NGOs. Primarily, the team liaise with multiple partners on initiatives related to mental health campaigns, stigma-reduction activities and media reporting of suicide.

Two significant communications channels featured under goal 1 of Connecting for Life, are the HSE Little Things Campaign, and the website www.yourmentalhealth.ie. Both are led by the HSE Mental Health Operations team, but resourced and supported by the Communications function in the NOSP.

In 2018, the Little Things Campaign continued its proactive delivery of messaging and information on how to look after your mental health, through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) and other media placement. The campaign has become a core source of materials and messaging for HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs), partner agencies, stakeholders and community groups across the country. For example, in 2018 the Little Things Campaign and LGBTI-specific resources were promoted at various Pride events nationally. Campaign messaging was also developed specifically for farming communities, and circulated at the National Ploughing Championships.

A new iteration of the Little Things Campaign called Mind Monsters, was developed and introduced in 2018 by the HSE Mental Health Operations Team. This campaign aims to help adolescents and young adults through tough times, and give them support on how to look after their mental health. Focussing on things that are known to cause stress and anxiety for young people, the campaign highlights the benefits that getting enough sleep, taking regular study breaks, spending less time on devices and sharing a problem with someone you trust can have on your mental health. The Mind Monsters Campaign will continue its rollout in 2019.

During 2018, the website www.yourmentalhealth.ie also underwent significant change. Led by the HSE Mental Health Operations team, HSE Digital team and supported by the NOSP, the site was redeveloped in October. This was part of a wider initiative to improve and consolidate the large quantity of HSE websites and microsites, and improve user's experiences across all HSE digital platforms. This HSE Digital Roadmap Project, and the HSE Developing Digital Mental Health Supports in Ireland Project, both continue to steer the ongoing transformative development and improvement of www.yourmentalhealth.ie and related digital mental health initiatives.

 [@NOSPIreland](https://twitter.com/NOSPIreland)

Local Implementation of Connecting for Life

The implementation of any government policy is a complex process. The success of Connecting for Life depends heavily on a systematic and structured approach to implementation, ensuring coordination in the delivery of key actions across government departments and agencies.

The Connecting for Life Implementation Plan 2017-2020 sets out the planned milestones for each of the 69 actions and the actions and activities which will be carried out both collectively and by individual agencies over the next three years. It describes the strategic and operational agenda that will be needed to nationally drive the implementation of Connecting for Life. The plan also outlines the risks, strategic drivers, communications plan and monitoring and evaluation processes for the strategy.

Until 2020, the focus on the implementation of Connecting for Life will continue to be supported by tangible actions and a strong implementation and monitoring framework. This approach will be maintained and further strengthened for the period to 2020.

The national Connecting for Life Implementation Plan 2017-2020 is available at www.connectingforlifeireland.ie



Minister Daly, promoting the new branding of www.yourmentalhealth.ie, October 2018

“Implement consistent, multi-agency suicide prevention action plans to enhance communities’ capacity to respond to suicidal behaviours, emerging suicide clusters and murder suicide. The plans will be the responsibility of HSE Mental Health Division and aligned to the HSE Community Health Organisations structure, local economic and community plans and Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) county plans.”

Connecting for Life action 2.1.1

Local Implementation

The preparation and implementation of local suicide prevention action plans supports Connecting for Life action 2.1.1 and facilitates detailed implementation planning and timelines. Local planning also builds capacity at a community level to respond to suicide and encourages community engagement on the delivery of other Connecting for Life actions.

Key responsibility for local plans lies within the HSE Mental Health and Healthcare Areas structures and the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) posts nationwide. The role of the NOSP is to:

- Provide guidance and support to the ROSPs in establishing local project structures and ensure appropriate representation on planning and working groups.
- Quality assure the process, structure, and the content of local Connecting for Life action plans to ensure alignment with the national strategy and implementation plans.
- Systematically monitor and evaluate on an annual basis, the progress of implementation of the plans.
- Resource the development of the plans.
- Provide communication support on the design and launch of plans.

During 2018 an additional five Connecting for Life Local Action Plans were launched; all strongly aligned to the national strategy, articulating local implementation of national actions, and committing to actions that respond to particular local needs, strengths and challenges.

	Area	Launched
1	Donegal	2016
2	Wexford	2017
3	Dublin South East, Dun Laoghaire and East Wicklow	2017
4	Mid West	2017
5	South Tipperary	2017
6	Kerry	2017
7	Cavan, Monaghan	2017
8	Cork	2017
9	Waterford	2017
10	Sligo, Leitrim	2017
11	Carlow	2017
12	Galway, Mayo, Roscommon	2017
13	Kildare, West Wicklow	February 2018
14	Dublin South	February 2018
15	Dublin North City and County	May 2018
16	Kilkenny	October 2018
17	Midlands, Louth, Meath	October 2018

2018 Launches

Connecting for Life Kildare, West Wicklow and Connecting for Life Dublin South

In February, Connecting for Life Local Action Plans for the HSE Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow area, were launched simultaneously. The plans are grounded in an approach recognising the contributions that can be made across all sectors of these communities, with the aim of reducing suicide. The plans lay out very specific steps to deliver the actions that are relevant to the needs of people in these areas.

Speakers at the launch included Minister Catherine Byrne, Kevin Brady (HSE), John Meehan (HSE), Margaret Duggan (Area Lead for Mental Health Engagement) and David Walsh (Chief Officer Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow).



John Meehan, Minister Catherine Byrne and Kevin Brady at the launch of Connecting for Life Kildare, West Wicklow and Dublin South, February 2018



Mary Walshe, John Meehan, Angela Walsh and Sandra Taylor, at the launch of Connecting for Life DNCC, May 2018

Connecting for Life Dublin North City and County

The results of the Dublin North City and County Suicide Prevention Action Plan consultation were published in February 2018. The consultation process had proactively sought to capture the knowledge and experience of statutory, non-statutory and community stakeholders to inform the plan. During October and November 2017, four online surveys were live for members of the public, service providers, GPs and psychiatrists. 336 people completed the surveys, contributing over 3,000 points of information and recommendations. In addition 14 focus groups were held with key stakeholders, which included priority groups and frontline staff. The consultation results were utilised to inform and develop Connecting for Life Dublin North City and County Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2018 - 2020.

Minister Jim Daly launched Connecting for Life Dublin North City and County, in May. The launch (in DIT Grangegorman) was attended by a large number of those involved in the drafting of the plan, including community and voluntary groups from across Dublin North City and County.

The plans are grounded in an approach recognising the contributions that can be made across all sectors of these communities, with the aim of reducing suicide.

2018 Launches

Connecting for Life Kilkenny

The final Connecting for Life local suicide prevention action plan in South East Community Healthcare, Connecting for Life Kilkenny, was launched in October. Its development involved the people of Kilkenny city and county areas, and those who provide services to them, producing a roadmap to address suicide and self-harm in the area from now until 2020.

The five Connecting for Life Implementation Steering Groups (ISGs) were established and/or maintained in 2018 with each group, comprising all local stakeholders, meeting on a quarterly basis to ensure effective implementation of all local actions. There was significant collaboration with the NOSP and HSE Mental Health in relation to the national implementation of Connecting for Life.



Minister Jim Daly at the launch of Connecting for Life Kilkenny, October 2018

Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath

Connecting for Life Midlands Louth Meath Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2018-2020, was also launched in October. The development of the plan was supported by a public consultation process involving members of the public and staff from statutory, voluntary and community groups working in the area of mental health and suicide prevention. Minister Jim Daly identified the plan as “a roadmap to address suicide and self-harm and key to building community capacity to prevent and respond to suicide”. Pat Bennett (Chief Officer, Midlands Louth Meath CHO), stated that “a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach is needed and Connecting for Life Midlands Louth Meath sets out a vision for suicide prevention across all counties in the Community Health Organisation area, and outlines the actions that will be taken to achieve the vision.”

Representatives of Laois Comhairle na nÓg addressed the launch audience and spoke of their appreciation in being invited to give their input and contribution towards the development of the suicide prevention action plan. They outlined their hopes and aspirations for a reduction in the stigma within their communities by talking about mental health and having a more positive approach and willingness to talk, listen and connect in with the relevant supports and services when needed.



Siobhán McArdle, Eddie Ward, John Meehan, Sandra Okome and Josephine Rigney at the launch of Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth and Meath, October 2018

Section 3

Activities During 2018

Highlights from around the Country

During 2018, a network of over 20 Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) worked across nine HSE Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs), areas or counties. The ROSPs are key to building community capacity to respond to suicide and also lead the implementation of 17 Connecting for Life local action plans, in consultation with local statutory, non-statutory and community groups.

The following information provides a snapshot of activities and engagements that took place during the year.

Donegal

Connecting for Life Donegal Implementation Groups continued to meet to advance the community and services-based actions throughout 2018.

The 3rd annual Connecting for Life Donegal Conference took place in Letterkenny and was attended by over 100 participants. The aim of this annual conference was to engage with stakeholders, build connections and share good practice in suicide prevention. The theme of the 2018 Conference was - Forever Changed? - The Impact of Suicide on Families, Workplaces and Communities.

In alignment with goal 2 of Connecting for Life Donegal, the demand for safeTALK and ASIST within the county continued in 2018. Courses were delivered in partnership with statutory, community and voluntary or workplace organisations. safeTALK was provided to 16 staff in an ESB Hydro Electric station where workers had been impacted by a suicide death. Emerging from the course, a need was identified for a wider input on men's health which was subsequently organised by one of the ASIST trainers.

This was the 6th year delivering safeTALK for Irish Water Safety and the Irish Surfing Association to beach life guards and surf instructors. Donegal is the only county where these organisations can receive such training which is helped by the fact that one of the ASIST trainers is an active member of the Irish Water Safety Association. 19 coastguards also attended safeTALK in West Donegal.

safeTALK and ASIST are also delivered annually within Letterkenny Institute of Education, where a staff member is an ASIST trainer. safeTALK sessions are offered to 2nd year students from General and Psychiatric and ID Nursing and Social Care studies. The next year, the same students receive ASIST. A total of three safeTALK and three ASIST courses are delivered annually in this setting.

During the year, meetings were held to establish interest in a Taxi Watch initiative in Donegal. Led by Local Link and following a strong response from drivers, a launch event was planned for early 2019.

In alignment with goal 4 of Connecting for Life Donegal, the Mental Health Emergencies Poster (which was developed in 2017 in response to feedback from the public that they did not know who to turn to in a mental health crisis) was re-designed to include the statement 'take a photo'. The poster has now been extensively distributed to health and community settings.

In alignment with goal 5 of the strategy, a series of advanced suicide risk and prevention sessions were delivered to individuals and groups of staff in the acute psychiatric unit. This included sessions for nurses, NCHDs and Consultant Psychiatrists, delivered by Dr Colette Corry (NSRF). Further augmented training in suicide prevention was delivered to a group of trainee GPs which is now an integral part of their training.

Cavan and Monaghan

In 2018, considerable activity in Cavan and Monaghan surrounded the annual Green Ribbon Campaign, World Mental Health Week and World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD).

For example, in recognition of WSPD 2018, a lunchtime event in Clones was aimed particularly at people who may be going through tough times, their family members and carers. Organised by the ROSP for Cavan and Monaghan, the event was also open to members of the public and professionals working in the area.

To mark World Mental Health Day (October), a full programme of events was developed in Cavan, supported by Healthy Ireland at Your Library, Connecting for Life Cavan Monaghan and the Healthy Cavan initiative.

Senior Clinical Psychologist Ryan O'Neill spoke on coping with stress and building resilience, at a dedicated event in Johnston Central Library. Lorraine Kirwan delivered a moving personal narrative, describing her own journey and the supports she found beneficial in improving her mental health.

Present was Cathaoirleach Madeleine Argue who noted that the focus of World Mental Health Day was on young people. She said, "We are reminded to ask people to look out for each other and the young people in their lives, and to be that one good adult, so that young people know they have someone to talk to in times of difficulty. Let us try to work together in home, education and community settings to build resilience in our young people. The message for today, World Mental Health Day, is to let people know that help is out there and that there are many services available."

In September, a large crowd gathered in the Íontas Theatre, Castleblayney to see Magpies on the Pylon - a play by Michael Collins. The play explored the theme of suicide and its impact on a family. The performance was funded by Monaghan Integrated Development, through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and by Cavan Monaghan Connecting for Life.

In addition to the range of events held during 2018, other actions were implemented to support communities in accessing help and knowing where to turn for support in Cavan and Monaghan. For example, the development of a convenient wallet card listing contact details for a range of local and national support services.

Suicide awareness and understanding self-harm training delivery continued in 2018, with 33 programmes delivered to 584 participants during the year. Furthermore, Stress Control training was introduced to Cavan Monaghan with a successful train-the-trainer course (facilitated by Dr Jim White) completed in November. This resulted in 30 HSE staff and additional local community and statutory agencies, trained as trainers, ready to deliver training from January 2019.

Sligo and Leitrim

A total of 1,089 people availed of training under Connecting for Life Sligo and Leitrim in 2018. This included 23 training initiatives attended by 487 people and 22 mental health training initiatives attended by 602 people.

A four-day M-PACT Training for Trainers Programme was delivered to 10 participants in Sligo and Leitrim following targeted recruitment for this programme. These trained facilitators will deliver the evidence-based Family Skills Programme in this region, from 2019 onward.

The Family Resource Centre Code of Practice for Suicide Prevention Training took place in Sligo in 2018. Critical Incident Training for schools also took place, with attendance from 12 schools. All schools offered to consult with NEPS Psychologists, to review their Critical Incident Plans. Six Friends Resilience Programmes were delivered to 175 teachers including three whole school events and three workshops, with representation from various schools.

The Change Your Mind one-day Mental Health Promotion event took place in March, and was attended by over 600 people. Later, in May, and in support of the annual Green Ribbon Campaign, 3,000 ribbons were distributed across Sligo and Leitrim. A wide range of community events with priority groups took place to promote mental health messaging and yourmentalhealth.ie. Furthermore, Little Things presentations were delivered and materials disseminated to a variety of organisations and community groups in Sligo and Leitrim throughout the year.

A range of Travellers Mental Health Events were delivered to members of the local travelling community and support groups, which were aimed at improving understanding of mental health, increasing awareness of local supports and services that are available and the importance of building self-care into daily routines.

Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

Implementation of Connecting for Life, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

A number of structures and supports have been established to support the implementation of Connecting for Life, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon 2018-2020 including: a multi-agency Implementation Steering Committee chaired by the HSE Head of Service, Mental Health; a HSE Working Group also chaired by the Head of Service, Mental Health; and an Engagement forum where all those involved in the area of suicide prevention can participate and/or attend educational events directly related to Connecting for Life actions. Under the guidance and support of the HSE Project Management Office, systems have been put in place to ensure that delivery of actions set out in Connecting for Life are being captured, monitored and reported three times per year.

Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service

Suicide Bereavement Liaison Services are being provided in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, with funding from the HSE NOSP, by Pieta House Galway, the Family Centre, Castlebar, Co Mayo and Vita House/Boyle Family Resource Centre, Roscommon, respectively. In 2018 the Western Alliance of Agencies Providing Suicide Bereavement Support Services developed a new leaflet to promote suicide bereavement support services in Community Healthcare West.

Training

In 2018, 48 training events were held in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, comprising of safeTALK, ASIST, Understanding Self-harm and STORM programmes. Over 860 participants attended these programmes during the year.

Eden Programme

A third Eden Programme was held in Galway City and Castlebar and the programme was delivered for the first time in Roscommon Town. The Eden Programme is a 26-week psycho-education programme for those over 18 years of age who have attempted or contemplated suicide. It is run by the HSE National Counselling Service in Community Healthcare West, in partnership with Suicide or Survive (SOS) and with funding provided by the HSE NOSP. The Eden Programme team was invited by the Health Service Excellence Awards Committee to showcase the programme at a networking and learning dissemination event in May, in Sligo IT. Later in the year, the Inaugural Community Healthcare West Staff Recognition Awards were held in October. The Eden Programme was selected as a winner in the Innovative Project category, which was one of three, namely, Service Improvement, Exceptional Service and Innovative Project.

Planet Youth

In February 2018, the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force facilitated an event introducing the Planet Youth drug prevention programme to key stakeholders in the region. The Planet Youth model originated in Iceland and has been rolled out in communities in 18 countries to date. It is an evidence-based approach to adolescent substance use, comprising three broad elements: collection of data from young people through a school-based questionnaire; planning and delivering prevention responses; and measuring the impact of these interventions.

As a first step, in October 2018, a survey was conducted on behalf of the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force by Planet Youth in 89 post-primary schools in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. A total of 4,480 participants took part, which comprised 80% of 15-16 years olds in the region. The findings are currently being analysed.

Galway Safe App

The Galway Safe App aims to reduce water tragedies in Galway City. It was developed by the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force, with the support of TUSLA, the HSE and Galway City Council. It uses GPS technology to send an alert to a person who enters into designated areas around the water edge (in the Spanish Arch area of Galway City between the hours of midnight and 6am) to determine their well-being. It also offers the user the opportunity to speak to one of their designated 'In Case of Emergency' (ICE) numbers or alternatively the Samaritans and/or the emergency services. Galway Safe App is currently being widely promoted and it can be downloaded from the Google Play Store.

NUIG IT Project

The National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) IT Group is a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency group comprising NUIG and HSE staff, which formed in 2016. With funding support from the HSE NOSP, the group is currently developing an app which will be used as an adjunct to therapy for those availing of supports from a mental health professional. The core function is to provide an interactive safety plan to users experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviours. A diary component for tracking a users mood and sleep patterns is also included. In addition, the app has the facility to record Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) worksheets in between sessions, thus allowing real-time, accurate data to be inputted and stored in a non-paper-based format. Further development of the app will continue in 2019. The NUIG IT Group is also undertaking a review and meta-analysis of mobile health technology interventions for suicide prevention and a review of current evidence on the use of Google trend data in the identification of individuals at risk of suicide.

Mid West

A significant milestone for the Mid West was celebrated in November with the conference entitled *Are We Connected?* This marked the mid-way point of *Connecting for Life Mid West, Action Plan for Suicide Prevention 2017-2020*. The aim of the conference was to take a sounding of the level of connectedness across the Mid West and to renew commitments to collective efforts to reduce suicide and self-harm in the Mid West (Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary).

The very active *Connecting for Life Mid West Implementation Group* (of over 50 members) contributed to the conference, and planning was undertaken by *Connecting for Life Mid West Communications and Partnership Subgroup*, under the stewardship of the subgroup chair Darina Greene (Clare Local Development Company). The conference event was operationally supported by over 30 Ambassadors drawn from the *Connecting for Life Mid West* partners.

Speakers at the conference (in Thomond Park) included Chief Officer Bernard Gloster (HSE Mid West Community Health Care), John Meehan (Head of NOSP), Mark Sparling (Lead for Mental Health Services, HSE MW) and Mary Kennedy (Resource Office for Suicide Prevention). The keynote address from Dr Sharon Lambert (UCC) focused on Trauma Informed Care.



Members of the *Connecting for Life Mid West Communications and Partnership Subgroup*, at the “*Are We Connected?*” Conference in Thomond Park, November 2018

All conference attendees were invited to remain connected throughout the day by using an audience interaction tool, Slido. Six interactive workshops were linked to the goals of *Connecting for life Mid West* and included;

- *Connecting with Our Positive Selves* (Mental Health Ireland)
- *The WRAP Connection* (PAUL Partnership)
- *Connecting with Services and Supports in the Mid West* (Dr Sharon Lambert)
- *Connected, the Youth Voice: the power of youth participation* (Jigsaw Limerick)
- *The Story Exchange: New ways to connect* (Narrative 4)
- *Connecting with Hope: Recovery Education, Engagement & Empowerment* (ARIES and HSE Mental Health Engagement).

Other engagements and activities during 2018 included;

- The proactive support of Limerick, Ennis and Thurles Mental Health Weeks in October
- The launch of *Healthy Tipperary* in partnership with the HSE South East
- The launch of the *Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan for the Mid West Community Healthcare*
- The dissemination of over 5,000 Green Ribbons across the Mid West as part of the annual *Green Ribbon Campaign*.

Cork and Kerry

Across Cork Kerry Community Healthcare in 2018, over 2,400 people attended training programmes such as safeTALK, ASIST, Understanding Self-harm and STORM – supporting the actions outlined in local Connecting for Life Suicide Prevention Action Plans.

The Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory (SSHO)

The SSHO was developed by the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) and School of Public Health, University College Cork (UCC), and is funded by the Health Research Board, Ireland. The SSHO builds on the Suicide Support and Information System and is an innovative real-time surveillance system and is the first system of its kind in Europe. It collates minimal data relating to suspected suicide cases within Cork City and County on a fortnightly basis. The establishment of the SSHO is in alignment with goal 7 of Connecting for Life.

The SSHO will improve early identification of emerging suicide and self-harm clusters, accessing multiple sources of information using advanced techniques. The need for up-to-date information on suicide and self-harm cases has been underlined by an increasing development of misinformation disseminated in the media, reported by international research to cause harmful effects. The SSHO is currently being implemented in collaboration with the Coroners of Cork City and County, and representatives of regional health and community services, before wider implementation.

Highlights and activities

All work streams in Cork are focused on a number of key targets across all Implementation Groups. During the year, closer links were developed with public and local representatives through City and County Councils. Some highlights of other activities and engagements related to Connecting for Life in Cork during the year, include;

- The promotion of Little Things at Vitality Cobh, involving over 30 service providers and 1,800 participants.

- The ongoing integration of Little Things into project work from Mallow, Fermoy and Youghal Community Health Projects.
- Distribution of 10,000 Green Ribbons during Green Ribbon month (May). In 2018, local councils and all networks with the support of the Connecting for Life Steering Group and HSE Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Senior Management, ensured high level support of the campaign. UCC, Cork City Football Club, community networks, front line staff, private and public companies, local representatives, schools and youth services all took part in Green Ribbon activities during the month.
- An Evening of Hope and Healing was held at Hollyhill Library on World Suicide Prevention Day. This featured The High Hopes Choir, Shine a Light, HSE Suicide Resource Officers, local youth services and youth groups. This was Shine a Light's way to bring community support services together to mark an important day for the community as a whole. The focus was to create a supportive space for people.
- In September, the NSRF hosted a lunch time seminar - the Role of the Media in Suicide Prevention, Suicide Clustering and Contagion, in conjunction with the School of Public Health, UCC. The seminar highlighted both the positive and negative impact the media can have on suicidal behaviour and illustrated how important it is to work together (with the media) to prevent suicide, the theme of World Suicide Prevention Day 2018.
- Olympic race-walker Rob Heffernan was the key-note speaker at a seminar on men's mental health and wellbeing in Cork as part of events which marked World Mental Health Day (October), hosted by Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Mental Health Services, and partners. He spoke on ways of promoting a healthy lifestyle, and dealing with setbacks. The seminar also heard from Noel Dunne of Men's Sheds, and Daniel Flynn, Principal Psychology Manager, Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare who spoke on the health concerns for men.

Highlights and activities *(continued)*

- Stronger links were developed with NEPS teams in supporting responses to schools and communities.
- Promotional work with youth services across all areas in the city and county, to highlight crisis numbers and message of hope and support.
- The development of a new Youth Mental Health Resource booklet.
- The delivery of presentations to Direct Provision centre staff, highlighting levels of support in all communities.

The progression and development of all actions in Connecting for Life Cork, are now being tracked by the Project Vision system.

Improving Health and Wellbeing through Social Prescribing in Listowel, Co Kerry

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare offered those working in the community and health sector an opportunity to learn more about social prescribing at a seminar in October, in Listowel. Key messages that emerged from the seminar were;

- There is clear evidence of the close relationships between physical health, mental wellbeing and social interaction.
- Social prescribing expands the range of options available to health professionals and service users in order to address needs that cannot be met by a health service response alone.
- Promoting social connectedness across the life course is already an integral part of the Family Resource Centre programme making social prescribing a natural fit.
- It was highlighted that more widely available social prescribing programmes potentially could alleviate some of the pressure on primary and secondary health services, while offering a service to people who would benefit from non-medical supports in order to maintain or regain mental health and wellbeing.

Social Prescribing is a pilot project currently in place in Listowel and is funded by Healthy Ireland through Pobal. Social Prescribing is a support service that links people with non-medical sources of support in their community. It includes for example, arts, learning and up- skilling, exercise, gardening, self-help materials and volunteering. There are also opportunities for individuals to join groups with like-minded people or to take part in health programmes that promote general wellbeing. Social Prescribing enables health care professionals and community and voluntary organisations to refer people to a range of community, non-clinical services to support health and wellbeing.

Kerry Health and Wellbeing Week

Kerry Health and Wellbeing Week was a collaborative project between Kerry County Council, Healthy Kerry, and HSE Cork Kerry Community Healthcare in line with Connecting for Life Kerry. A dedicated committee of local support services and organisations planned a series of events to celebrate World Mental Health Day.

The week featured 50 free events and workshops with over 900 people engaging in the activities. For example - Add Your Friends To Tea events at FRCs in the county; Feet On The Street from Samaritans; Do Good Feel Good events across Tralee, Dingle, Kenmare and Listowel; PSYCHED Wellbeing in the Workplace workshop in Tralee; and other activities from Aware and Macra na Feirme.

The purpose of the week was to promote the Five Ways to Wellbeing and to ensure people are aware of the many mental health supports and services that are available in the county. A mental health support service leaflet was developed and is now available in all local health centres and libraries across Kerry.

Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary

1,491 people participated in training programmes in South East Community Healthcare (SECH) in 2018, including safeTALK, ASIST and Understanding Self-harm. The Suicide Resource Office coordinated the delivery of 56 safeTALK trainings, 10 ASIST programmes and six Understanding Self-harm trainings. The office was the coordinating site for the delivery of safeTALK in the Gardai and Tusla in the South East and supported Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service and Carlow County Development Partnership to deliver safeTALK in their organisations using a cascade approach.

Significant collaboration was maintained with Waterford Institute of Technology where all three aforementioned programmes form part of the curriculum for students studying Mental Health Nursing. safeTALK training was also delivered to a cohort of General Nursing students in 2018 and a plan was developed to incorporate the training into a new Youth and Community undergraduate programme in the Institute of Technology in Carlow. Information sessions and presentations on suicide and self-harm prevention as well as Little Things workshops were delivered to a broad range of community groups on a regular basis in 2018. A support day was facilitated for all Trainers delivering suicide and self-harm prevention training in SECH. The Suicide Resource Office made a significant contribution to the NOSP Monitoring and Evaluation Team throughout the year by incorporating evaluation mechanisms into a number of trainings delivered.

The Bereavement Counselling Service for Traumatic Deaths

There were 191 referrals to this service in 2018 from the five counties in the South East and approximately 1,146 counselling hours were provided by 16 Counsellors - to individuals who were bereaved following the death of a loved one by suicide, homicide, road traffic accident, industrial, domestic and agricultural accidents or drowning. 131 people (72%) referred were bereaved through suicide and 140 referrals were female. This service is managed and coordinated by the Regional Suicide Resource Office. The monthly Suicide Bereavement Support Group continued to operate in Waterford in 2018. The office provided support to the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service (SBLs) across the five counties.

Postvention

The Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) provided postvention support to nine organisations in 2018 and worked in collaboration with a number of agencies including the GAA, NEPS, the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officer and community and voluntary sector groups. The ROSP also became part of the HSE Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) for SECH. The Annual Bereavement Memorial Ceremony was held in Waterford in December 2018.

The Suicide Resource Office also;

- Co-facilitated the Family Resource Centre Code of Practice for Suicide Prevention training, to staff from local Family Resource Centres in collaboration with the national FRC Project in 2018.
- Was actively involved in the planning and organisation of two Traveller specific mental health conferences in 2018.
- Has been instrumental in the successful roll out of the Social Prescribing Service in Waterford and contributed to the development of the Healthy Ireland local plans in four of the five counties in SECH.
- Continued the promotion of the Little Things Campaign and the Green Ribbon Campaign throughout the year and support was provided to a multitude of stakeholders in the five counties for World Suicide Prevention Day and International Mental Health Week.
- Continues to work closely with all departments in HSE SECH and sits on the area Quality and Safety Executive Committee.

Dublin South East, Dublin South and Wicklow

During 2018, over 600 people attended training programmes such as safeTALK, ASIST, and Understanding Self-harm in Dublin South East, Dublin South and Wicklow.

Further to this, an additional 70 people participated in Little Things in Practice Workshops in the area. These interagency workshops were developed by the HSE ROSPs and Health Promotion Officers, in collaboration with Quality Matters. The workshops were interactive and action-focused where participants identified practical ways to raise awareness and support behaviour change through campaign messages. The expected outcome was that participants champion and support on-going implementation in their setting to meet the needs of the groups and services they represent.

The Little Things Campaign aims to;

- Raise awareness about how common stresses and difficulties are
- Share some simple coping strategies
- Raise awareness about supports available and how to access them.

Some outcomes of the Little Things in Practice Workshops;

- The workshops helped participants to understand the Little Things campaign on a practical level
- Participants from various organisations and settings shared ideas on creative ways to raise awareness and support behaviour change in line with the Little Things
- Participants developed an action plan for promoting the Little Things in their community / with their service users / with their team.

Social Prescribing

Social Prescribing refers to the process whereby people access non-medical interventions; it is a mechanism for linking individuals with non-medical sources of support within the community to improve their health and wellbeing.

In 2018, funding for three Social Prescribing sites in Community Healthcare East was secured by Wicklow Partnership, Bray Area Partnership and Southside Partnership DLR in collaboration with the HSE and other agencies. Referrals to both Wicklow sites are growing steadily and referrals to the Southside partnership site are due to commence shortly.

Dublin South

During 2018, almost 2,000 participants availed of suicide and self-harm training in Dublin South, including safeTALK, ASIST and Understanding Self-harm. Participants came from local communities, private businesses, education settings, government agencies, statutory and community bodies.

Of particular note was the development of a new video, by and for the community in Jobstown, Tallaght. The video described the benefits of safeTALK training and featured key people trained in the community, who are “safe to talk to”.

The areas inter-agency Education and Training Group (comprising of community, school and third level education representatives) developed a detailed work plan for the lifespan of Connecting for Life Dublin South, and Connecting for Life Kildare West Wicklow. During the year, two new Suicide Bereavement training programmes were piloted in the area.

The HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) successfully promoted the annual Green Ribbon Campaign in collaboration with Tallaght Hospital. This involved the dissemination of Green Ribbons, information on services, and appropriate pathways to care. Professor Brendan Kelly provided a related talk in Tallaght Library on Mental Health in Older Age, and Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership held a month-long series of events to promote mental health in the area. A wide range of activities and events related to Little Things, World Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day, were supported by the HSE ROSP.

A wide range of inter-agency mental health forums related to suicide prevention, responses and bereavement support are now in place in the Dublin South area. Specifically, the HSE ROSP continued to work actively to provide appropriate responses to death by suspected suicide across the area. Through timely collection of data, services are able to identify key trends and emerging needs and tailor collaborative responses to meet them. For example, Ballyfermot Star developed

a programme for women who had similar presenting issues as some women who died in 2017.

Other points of note in Dublin South;

- The HSE in Dublin South and the HSE ROSP continue to work closely with Pieta House, to improve pathways to care across substance misuse and family supports. In 2018, Pieta House moved to a new headquarters in Tallaght and now has 3 services in Dublin South – Lucan, Ballyfermot and Tallaght.
- Clondalkin Young Minds was established. This was to meet the needs of young people who fall between the primary and tertiary levels of mental health care. St Patricks Mental Health Services provide a Clinical Nurse Specialist for this project.
- Co-funding arrangements have been established (from HSE Mental Health, Tusla and South Dublin County Council) to develop a response to build resilience in disadvantaged areas.
- Social Prescribing Projects are in place now in Dublin 8 and in Tallaght.
- Funding was also secured to scope the development of a Social Prescribing Project specifically for under 18s, in Ballyfermot.
- The Dublin 12 Mental Health Forum, Gateway and Threshold Training Network, continue to provide collaborative support and progression, through training, for people with long-term mental health issues.
- Mojo and Heads Up is operational across Kildare, Tallaght, Dublin 8, Dublin 10 and Dublin 12.

Laois and Offaly

Over 700 people participated in suicide prevention training programmes during 2018 in Laois and Offaly. With a view to targeting members of and those working with vulnerable groups, from a total of 456 participants, the safeTALK programme was specifically delivered to 38 men within the Midlands and Portlaoise Prisons, 21 members of Portlaoise Action for Homeless, 10 Mojo men, 18 members of the Traveller Community and 26 members of GAA Clubs. The ESB also trained 42 of their Employee Assistance Programme and Mind Your Buddy staff and the Department of Social Protection trained 22 of their Welfare Officers. 39 Teachers and SNA's attended two Understanding Self-harm workshops. 120 people attended ASIST training and 35 people attended ASIST Refresher workshops.

55 men graduated from the 12-week Mojo Offaly programme during 2018. The programme is aimed at men who are affected by unemployment and/or mental health issues. The men are encouraged and motivated to make changes to their lives. Evaluations and feedback advise that almost all men reported a decrease in, or elimination of risk of harm to self or others. 83% reduced their level of depression and anxiety, 4 out of 5 men reported an increase in self-esteem. There was between 70% and 76% progression onto training and education and 86% and 90% retention rates on the programme.

As part of Laois CONNECTS Mental Health Awareness Week, Laois GAA and the HSE hosted 'Sporting the Little Things' - an awareness evening to promote positive health and well-being in the sporting and wider community. A number of sports people shared their experience of adversities which they had faced in their lives and how they overcame them including Mark Keane, Limerick Hurler, Pdraig Bannon, O'Dempsey's Laois and Cathal McCarron, Tyrone Footballer. The partnership with the GAA in relation to the adaption of the Little Things nine key messages and how Clubs can incorporate and utilise the campaign, was outlined. All Clubs received a Wellness Board and a pack of the Little Things messages.

The Primary Healthcare workers within the Laois Traveller Action group were supported to develop a calendar promoting physical and mental health messages for each month of the year. The Little Things messages were outlined on three months of the year along with a list of the various relevant supports and services that are available locally, regionally and nationally.

Examples of further positive mental health events organised in collaboration with others during 2018;

- Senator Frances Black and Fiona O'Loughlin TD participated in an event in Portarlington in October promoting the Little Things messages.
- The annual Green Ribbon Campaign was the focus of the #TullamoreGoesGreen social media initiative in May. Over 10,000 ribbons were distributed to the general public, businesses and workplaces in Tullamore and Offaly with the aim of promoting and encouraging open conversation about mental health and challenging any associated stigma with regard to seeking support when it is needed.
- During June, the Offaly Minding Our Mental Health Group were supported in the organisation of two experiential photography workshops - Using Nature to Nurture Mental Health - during which participants were encouraged to embrace nature and gain an understanding of its natural benefits for the mind and body through the camera lens. A successful exhibition of the participant's photographs took place in September in the Tullamore Library.
- During Mental Health Awareness Week, the film Call me Crazy, which featured five individual stories illustrating the impact and stigma of mental illness and the journey to recovery, was shown in Tullamore. Over 400 people attended and it was followed by a panel discussion with representatives from HSE Mental Health Services, Shine, Jigsaw Offaly, a See Change Ambassador and a person with lived experience.

Longford and Westmeath

To increase suicide prevention knowledge, understanding and skills of communities in Longford and Westmeath, a range of suicide prevention programmes, workshops and seminars including safeTALK, ASIST and Understanding Self-harm were provided by the HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention (ROSP). In 2018 a total number of 891 people participated in 60 workshops across the counties.

Regular and ongoing support was given to the ASIST Network in Longford/Westmeath (those who have completed the ASIST programme). In 2018, to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health services, an information seminar on mental health services was provided for 16 ASIST network members. This included presentations by the HSE ROSP, the Assistant Director of Mental Health Nursing, the regional manager of CAMHS/YAMHS and the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officer.

A very successful partnership aimed at increasing the knowledge, understanding and skills specifically for Westmeath Fire Fighters was developed and implemented by the HSE ROSP and County Westmeath Fire Service. This involved the provision of four safeTALK programmes and four Understanding Self-harm seminars to 50 fire fighters across four centres in Athlone, Mullingar, Castlepollard and Kilbeggan.

As part of ongoing support to the Family Resource Centres (FRCs) in the Midlands, the HSE ROSP in partnership with the National FRC Mental Health Promotion Project, delivered the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice Workshop to key FRC staff.

A further partnership with the Child and Family Support Networks in Longford/Westmeath resulted in the provision of two training seminars held in Mullingar and Athlone to increase the knowledge, understanding and skills of network members around suicide prevention.

County Longford GAA

The HSE ROSP and Longford GAA County Board worked in partnership in the development of a Critical Incident Policy, aimed at supporting the County Board and GAA clubs in County Longford. This involved the development and ratification by the County Board of the Critical Incident Policy and the holding of a training and awareness evening for GAA clubs around the county to better equip them to develop their club specific Critical Incident Policy. The partnership also included the provision of a safeTALK programme for 16 GAA Health and Wellbeing Officers and the delivery of a suicide awareness presentation to delegates at the County Longford GAA convention. This highlighted the Critical Incident Policy and the need for this to be implemented across the county.

Youth Mental Health

To support youth mental health and wellbeing, the HSE ROSP provided support to County Longford Youth Service in relation to the marking of World Mental Health Day and to support the work of the Top Class, Alternative Education Programme. This programme engages a group of young men who are for a variety of reasons, experiencing difficulties in attending main stream education. The project aims to build resilience, confidence, and assertiveness and to increase their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

The ROSP also supported the work of the Aisling Children's Arts Festival emphasising health and wellbeing in the provision of a range of art related activities to young people across all geographic and social backgrounds in County Longford.

Louth and Meath

One of the core actions in Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth Meath, is building capacity and empowering communities to prevent suicide by providing suicide prevention training workshops. In 2018, 53 suicide prevention training workshops took place, which were attended by 828 people.

- 25 of these workshops were organised in collaboration with statutory, community and voluntary organisations.
- 11 of these collaborations were with GAA clubs in Louth and Meath.
- Others were developed in collaboration with post primary secondary schools, Dundalk Institute of Technology (Faculty of Psychiatric Nursing and School of Social works), Dundalk Simon, National Learning Network, Louth Community Employment Scheme and the Women's Refuge.

Almost 50% of these workshops were organised collaboratively demonstrating the benefit of a partnership approach locally.

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day, a memorial tree planting took place at St Helena's Park in Dundalk and St Dominic's Park in Drogheda. This was the 1st annual memorial tree planting in Dundalk and Drogheda and was organised in collaboration with Louth County Council and the Tree Council Ireland. In Navan candles were lit at a seminar in collaboration with Solace Bereavement Support, to remember family members and friends who had passed away by suicide.

During Mental Health Awareness Week (October), a number of events were held, targeting a variety of audiences. These events were supported by the distribution of Little Things promotional materials (posters, postcards, t-shirts, bookmarks, stickers) and information on mental health services and supports available. Of note was the annual art exhibition held in the County Museum in Dundalk which is organised in collaboration with Dundalk Mental Health Forum. The exhibition included 45 art pieces produced by service

users of The Birches Alzheimer's Day Centre Dundalk, Armagh Diocesan Pastoral Centre, local schools, HSE Mental Health Service Users and the general public. The exhibition was seen by over 400 people. The purpose of this is to highlight the role of art in mental health and recovery.

Another notable event was organised by the youth committee of MAD Youth Theatre, Dundalk, marking World Mental Health Day. The committee decided it was important to step out into the community through music and movement, handing out words of encouragement to members of the public. A worry bucket was on display which gave members of the public an opportunity to speak about things that were on their mind at the time, encouraging dialogue between the young people and the members of the public. This further highlights to the use of creative art to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

In collaboration with Meath Partnership, a presentation on suicide and its prevention was made at the Meath Men's Sheds Network meeting with further plans to collaborate with all Men's Sheds in Meath to organise safeTALK workshops for this priority group. This was attended by 30 men from 10 Men's Sheds in County Meath.

Dublin North City and County

During 2018, 1,066 participants received suicide prevention training in Dublin North City and County. This consisted of safeTALK, ASIST and Understanding Self-harm programmes. Of particular note, was the delivery of Understanding Self-harm training to the Deaf Community Staff working in North Dublin services, supported by the HSE NOSP and coordinated by the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) in North Dublin. This programme is one of a suite of programmes available to both the general public and frontline workers, provided through HSE Mental Health Services across Dublin North City and County.

Alongside local training partners (the Oasis Centre), training was also provided to homeless agencies, Gardaí, the Coastguard, Emergency Services, Addiction Projects, across the education sector, and within community and statutory services to increase the capacity across North Dublin to reduce suicidal distress.

After a considerable planning process, the implementation of Connecting for Life, Dublin North City and County (launched in May 2018) commenced with the first cross sectoral multi-agency Implementation Steering Group meeting in November, chaired by Angela Walsh, Head of Mental Health. Work commenced to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach to effect and evidence-based service provision.

This steering group will have oversight of four work stream groups driving the implementation across North Dublin. These work streams will progress the actions in the plan through the statutory and community agencies within their membership, coordinated by the ROSP. The work stream groups are aligned with the goals within the suicide prevention action plan, and will work collaboratively to implement the strategy;

- Communications Work Stream - Connecting for Life, Goal 1
- Interagency Protocols Work Stream - Connecting for Life, Goal 2
- Psychotherapeutic Supports Work Stream - Connecting for Life, Goal 4
- Excellence in Care Work Stream - Connecting for Life, Goal 5

Activities of Partner Agencies

Over 28 charities and NGOs receive funding from the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention, to deliver on work which is aligned with the goals and actions in Connecting for Life. Almost 60% of the NOSP's budget is allocated to these frontline services. The following are some highlights from 2018.

Aware

Aware undertakes to create a society where people affected by stress, depression, bipolar disorder and mood related conditions are understood, supported, free from stigma, and are encouraged to access appropriate therapies.

The three pillars of Aware's work are information, education and support. The organisation provides a range of services including group meetings offering support and information, a telephone and email support service, and a number of programmes based on principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

During 2018, funding from the NOSP contributed towards the delivery of 120 Life Skills Programmes. Based on the principles of CBT, these programmes are designed to help people learn more about how we think and how this can influence our actions in helpful or unhelpful ways. It is delivered over the course of six weeks in 90 minute evening sessions.

This Programme has been independently evaluated by Aware. The evaluation showed a statistically significant improvement in participants' self-reported levels of anxiety and depression after completing the Programme.

In 2018, Aware delivered the Life Skills Programme in 26 counties. 2,965 people registered for the Programme and over 2,500 attended on night one, with a retention rate of over 63% for the duration of the Programme.

During the year, a pilot Life Skills Programme was delivered to the Travelling Community with the Travellers of North Cork. Further Programmes were then delivered to the Southern Travellers Health Network in Mallow and the Galway Traveller Movement. A Programme was also provided specifically for Castlerea Prison, County Roscommon.

“I have become optimistic, calm, mentally strong and confident. I have developed a positive approach towards life”

“I think this programme has changed my life and made me understand a lot more about myself and how to deal with things in a better way”

“It has made me value my mental health more and put it on equal par to my physical health”

Feedback from participants in the Aware Life Skills Programme

 www.aware.ie

BeLonG To Youth Services

BeLonG To Youth Services is a national organisation supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland, since 2003. BeLonG To work with young LGBTI+ people, aged 14 to 23, to create a world where they are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. They also advocate and campaign on behalf of young LGBTI+ people, and offer a specialised LGBTI+ youth service with a focus on mental and sexual health alongside drug and alcohol support.

Youth groups

Working in partnership with national youth organisations such as Youth Work Ireland, Foróige, Crosscare, and other local LGBTI+ groups, BeLonG To ensure that young LGBTI+ people have access to safe spaces outside Dublin, closer to home through their National Network. In 2018, they supported 45 LGBTI+ youth groups nationally, including several new groups, for example in, Wexford, Waterford, Mayo, Leitrim, and Cavan. 2,886 young people received LGBTI+ awareness training through the National Network fund in 2018.

Training

BeLonG To work with a wide range of professionals to help them develop understanding, language and skills to ensure that young LGBTI+ people can feel safe and supported in schools and can access inclusive and welcoming services. BeLonG To offered training to over 700 professionals in 2018. This training focuses on areas including education, mental health, social care, sexual health, and youth work.

“BeLonG To has made me feel better in my own skin. Coming here has shown me that there are people just like me, and I can talk to them without fear”

Feedback from a BeLonG To Service User

Support services

BeLonG To provide an in-house crisis counselling service, offered in partnership with Pieta House. This is a dedicated LGBTI+ youth counselling service, available free of charge to those experiencing suicide ideation or engaging in self-harm. Throughout 2018, the service operated two mornings per week and the hours of their dedicated therapists doubled from 10 to 20 hours per week. Over 140 hours of free crisis counselling were delivered. In addition, there was a 50% increase in Monday Chats service delivery in 2018, with 150 one-on-ones provided.

Better Out Than In Campaign

The aim of the new 2018 campaign, Better Out Than In, was to change attitudes towards help seeking behaviour among 14 to 23 year-old LGBTI+ people. The integrated digital and media relations campaign focused on reassuring the target audience that asking for help is worth it and signposted them to LGBTI+ friendly support services. The campaign generated a total PR reach of over 1 million and social impressions of over 2 million in 2018.

 www.belongto.org

Dublin Simon Community

The Dublin Simon Community Sure Steps Counselling Service was established in 2012, to fill an identified gap in services for low threshold counselling supports to people experiencing homelessness.

In 2018 Dublin Simon Community developed a suicide-specific treatment track (SSTT) - a pathway for clients expressing suicidal ideation within Dublin Simon Community and other external providers.

As part of this project, based on the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS), an SSTT Training programme for all Dublin Simon staff and an SSTT booklet was developed and rolled out. The CAMS approach used by Sure Steps Counsellors, was rolled out across the entire organisation in 2018.

In June 2018, the results of the initial CAMS pilot project were launched - with the support of the NOSP, the suicide prevention response service was extended to include an out-of-hours suicide prevention team (since August 2018). The Dublin Simon Suicide Prevention Service now operates from 8am to 10.30pm on weekdays, and from 4.30pm to 10.30pm on weekends and bank holidays.

It operates 365 days every year and more recently, its reach has been extended to other homeless service providers, including Salvation Army, DePaul Ireland, Peter McVerry Trust, Crosscare and SafetyNet.

Overall 37 suicide-specific referrals were received by the service 2018. A total of 169 one-to-one sessions using the CAMS approach, were provided to clients. The service has been successful in maintaining its target in engaging a client on a one-to-one basis, within 24 hours.

 www.dubsimon.ie

Exchange House Ireland, National Traveller Mental Health Service

Exchange House Ireland, National Traveller Mental Health Service, is a Traveller-specific service designed to improve mental health and overall wellbeing of Travellers and to reduce the likelihood of suicide within the community. Although many Travellers are reluctant to speak about mental illness in general and suicide in particular, Exchange House Ireland takes a proactive stance through open dialogue and engagement. In 2018, 6% of individuals accessing services through the National Traveller Mental Health Service, identified mental health as the primary issue impacting them. However, once engaged in services, this number rises to up to 47%.

The Service aims to address inequalities that Travellers may experience by working with individuals, families and communities and service providers, deepening understanding, improving referral pathways and aiding recovery. It supports and delivers culturally appropriate programmes through partnership approaches. The National Traveller Mental Health Service is fully funded by the HSE NOSP.

The Service has established working groups in Limerick, Sligo, Meath, Waterford, Kildare and the Midlands. Exchange House Ireland has delivered Mental Health First Aid and safeTALK training, as well as 4,481 individual/family service provisions, to 457 Traveller Families in County Dublin. The extremely low no show rate of 2% indicates the importance of this service.

The National Traveller Mental Health Service is also actively involved with the National Traveller Mental Health Network, the objective of which is to develop a collective space that is community led, where local, regional and national Traveller mental health issues are highlighted, discussed, and addressed.

Exchange House Ireland also recognises the unique mental health needs of LGBTI+ Travellers and is active in the National Action Group of LGBTI Traveller and Roma Rights.

A Mental Health training programme for Travellers is currently being developed in collaboration with National University of Ireland, Galway and the University of Maynooth. Exchange House Ireland is also currently collaborating with Turn2Me to develop a Traveller-friendly online service platform.

First Fortnight

The annual First Fortnight Festival showcases informative art-themed events which help to improve population-wide understanding of suicidal behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and associated risk and protective factors. The festival aims to increase awareness of available suicide prevention and mental health services and reduce stigmatising attitudes to mental health and suicidal behaviour at population level and within priority groups.

First Fortnight 2018 was the biggest edition of the festival yet, with a presence in 17 counties (+112% on previous year) across 62 venues (+138% on previous year). There were over 8,900 Festival attendees (+48% on previous year), allowing a meaningful impact in January, in terms of challenging mental health prejudice through cultural arts and actions. Marketing and media coverage potential reach increased 76% on the previous year. There were also significant increases across First Fortnight social media channels and website traffic during the festival.

In 2018 First Fortnight also began preparation for the hosting of the European Mental Health Arts & Culture Festival in January 2019. The 2019 festival programme was officially launched in November in Dublin City Hall.

In addition to the festival, First Fortnight has also continued work on their Centre for Creative Therapies – delivering a unique and innovative intervention in homeless mental health. The team has continued to extend its community development work and the mission of the project. This has been achieved through further collaboration with homeless services and a further examination of the position of the arts therapies in the wider suite of service provision in homelessness.

In June 2018 First Fortnight published its first policy paper on mental health stigma in Europe and presented its findings in Athens as part of Erasmus+ funded MENS Project, to promote active living for mental health.



Ronan Yourell, Hannah Mamalis, Eoghan McDermott and Nikki Hayes at the launch of the First Fortnight 2018 Programme (photo: Conor McCabe)

 www.firstfortnight.ie

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA)

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) provides a range of initiatives focused on mental health awareness and suicide prevention across their networks. In 2018, through Phase Three of the 'Healthy Club Project', over 1000 people engaged in emotional wellbeing programmes delivered by the 150 participating Healthy Clubs. Media analysis of the launch of Phase Three of the Healthy Club project revealed a total campaign reach of 2,871,469; total PR value €844,128; total AD value €281,376 across numerous media platforms (national TV, radio and print, regional print and radio, online).

All 32 County Health and Wellbeing Committees as part of their annual Action Plan, were requested to assist in the delivery of safeTALK training for their members. 75% of counties have achieved this. In 2018, 52 safeTALK training sessions were delivered to a total of 509 club members.

Further to this, all Healthy Clubs and counties have adopted their critical incident response plan in 2018. Critical Incident training was developed and delivered in quarter one, in conjunction with the National County Officer Development Conference. A new suite of resources was developed to complement the training, which can be viewed on the GAA website.

Some local initiatives of note include;

- The installation of new mental health and suicide prevention information signage (Meath Health and Wellbeing Committee, Meath LSP and HSE).
- The provision of new, permanently displayed, club health information boards (Louth County Health and Wellbeing Committee).
- Promoting and engaging with positive mental health activities during Mental Health Week (Cavan Health and Wellbeing Committees).
- Delivery of the Cork Beat Stress programme, with 450 participants in 2018 (Cork Health and Wellbeing Committee).
- Delivery of Moving your Mind - combining nutrition, physical and mental health workshops (Mayo County Health and Wellbeing Committee with Mayo Mental Health Association).
- Participation in the Green Ribbon Campaign in Donegal and organisation of the Donegal GAA Youth Matters Conference.
- Completion of a survey of Tipperary youth players (aged 15 to 17) to assess what mental health supports they would like to see in the GAA and the development thereafter, of a health supports information board (Tipperary County Health and Wellbeing Committee).
- Promotion and participation in the Behind the Jersey initiative, and Wexford Wellness Week (Wexford County Health and Wellbeing Committee).
- Mind Fit, a pilot programme aimed at GAA players, was rolled out in Ulster GAA in partnership with Aware NI. Aware Ireland also ran a six-week Life Skills Programme in two Healthy Clubs, with a total of 45 attendees.

Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)

The Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) is the professional body for general practice in Ireland. The College's primary aim is to serve the patient and the general practitioner by encouraging and maintaining the highest standards of general medical practice. It is the representative organisation on education, training and standards in general practice.

The practice support and safety intervention programme for patients with suicidal crisis and/or self-harm

The vision for this three-year programme, now in its second year, is to improve healthcare practice and design in ways that will lead to standardisation of care for those at risk of suicide. The mission is to establish a framework within which to progress common goals in suicide prevention in general practice - mapping the training plan to areas with the highest need based on national statistics. This inter-professional and inter-disciplinary programme aims to mitigate the suicide risk by simple, universal and context-specific primary care responses.

In this collaborative programme, Level One training is delivered by 4 Mental Health providers in a Train the Trainer model. These trained GPs, paired with other healthcare professionals, deliver Level Two training to GPs through faculty and CME small group networks. The ideal pairing for GPs includes a Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN), a community mental health nurse or other healthcare professional working in the area. This pairing facilitates expanding the network of contacts and supports for GPs within their own areas.

ICGP follows a multi-layered communications plan to recruit GP trainers and encourage GPs, particularly in areas of high suicide prevalence, to attend Level Two training. These channels include advertising the programme in the ICGP Forum Journal; College e-zine; College website; through the ICGP Professional Competence Scheme (PCS); emails; PCS e-zine and at ICGP events such as the Annual Conference & AGM; Winter Meeting; Regional meetings and workshops; Trainer Conference; Trainee Conference.

In 2018, a total of 17 GP trainers were recruited and trained by 4 Mental Health at Level One in May and October 2018. Following their training, these GPs delivered Level Two training to the following groups;

- Three faculties - training a total of 88 GPs
- Two CME small groups - training a total of 37 GPs
- Two Training schemes - training a total of 33 GPs in training to become GPs

This gives an overall total of 175 GPs who have received training - which was, where possible targeted and delivered to regionally based GPs and trainees in areas with highest prevalence of suicide.

LGBT Ireland

LGBT Ireland operates the National LGBT Helpline, the Gender Identity Family Support Line and a network of peer support groups nationwide.

In 2018 LGBT Ireland provided the National LGBT Helpline seven evenings per week and over 2,000 contacts were made during the year. 43 new helpline volunteers were trained and mentored. The helpline continues to provide timely, non-judgmental emotional support to people across the country and across the age spectrum.

The new Gender Identity Family Support Line, provided in partnership with Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI), was launched in March 2018. It developed from a monthly Sunday afternoon service to a weekly service in the space of six months. 12 parents of young Trans people were trained as support line volunteers. This service receives 200 calls annually. It provides a welcome support to parents and young people, as families are facing what can seem, and feel like a crisis.

LGBT Ireland peer support groups in Dublin and Galway, continued during 2018;

- Straight Talking' Spouse group, Dublin
- Married Women's group, Dublin
- First Out groups (LB women) (GB men), Dublin and Galway
- LGBT asylum seeker peer support group.

These peer support groups facilitate 150 people annually. People come for face-to-face emotional support from people like them, who are facing similar struggles and sharing coping strategies.

LGBT Ireland continued to deliver its LGBT awareness training to a wide range of external agencies. During 2018, a total of 1,006 people were trained as part of multidisciplinary staff groups and community or voluntary organisations and services.

The organisation has prioritised some specific cohorts of the community who suffer double invisibility and heightened mental health vulnerability. For example - LGBT Travellers, older LGBT people and LGBT asylum seekers.

Also of note during 2018;

- A pilot of the LGBT Champions Programme was run in September, targeting health and social care professionals caring for older people.
- On International Day of Older Persons, a joint poster was launched between LGBT Ireland, ALONE, Age & Opportunity, SAGE and NHI.
- In October, an LGBT Traveller video and poster campaign was launched (on National Coming Out Day) as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. The launch took place in Outhouse, on Capel Street, Dublin - the first time ever that a Traveller event took place in an LGBT venue.
- The effective handover from the Irish Refugee Council of a support group for LGBT asylum seekers. LGBT Ireland successfully transitioned the group into a professionally facilitated peer support group which supports between 10 to 15 LGBT asylum seekers living in Direct Provision, every month.

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) is Ireland's national child protection charity. The ISPCC provide Childline - a 24-hour listening service for children and young people throughout Ireland. Information and support is also made available to children and young people online, at Childline.ie.

The Childline service supports children and young people through the provision of;

- A free confidential non-judgemental 24-hour helpline for those up to the age of 18
- Live web and text support services from 10am to 4am daily, where children can seek support from specially trained Childline volunteers and staff
- The Childline website where young people have access to information about mental health and suicide. Childline also signposts children to other support services.

Childline is staffed by teams of skilled volunteers and staff who train and support volunteers to ensure a consistent and high-quality service to children and young people. Childline staff and volunteers listen to, support and empower children and young people.

Mental health and the wellbeing of children and young people underpin all services provided by the ISPCC. Services focus on the mental health of the child and empowering the child to develop coping skills and build resilience to manage problems as they arise.

In 2018, ISPCC Childline, with the support of the Vodafone Ireland Foundation, launched the Talking Makes Us Stronger Campaign - featuring Headbomz: a fun way to remind children that talking builds emotional resilience. The campaign is targeted at children aged 8 to 11. Every primary school in Ireland was sent a Headbomz School Pack, containing a copy of the book along with other campaign materials. Over 650 primary schools signed up to take part in The Great Headbomz Assembly - requesting over 20,000 copies of the book for pupils.

Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI)

The NOSP continued to support the work of the Middle-Aged Men and Mental Health Project led by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI). The overall aim of this three-year project is to establish an evidence base, develop effective and relevant resources, establish a training programme and create a sustainable delivery mechanism – all of which will help to improve the mental health and wellbeing of at risk and vulnerable middle-aged men in Ireland.

During 2018, MHFI received funding from the NOSP to undertake year two of this initiative. Work in year 1 had focused on researching the mental health and wellbeing needs of men aged 40 to 59 and, specifically targeted the most at risk and vulnerable people within this grouping. This was the first indepth study in Ireland to explore the possible links between middle-aged men at risk of marginalisation and increased suicide risk - a focus which has also been absent in international literature.

In year two of the initiative (2018) the MHFI launched and disseminated the substantive report on findings from this study. During this second phase, new resources and a training programme to meet the needs of service providers who interface with middle-aged men were discussed, tentatively developed, and piloted with experienced men's health workers.

The Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland Report was launched in March 2018, by Jason McAteer. The report explored;

- The specific mental health and wellbeing needs of at risk and vulnerable middle-aged men
- The extent of the difficulties that these men are facing
- Perspectives of both service providers and at-risk groups of middle-aged men
- The key issues that impact on their mental health
- Any barriers/opportunities for engagement with this target group
- Examples and models of practice that have worked elsewhere.

During 2018, the voluntary Middle-Aged Men and Mental Health Project Advisory Group continued to guide this work. In September, they appointed a new sub-group to coordinate the development of the programme and resource materials for the new Engage Unit 7.

 www.mhfi.org

“We’re the last generation before the huge big change out there. What our fathers and grandfathers would have done, we would have done, but now our children are brought into a different world... Sometimes you look and think am I part of this world or that one?”

Alan, Rural Isolated Man, quoted in the Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland Report

Offaly Local Development Company / Mojo Offaly Project

The Mojo programme is delivered in Offaly by Offaly Local Development Company (OLDC) and is governed by an Interagency Advisory Group (IAG). The IAG is central to Mojo programme planning, quality assurance and delivery. The IAG steers the direction and future development of the project in their respective areas. The IAG is made up of a host of local organisations and services including HSE Mental Health Services, Primary Care, Adult Education Services and OLDC.

The Mojo programme is 12 weeks in duration. It is open to men 18 years or older and runs over two mornings a week. Morning one is three hours in duration while morning two is of four hours. Mojo sessions combine short inputs from facilitators on a particular topic with small group discussions, group exercises and questions and answers.

The programme has four interconnected and equally important components that help the men to develop;

- Wellbeing and resilience
- The ability to set goals and take action
- Physical fitness
- A male space that supports their social connections.

In 2018, a total of 104 men were referred to the Mojo Offaly Project with 48 men participating on the 12-week training programme and 22 participating in a Mini Mojo. The average age of men was 42 years old - the youngest being 19 years old and the oldest being 69 years old.

 www.offalyldc.ie/training-programmes/mojo-programme

MyMind

MyMind provide fast and easy access to counselling and psychotherapy services across Ireland, and believe that early intervention when a mental health issue presents itself, will lead to a better mental health outcome. Early intervention on mental health issues including depression, anxiety, and stress can prevent problems from escalating, and enable individuals to be proactive around their mental health.

In 2018, MyMind opened its new centre in Dublin 8, creating a wellbeing hub, where they have identified a need for affordable mental health support to reach across a broad demographic - including priority groups such as students, immigrants, and the LGBTQ+ community.

Also during 2018, MyMind relocated to a new centre in Cork. Moving to a bigger centre allowed the team to increase service capacity by 40%. Almost 5,600 appointments were provided to the people of Cork in 2018 and the new centre now provides counselling and psychotherapy in different languages for adults, teens and children, including Hungarian, Polish, Lithuanian, Italian and English.

MyMind began the journey of expanding its team across Ireland through a network of members. MyMind now has a presence in counties such as Roscommon, Sligo, Drogheda, Donegal, Carlow, Kerry, Kilkenny, Meath and Tipperary.

In total in 2018, over 9,700 clients came to MyMind for an average of 6.8 sessions, and MyMind provided over 20,400 appointments. The busiest month in 2018 was November, during which 2,259 appointments were provided.

Further to this, MyMind offers the option of mental health support via online therapy sessions. These are delivered via a video conferencing platform integrated with each client's unique account. Through online sessions, the client is able to have regular therapy sessions from the privacy and convenience of their own home.

In 2018, MyMind Online provided 623 online appointments, responded to over 10,000 email queries, answered over 7,100 calls, and over 900 live chat queries.

In September 2018, MyMind launched its Tell Yourself Campaign. MyMind's ask was very simple - to tell yourself something you like about you today. While people had no problem telling friends and family why they loved them, they struggled when it came to showing the same love to themselves. With the Tell Yourself video, MyMind wanted to encourage everyone to talk to themselves like they would a loved one.

The screenshot shows the MyMind website homepage. At the top, the MyMind logo is displayed. Below the logo, there is a navigation menu. The main content area features a large banner with the text "Your Mental Health and Wellbeing Matter" and a phone number (+353) 76 680 1060. A prominent "BOOK APPOINTMENT" button is visible. Below the banner, the text reads "COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR WHAT YOU NEED, WHERE YOU ARE, WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD." and "Low cost, high quality support in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Galway, Limerick and Kerry. Services for 18+ and 16+." There are three main service categories: "EXISTING CLIENT" with a "Log in" button, "Online counselling and psychotherapy" (described as "Personal and confidential video appointments with counsellors and psychologists"), "Face to face counselling" (described as "First appointments within 12 hours of booking. Team of over 100 qualified counsellors and psychologists"), and "MyMind at Work: For companies" (described as "Affordable rates for companies, with memberships, private staff wellbeing and assistance"). At the bottom, there is a "COURSES AND TRAINING" section with a "Our courses offer" button.

 www.mymind.org

The National Family Resource Centre (FRC) Mental Health Promotion Project

The Family Resource Centre (FRC) Programme is Ireland's largest family support programme delivering universal services to families in disadvantaged areas across 120 communities, based on a lifecycle approach.

The National FRC Mental Health Promotion Project is part of the whole Family Resource Centre Programme covering nine regions and 120 FRCs. The project is funded by Tusla and the NOSP and promotes a shared response to issues related to suicide. It also endeavours to raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with mental health. The project works in partnership with local HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) to deliver Suicide Prevention Code of Practice Training and to support the implementation of Connecting for Life.

The project strives towards utilising the strengths and resilience of communities to create awareness, educate, break down barriers, and offer solutions to complex issues related to mental health. Prevention can be supported through training, guidance, building relationships and consolidating supports.

The overall objectives of the project are;

- To promote the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice and to facilitate implementation through training for FRC staff, voluntary management committees and volunteers
- Develop a national policy framework for mental health promotion between the FRC programme, Tusla and the HSE.

26 participants were trained in the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice in four FRC regions during 2018. The project also provided refresher training to ensure staff were up-to-date and comfortable implementing the Code of Practice. Four refresher training events were held in 2018 with a total of 12 individuals attending.

In 2018, the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice was redrafted, along with the Responding to the Situation supporting document. Both were relaunched at a national event in December.

Over recent years this project has evolved further to meet changing needs of staff and volunteers who work in FRCs. As a direct response to their needs, the project designed and delivered staff self-care training. This training provides front line workers with a safety system when caring for others and aims to recognise the importance of the mental health of staff in FRCs. In 2018, 12 self-care and compassion fatigue training days were held in nine FRC regions and a total of 135 FRC staff participated. This work is currently being evaluated in an effort to further develop best practice for staff wellbeing.

A fundamental part of the project is to promote positive mental wellbeing and combat stigma amongst staff, volunteers and the wider community. During 2018, various mental health campaigns were designed within the project, such as Self-Care, Wellbeing in Summer and Staying Well at Work. These campaigns raised awareness and promoted positive dialogue on mental health.



The FRC Suicide Prevention Code of Practice, 2018

 www.westportfrc.ie

The National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF)

During 2018, the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) coordinated a range of research projects in the area of suicide, self-harm and related mental health issues, all contributing to surveillance, research, implementation, evaluation and the evidence base relating to strategic goals and actions of the Connecting for Life strategy.

The National Self-Harm Registry Ireland is operated by the NSRF and is funded by the NOSP. It is the world's first national registry of cases of intentional self-harm presenting to hospital emergency departments. The Registry fulfils a major objective in providing timely data on trends and high-risk groups for self-harm in Ireland. The 16th annual report from the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI) was published in October 2018.

In 2018, the NSRF was involved in the development of new research projects and the wider implementation of three existing research projects. These research programmes have clear links with Connecting for Life priorities and actions (including actions 4.1, 4.2, 5.3, 6.1 and 7.4).

1. Review of the HSE Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN) Service. The aims of this review are to describe the operational structure of the SCAN Service and to review referrals made to the SCAN Service in 2017.
2. Self-harm Assessment and Data Analysis (SADA) Project. This project involves the ongoing recording of self-harm in Irish Prisons, in collaboration with the Irish Prison Service. NSRF coordinates the data management, data analysis and reporting of findings from the SADA Project. The first annual report from the SADA Project was published in 2018, reporting on self-harm in Irish Prisons for the year 2017.
3. Frequently-used Drugs in Intentional Overdose. This programme of research involves an ongoing collaboration with researchers in the University of Manchester, using data from several national data sources, as part of a PhD programme (2015-2019).

The NSRF have also contributed to two ongoing working groups, including the Evaluation of Suicide Bereavement Support Services (Connecting for Life actions 4.3.1 and 4.3.2) and the Suicide and Self-Harm Awareness, Assessment and Response Project (actions 4.1.4 and 5.2.1).

Over the course of 2018, the NSRF prepared eight briefing documents, authored/contributed to five reports and published 21 papers in international peer review journals, informing the implementation and evaluation of a wide range of actions, included in the Connecting for Life strategy.

During the year NSRF researchers presented at more than 70 lectures at local, national and international seminars and conferences and NSRF academics were represented on more than 40 advisory and steering groups at national and international level.

Of note in 2018, the NSRF;

- Hosted a media seminar in University College Cork, to discuss the role of the media in suicide prevention. Findings from published research were presented and the event was followed by an informative and engaging discussion with panellists from local media, the HSE Communications Team and stakeholders involved in suicide prevention.
- Co-facilitated Gatekeeper Training for construction workers in UCC and for professionals working in health and community based services in the University of Koper, Slovenia.
- Hosted a symposium on Contemporary Challenges in Suicide Prevention at the Social Pathologies of Contemporary Civilisation Conference in UCC and on Multicentre and national studies of hospital-treated self-harm, at the European Symposium on Suicide and Suicidal Behaviour (ESSSB17) in Ghent, Belgium.

 www.nsrif.ie

Offaly Traveller Movement - Travelling to Wellbeing Mental Health Service

The Travelling to Wellbeing Mental Health Service (Offaly Traveller Movement) advocates for culturally appropriate, clinical, therapeutic, recovery-focused mental health services for Travellers in County Offaly. It offers individual and group support, mental health recovery and suicide prevention, intervention and postvention supports, to maximise the wellbeing and quality of life for Travellers.

The team consists of a mental health social worker, mental health coordinator and is supported by a Traveller-specific public health nurse, counsellor and the team in Offaly Traveller Movement. In 2018, there were 651 interventions relating to mental health (467 male and 184 female). There were 58 interventions relating to suicide or self-harm.

During 2018, Offaly Traveller Movement, in partnership with the local HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention and other local agencies, produced a Guide to Developing a Local Co-ordinated Crisis Response Plan for the Traveller Community. This guide was developed in response to the increased number of suicide deaths that have occurred within the Traveller community and the need for a co-ordinated response when such incidences occur. It provides a framework for developing a Local Co-ordinated Crisis Response Plan for the Traveller community which is activated following the occurrence of an attempted suicide, suicide or unexpected death. The aim of this plan is to facilitate the co-ordination of multi-agency responses and will ensure more support for individuals and families who are experiencing these crisis situations. This guide is aligned with Goal 3 of Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018-2020 - "To target approaches to reduce suicidal behaviour and improve mental health among priority groups".

Offaly Traveller Movement participated in, promoted or initiated events relating to 2018 World Suicide Prevention Day, World Mental Health Day and the annual Green Ribbon Campaign. In 2018, the group participated in numerous training programmes such as safeTALK, Supporting Young Peoples Mental Health (Jigsaw) and Taking Control (Shine).

Pieta House

Since Pieta House opened its doors in 2006, it has supported more than 40,000 people in Ireland, who were in suicidal or self-harming crisis, or who had been bereaved by suicide. Pieta House provides free and professional counselling in 15 centres, two outreach offices, and one in-reach service (supporting Belong To LGBTQI+ clients). In addition to one-to-one counselling for crisis and bereavement, Pieta provides a 24/7 free helpline (1800 247 247). This service is manned by therapists who can support and signpost callers to their nearest Pieta House centre or to other services in their local area.

Pieta House also provides a Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service with six Officers nationwide. They provide support in homes, schools, and companies in the immediate aftermath of a death by suicide. These Officers offer practical support to communities who are recently bereaved and signpost to local services as well as Pieta House counselling in their nearest centre.

In 2018, Pieta House:

- Delivered over 41,900 hours of counselling to over 8,500 people - a 31% increase on 2017. More than 2,400 young people under the age of 18 accessed services. This represented more than 35% of the client base.
- Responded to over 15,100 calls and 47,000 text message on their 24/7 free call helpline.
- Helped over 550 people who had been bereaved through suicide, by providing 4,111 hours of dedicated suicide bereavement counselling.
- Supported 425 people in the immediate aftermath of a death by suicide by liaising with families, friends and the wider community where a suicide had occurred.
- Opened 2 new outreach services, serving Sligo and Ennis.

Since Pieta House opened its doors in 2006, it has supported more than 40,000 people in Ireland, who were in suicidal or self-harming crisis, or who had been bereaved by suicide.

Samaritans Ireland

The vision of Samaritans Ireland is that fewer people die by suicide. Its mission is to alleviate emotional distress and reduce incidences of suicidal feelings and suicidal behaviour.

Samaritans provides a 24-hour helpline service for people who are in distress, struggling to cope, and who are in need of emotional support, including those who are feeling suicidal.

In 2018, 1,800 dedicated volunteers in 13 branches across the Republic of Ireland answered over half a million calls for help, supporting people through some of the darkest moments in their lives. The main issues people contacted Samaritans about in 2018 included mental health/illness (36.2%), isolation/loneliness (30%), family issues (28.5%) and relationship problems (20.9%). Other callers raised concerns about physical health/illness, bereavement, violence/abuse, drug and/or alcohol misuse, and finance/unemployment. Suicidal thoughts were expressed in 16.6% of contacts.

At a national level, Samaritans Ireland acts as an umbrella organisation for all of the branches in Ireland. A small staff team work behind the scenes to maintain the telephone, email and SMS network and support the branches. Areas such as administration, Garda vetting, safeguarding, partnerships, communications, campaigns, training and operations are all delivered from the office.

One of the key highlights during 2018 was the relaunch of Samaritans email service in Ireland, which ensured all emails to jo@samaritans.ie were answered by volunteers in Ireland. By the end of the year, volunteers had sent 5,300 email replies, with the figure growing month-on-month.

In 2018, Samaritans;

- Listened for almost 70,000 hours to people in need
- Sent almost 46,000 text message replies
- Supported more than 4,000 people with face-to-face emotional support in a branch or at a festival
- Took out-of-hours calls from six other organisations, whose calls were diverted when their lines were closed
- Launched Step by Step, a new postvention service for schools, clubs and communities following a tragic death
- Rolled-out its Listener Scheme to every prison in the country
- Staged a series of caller awareness campaigns, including targeting those impacted by rural isolation in County Donegal and at the National Ploughing Championships
- Entered into a new partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs to support those overseas
- Delivered training to a range of statutory, regulatory and state agencies
- Staged a number of events to mark the longest night of the year
- Upgraded broadband packages in 14 sites
- Finalised an in-depth analysis of telephone data prior to introducing a queue for callers based on this analysis
- Developed real time reporting systems for operational monitoring across 13 branches.

*No matter what
someone's reason for
calling, Samaritans
offer a space to explore
how they are feeling, in
their own time and in
their own way – either
on the phone, by text or
email, or face to face.*



South County Dublin Partnership (Heads Up Programme)

Heads Up is a programme delivered through a collaboration of partnerships working in the CHO7 area. The partners included, South Dublin County Partnership, Kildare Leader Partnership, Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership and Dublin South City Partnership.

Heads Up is an education, training programme for men who are finding life stressful, have issues with unemployment, and want an education on how they can increase their wellbeing. The programme aims to motivate the participants to make positive changes to their lives. It focuses on developing resilience to their current situation and offers support to access local services which can help them to return to work or education.

Each programme is different, as the needs of the participants are identified and modules are carried out to support that particular group. The main programme runs two sessions per week for a 12-week period and has four components - Mental Fitness, Physical Fitness, Building Connection and Life Planning. Each programme is supported by a local Advisory Group that provides a coordinated support to each participant and offers progression from the training.

In 2018, South County Dublin County Partnership developed a collaboration agreement with four other partnerships agreeing to support each other in developing Heads Up programmes to support men in distress across the entire CHO7 area.

In 2018, South Dublin County Partnership supported 230 men in Tallaght and Clondalkin by;

- Delivering three 12-week Heads Up programmes
- Supporting the Mojo Mens Shed (social support for local men), consisting of numerous activities, events and workshops
- Delivering five shorter education wellness programmes (up to 6-weeks long) for men on waiting lists for the 12-week programme or for those that want to sample a Heads Up programme
- Running a Wellness Man Day.

South County Dublin Partnership works in collaboration with Kildare Leadership Partnership and with Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership to provide Heads Up Kildare (Athy, Newbridge and Celbridge) and related activities in Dublin 8, 10 and 12.

The programme aims to motivate the participants to make positive changes to their lives.



Funded by the NOSP and the HSE, The National DBT Project was formed in 2013. The HSE became the only public health service internationally to roll out a national coordinated implementation of DBT for people with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and related conditions with a high tendency for self-harming and suicidal behaviours.

As part of the national roll-out of DBT in community health services, the National DBT Project Office conducted research on the effectiveness of DBT collecting outcome data from a sample of the people receiving DBT and DBT-informed therapies. The National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Project, Ireland Report 2013-2018, gives an overview of the results as well as links to 12 peer reviewed papers in which the findings are presented in more detail.

Pictured at the launch of the report were John Meehan, Kathleen Lynch, Eileen Williamson, Daniel Flynn and Ella Arensman, November 2018.

photo: Brian Loughheed

Shine

Headline - Ireland's national programme for responsible reporting, and representation of mental illness and suicide.

Headline is a vital link between two very different sectors in Ireland - mental health and media. Its goals are directly aligned with Connecting for Life goals 1 and 3. Headline promotes and supports responsible reportage of suicide and mental illness through four main functions: Media Monitoring, Education, Support and Research. They actively monitor content produced by Irish media organisations on incidents of suicide that feature in the news (both at local and national level) and provide training and insights to working professionals and student journalists.

Following a NOSP review of Headline in 2017, its operational model flipped in 2018 from a reactionary focus on daily monitoring, to a more proactive focus on training and collaboration. The education programme was entirely redeveloped throughout 2018 with much work being done on engaging with media workers across multiple platforms. Research was commissioned on the challenges faced by journalists working in this area - and there are many. By better understanding the constraints the media work within, Headline are better positioned to offer relevant supports towards more responsible coverage of suicide and facilitate a better understanding by audiences nationwide.

Of particular note in 2018, the Press Ombudsman upheld a complaint made by Headline against the irresponsible inclusion of excessive details of a particular suicide method in a prominent national Sunday newspaper. The newspaper appealed the decision with Headline spending much of late 2018 defending the original complaint. The appeal was carried forward to 2019 where a final decision was made in Headline's favour. This is the first time a complaint regarding excessive detail on reporting of a suicide method, has been upheld in such a way.

Other key developments in 2018 included:

- The monitoring of over 40,000 articles containing references to suicide or mental ill health. Between May and December, Headline found that less than 3% of articles monitored breached suicide reporting guidelines.
- The full redevelopment of education programming targeting journalism students.
- A rebrand and redevelopment of new Headline.ie online resources.
- The publication of research into the challenges faced by journalists working in Irish media, around suicide and mental illness.
- Engagement with several regional editors and journalists on best practice regarding suicide reportage.

See Change - Dedicated to ending mental health stigma.

See Change is dedicated to ending mental health stigma, focusing on bringing the voice of lived experience to the public, to address the issue of stigma that exists in society today.

Many of the targeted programmes from, and functions of, See Change are aligned with Connecting for Life, goals 1, 2 and 3. There are a number of strands to the project that proactively reach wide audiences across Ireland, including the annual Green Ribbon Campaign, See Change Ambassador and Partner Programmes and the See Change Workplace Programme.

Of particular note, the See Change Workplace Programme aims to open conversations with managers and senior leaders to create a culture change and reduce stigma in their workplaces. This happens through a wide range of activities, which are monitored through a six-step programme. The programme helps to facilitate a cultural shift in workplaces so that employers and employees feel supported and secure in starting a discussion about how mental health can affect each one of us.

By signing up to the pledge programme, organisations demonstrate that they are committed to creating an open culture around mental health for managers and employees. See Change delivered 47 mental health awareness workshops with line managers nationwide in 2018. Approximately 700 line managers were trained. In addition to this, lunchtime talks with See Change ambassadors were delivered to 19 organisations.



The launch of the 2018 Green Ribbon Campaign, from See Change

The See Change Programme helps to facilitate a cultural shift in workplaces so that employers and employees feel supported and secure in starting a discussion about how mental health can affect each one of us.

SpunOut.ie

SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website and is funded by the NOSP to contribute to the delivery of a number of actions specific to Connecting for Life. The website provides high-quality information to young people online, particularly targeting those at risk of self-harm and suicide with signposting to appropriate services.

SpunOut.ie continued to expand in 2018, and once again reported its busiest year, with 1,277,457 people visiting the website and nearly 2.5 million pages of information consumed by visitors. This represented a significant increase in the number of young people availing of SpunOut.ie information resources, and an overall increase of 22% on 2017.

The 2018 SpunOut.ie reader survey (1,515 respondents) found that 81% felt supported by the service, with 65% agreeing that SpunOut.ie had led them to make better decisions in their lives. Overall, reader satisfaction with SpunOut.ie is high, with readers giving high scores on content quality (91% satisfaction), content relevance (92%) and use of language and tone (93%). Respondents further articulated a desire to see an even greater focus on mental health content, including serious mental health issues, and harm reduction regarding alcohol and drugs, which the service will continue to strive to meet into 2019 and beyond.

In 2018, the organisation developed a number of call-to-action campaigns in the areas of self-harm reduction, suicide prevention, reducing alcohol harm, gambling awareness and promoting positive mental health. SpunOut.ie also carried out a total of six outreach workshops on the subjects of suicide or self-harm.

Self-harm reduction

SpunOut.ie's 2018 self-harm prevention information content for 2018 was aimed at promoting help-seeking behaviour, reducing stigma and signposting young people to supports and services. The content on the subject was divided into three strands: content emphasising techniques and strategies around alternatives to self-harm; real-life experiences of self-harm as a tool for peer education; and content directed at peers who may want to help someone they care about who self-harms.

Suicide prevention

The suicide prevention content produced and promoted by SpunOut.ie in 2018 aimed to be informative, engaging and non-judgemental in tone. The messaging focused on help-seeking behaviour and signposting to mental health services as well as de-stigmatisation and highlighting the link between alcohol and risk of suicide.

Positive mental health

SpunOut.ie's positive mental health information campaign in 2018 focused on protective factors, drawing on the HSE Little Things Campaign and the New Economics Foundation (NEF) Five Ways to Wellbeing. The focus was on promoting resources that suggest practical, affordable, enjoyable things that everyone can do on a daily basis. One of the campaign's key aims was to broaden the understanding of mental health among the audience to including positive mental health, rather than just mental ill-health.

Reducing alcohol harm

In focusing on the issue of alcohol harm in 2018, SpunOut.ie drew on research indicating alcohol abuse as a factor in the lives of half of those who died by suicide in 2017, and the WHO's identification of alcohol abuse as a significant risk factor regarding suicide. The content was therefore aimed at raising awareness of this link and to equip young people with the information and encouragement they need to reduce the role of alcohol in their socialising.

Youth gambling awareness

Building on work in the previous year, SpunOut.ie increased the volume and quality of content on their site relating to problem gambling. The content aimed to increase awareness, particularly amongst young men who are most at risk, in light of the substantial body of research indicating a link between problem gambling and negative mental health outcomes.



The top three visited self-harm related pages on SpunOut.ie in 2018 were:

1. What is self-harm?
2. Know self-harm
3. Positive ways I've found to reduce self-harm (opinion piece)

The top three visited suicide-related pages visited were:

1. How can I tell that someone is thinking of suicide?
2. What is suicide and why does it happen?
3. Who is at risk of suicide?

Suicide or Survive (SOS)

Suicide or Survive (SOS) is a “for impact” organisation, working in partnership and collaboration with many varied stakeholders. SOS recognises this approach as the key to change, i.e. “we are stronger together than we are apart”. SOS programmes are founded in compassion, belief, respect, hope and love. They invite people to explore their potential and have the courage to develop that potential.

SOS delivers a range of innovative programmes nationwide. For example;

The Eden Programme

The Eden Programme is for people who have attempted suicide, are suicidal or have suicidal thoughts and/or feelings. It invites people to explore what it would be like to live and how to support themselves when they experience thoughts and feelings of death by suicide. In 2018, there were four Eden Programmes in Dublin, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, with up to 16 participants per programmes. The programmes are delivered in partnership with the National Counselling Service (NCS), HSE, NOSP and local Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention.

Wellness Workshop

SOS Wellness Workshops provide tips, techniques and skills for day-to-day mental health. They include the narrative of a life lived, in line with social connection. In 2018, 33 Wellness Workshops were held nationwide, with up to 50 attendees per workshop.

“I know I can have thoughts and feelings of death by suicide but I don’t have to put them into action and that’s so freeing for me”

SOS Eden Programme Participant

WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)

WRAP is a mental wellness self-management programme, giving participants an opportunity to further explore their day-to-day mental health skills, strategies, triggers and action plans. In 2018, SOS delivered 21 WRAP workshops nationwide, with up to 20 people per workshop.

Corporate Cultural Programmes

SOS work with organisations and workplaces, to open conversations on mental health. SOS Corporate Cultural Programmes help break the stigma that stops people from seeking help when they struggle. They consist of a suite of programmes for managers, team leaders, supervisors and staff. In 2018, 85 such programmes were delivered nationwide.

SOS Supporters Programme

The SOS Supporters Programmes explores how a person supporting a family member, friend or work colleague can introduce empowerment, connection, movement and advocacy, while at the same time investing in their own self-care. Six Supporters Programmes were delivered in 2018.

The SOS website containing additional online workshops and workbooks, had over 550,000 hits in 2018.

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

The Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) continued to promote positive mental health during 2018, through its network of peer support groups, in nine locations nationwide. These groups work to provide a space for trans people and to promote positive mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

In 2018, TENI was contacted over 2,500 times by individuals and organisations looking for support and information. This contact consisted of 52% seeking family support, 21% seeking general support and 2% requiring crisis intervention or suicide prevention support. Of those seeking signposting or referral, 30% were for general information, 18% for medical transition information, 12% for mental health referrals and 11.5% for peer support groups.

During the year TENI delivered 172 training sessions to almost 7,000 individuals across their Health and Education services, peer support groups or with employers, to promote better access to services. This was the busiest year ever in delivering such training sessions.

Some highlights from 2018:

- New initiatives were developed with the Trans Group Alliance, the governing body for the TENI peer support network. A stronger emphasis, through training, was placed on engaging with harder to reach priority groups under the trans umbrella, for example, trans women and people who identify as non-binary.
- Hosting the inaugural Wonder Woman resilience course for young trans women and their families. The course, run over one full weekend, provides information, education, techniques and workshops on transition and what to expect.
- Regular collaboration on training and resources, with support services such as Pieta House, One Family, the LGBT Helpline, and Cork Counselling Services.

- Working with LGBT Ireland to launch the first dedicated Gender Identity Family Support Line. This line provides support to the families of trans people. The service is staffed entirely by trained volunteers (who are also family members of trans people) and has been supported by the Department of Health.
- Regular close contact and collaboration with professional bodies, service providers, statutory agencies and educational institutions, to raise awareness of the health needs of trans people and to develop trans inclusive policies. For example, with HSE Primary Care and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- The production of a new guide for Counsellors and Psychotherapists working with trans people in partnership with Cork Counselling Services (specifically supported by the Community Foundation for Ireland).
- Hosting the week-long Trans Mental Health Week to coincide with international Trans Day of Remembrance, in November. The week was focused on positive mental health within the trans community and followed on from World Mental Health Day in October. The week comprised a series of targeted events and workshops nationwide.

In 2018, TENI was contacted over 2,500 times by individuals and organisations looking for support and information.

Turn2me

Turn2me use technology to connect people, promote mental wellbeing and help prevent suicide. In 2018, they reported a successful year delivering their early intervention, three-tier psychosocial model of online mental health support, to adults across Ireland presenting with a wide range of mental health challenges.

Turn2me's three-tier model offers clients in need a wide range of mental health support services depending on their unique requirements;

1. Clinically moderated peer-to-peer support
2. Clinician-led online support groups
3. 1:1 counselling online with an Online Counsellor offered according to clients' preferred modes of communication: instant messaging, video, voice over internet protocol (VOIP) and email.

In 2018, Turn2me delivered over 1,600 counselling sessions online and over 400 online support groups, on suicidal thoughts and feelings, depression, anxiety, stress, LGBTQI+ mental health, family conflict and Christmas Blues.

In 2018, Turn2me delivered over 1,600 counselling sessions online and over 400 online support groups, on suicidal thoughts and feelings, depression, anxiety, stress, LGBTQI+ mental health, family conflict and Christmas Blues. Almost 4,600 service users availed of free individual and group counselling supports, which are available 365 days of the year.

Turn2me were delighted to develop a range of innovative counselling online pilots with the HSE Mental Health Service Leads and Minister Jim Daly, for launch in December 2018 and continuing throughout 2019.

Turn2me were also a key contributor to Mental Health Reform and Interreg Northwest Europe's eMen conference, eMental Health: The Next Big Thing in Psychological Practice - providing a Turn2me HSE NOSP branded presentation on technical and clinical innovations entitled eMental Health: The Future is Now.

To further raise awareness and professional recognition of counselling and psychotherapy online services, Turn2me researched and submitted a white paper outlining the diverse nature and extensive evidence base for eMental health interventions to the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy Accreditation committee.

Turn2me were awarded funding from the Community Foundation of Ireland Social Change Mental Health Grant, to develop and enhance their platform and service offering with, and for, the Traveller Community to develop and deliver new technological innovations to increase cultural relevance, awareness and usability of the service for the Community.

Union of Students in Ireland

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) is the national representative body for over 370,000 students in third level education. USI is a membership organisation, with affiliated Students' Unions around Ireland, North and South. The USI works to improve and protect the lives of students every day on academic and social issues through campaigns, training and research.

With the support of the NOSP, a Mental Health Project Manager is employed by the USI to work on mental health related activities and projects.



The Re:Charge Campaign from USI, November 2018
(photo: Emmet Curtin Photography)

Some key activities during 2018;

- The USI launched and promoted the National Student Mental Health Survey. This was a comprehensive study on student mental health that received over 3,300 responses from students attending third level institutions throughout Ireland. The analysis of the report commenced following the closure of the survey.
- The USI held Chats for Change in January. This is a campaign that encourages students to be open about their mental health.
- Minister Jim Daly TD launched the new Re:Charge Campaign in November. Delivered in partnership with the HSE, this campaign encourages students to look after themselves, promotes healthy study habits, provides information on how drinking can affect mood and emphasises the importance of good sleep.
- At the same time, the +Connections app was launched. This app maps student services on each campus and helps to ensure that students know what supports are available to them and where to find them. It hosts a student blog and a section with information on how to start a conversation about mental health.
- The USI presented at several conferences focused on student mental health including SPHeRE (Structured Population and Health-services Research Education), Maynooth Student Mental Health Conference, and AHEAD's (Association for Higher Education Access and Disability) International Conference.
- The USI organised for 50 Student Officers to be trained in Mental Health First Aid and commenced development of a Peer Education Programme with Jigsaw.



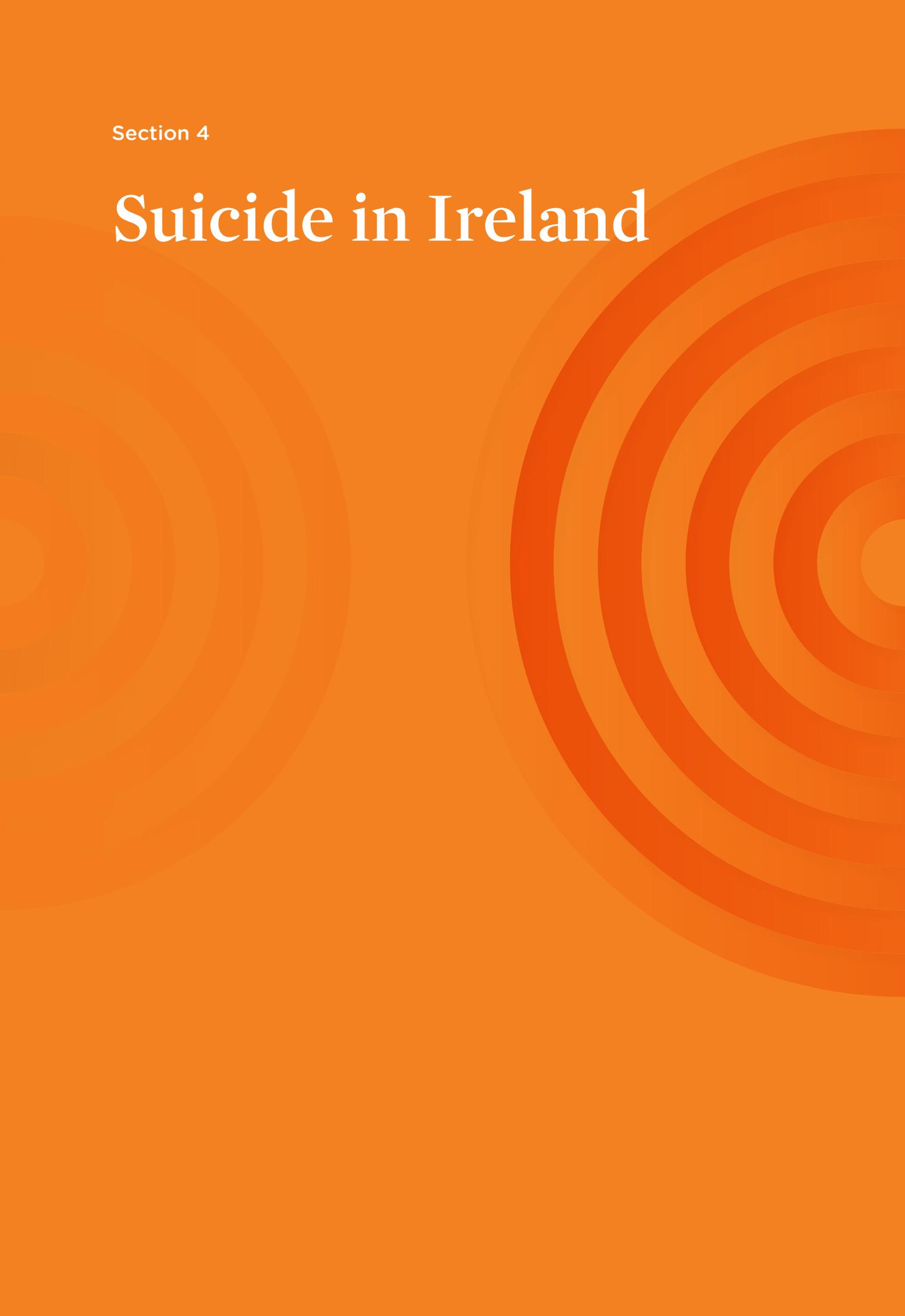
A new iteration of the Little Things Campaign called Mind Monsters, was developed and introduced in 2018 by the HSE Mental Health Operations Team. This campaign aims to help adolescents and young adults through tough times, and give them support on how to look after their mental health.

Focusing on things that are known to cause stress and anxiety for young people, the campaign highlights the benefits that getting enough sleep, taking regular study breaks, spending less time on devices and sharing a problem with someone you trust can have on your mental health.

The Mind Monsters Campaign is supportive of goal 1 of Connecting for Life, and will continue its rollout in 2019.

Section 4

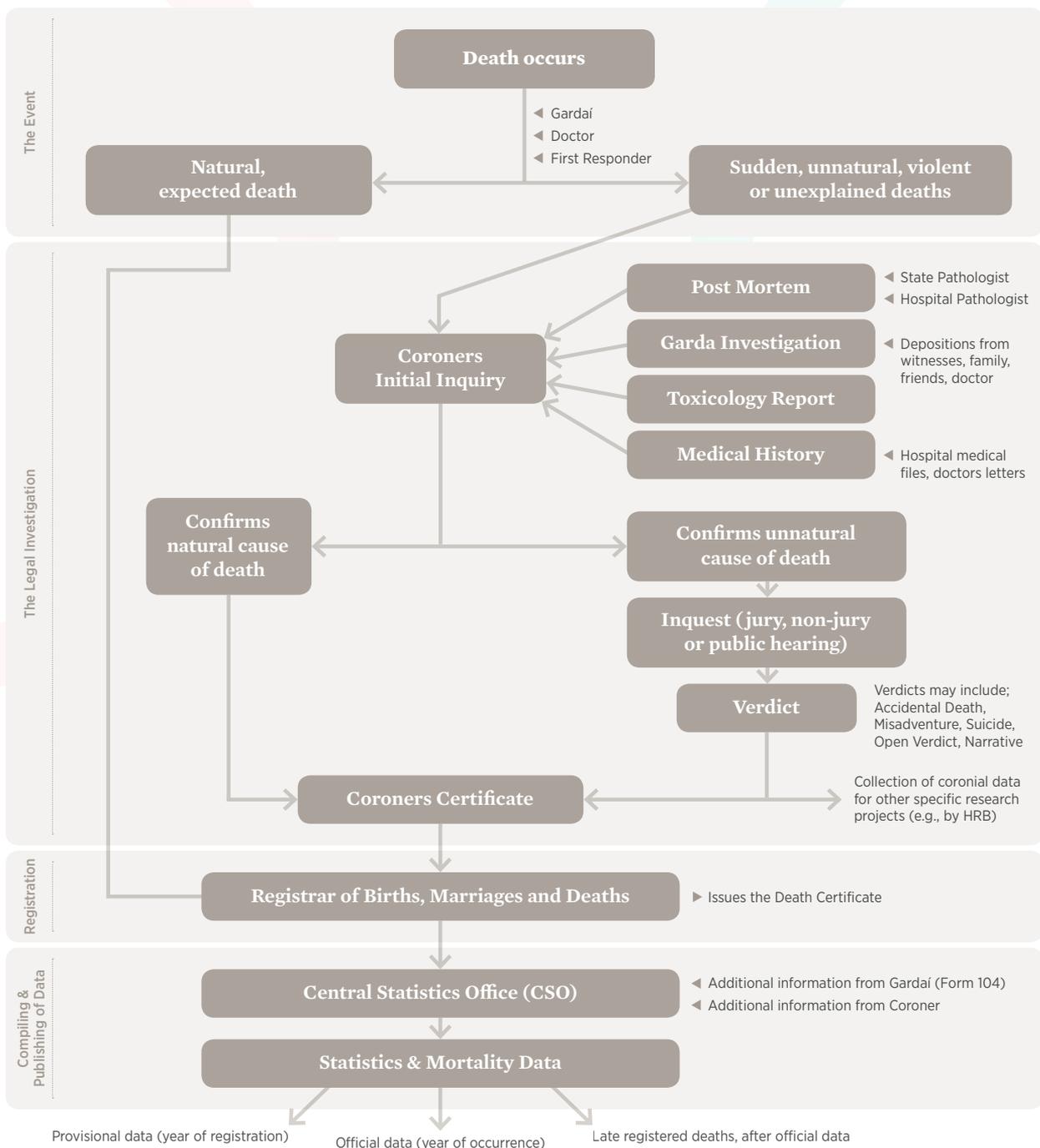
Suicide in Ireland



Irish Cause of Death Statistics System

In Ireland, the decision as to whether someone has died by suicide, is a legal decision made by Coroners - not a medical decision made by doctors or the HSE. The Coroner is a death investigator tasked under statute with investigating all sudden, unexplained, violent and unnatural deaths. Suicide is a verdict which is recorded if they find evidence of death by suicide 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

Following the Coronial investigation, inquest and registration processes, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) publishes national mortality data, including data on deaths by a Coroner, as suicide. The purpose of the CSO (mandated under the Statistics Act 1993) is to impartially collect, analyse and make available statistics about Ireland's people, society and economy.



Irish Suicide and Self-harm Statistics

Irish Suicide Statistics

Suicide statistics published by the Central Statistics (CSO) are not easily comparable across different years. This is because this information is provided in different stages.

1. Numbers of deaths are provided firstly based by year of registration – “provisional”
2. They are revised later, by year of occurrence – “official”
3. Finally, they are revised later again, to include “late registrations”.

At any given time, statistics for different years are at different stages. The following table gives the number of suicide deaths in Ireland for the last ten years, and highlights the stage of each (at time of print). Rates (in italics) are given per 100,000 population.

	All	Male	Female	
2018	352 <i>7.2</i>	282 <i>11.7</i>	70 <i>2.9</i>	Provisional, year of registration data
2017	392 <i>8.2</i>	312 <i>13.2</i>	80 <i>3.3</i>	Provisional, year of registration data
2016	437 <i>9.2</i>	350 <i>14.9</i>	87 <i>3.6</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>excluding</i> late registrations
2015	425 <i>9.1</i>	335 <i>14.5</i>	90 <i>3.8</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>excluding</i> late registrations
2014	560 <i>12.1</i>	458 <i>19.9</i>	102 <i>4.3</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2013	545 <i>11.8</i>	438 <i>19.2</i>	107 <i>4.6</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2012	577 <i>12.6</i>	471 <i>20.7</i>	106 <i>4.6</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2011	579 <i>12.6</i>	475 <i>20.9</i>	101 <i>4.4</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2010	522 <i>11.5</i>	423 <i>18.7</i>	99 <i>4.3</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2009	579 <i>12.8</i>	465 <i>20.6</i>	114 <i>5.0</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations
2008	529 <i>11.8</i>	398 <i>17.8</i>	131 <i>5.8</i>	Official, year of occurrence data, <i>including</i> late registrations

Indications are that additional deaths registered as “undetermined” may include hidden cases of suicide. However, it is not clear which proportion of undetermined deaths involve probable suicide cases.

The numbers of undetermined deaths published by the CSO have generally declined during the 10 year period above, and have ranged from 83 (in 2010) to 19 (provisionally, in 2018).

More data on deaths in Ireland can be found on the Central Statistics Office website at www.cso.ie and in the briefing documents provided by the NOSP, at www.connectingforlifeireland.ie.

Irish Suicide Statistics, by County

Given the limitations in comparing suicide statistics already outlined, and the large differences in county populations, the NOSP recommends comparing county suicide rates - using three-year moving average rates of suicide, per 100,000 population, by county of residence of deceased.

The following table gives these rates for 2006 to 2018 (*2017 and 2018 data is provisional).

	2006 - 2008	2007 - 2009	2008 - 2010	2009 - 2011	2010 - 2012	2011 - 2013	2012 - 2014	2013 - 2015	2014 - 2016*	2015 - 2017*	2016 - 2018*
Ireland	10.9	11.3	11.4	11.7	11.6	11.5	11.0	10.1	9.6	8.8	8.2
Carlow	17.4	14.5	11.7	12.3	11.6	15.2	16.3	16.9	14.4	11.8	12.3
South Dublin	8.6	8.2	8.2	9.5	8.8	9.3	7.4	6.7	5.3	4.2	4.2
Dublin C.B.	10.3	10.4	10.4	10.8	11.0	10.6	9.5	7.3	5.8	4.4	3.9
Fingal	5.2	6.3	6.7	6.0	5.6	5.2	5.3	4.5	3.8	3.7	3.2
Dun Lgh Rdown	6.5	7.3	7.9	7.3	7.1	7.0	6.5	4.1	2.5	2.1	2.4
Kildare	11.4	11.4	10.3	10.5	10.9	11.7	11.8	11.1	10.8	9.3	8.7
Kilkenny	11.5	10.9	9.6	11.2	11.8	11.8	11.1	11.4	12.3	11.5	9.7
Laois	11.6	10.9	13.5	16.5	16.8	12.2	8.1	7.6	8.8	12.2	10.1
Longford	10.5	9.2	7.9	8.7	7.6	9.2	10.8	11.6	9.9	9.8	6.5
Louth	11.1	11.6	12.8	12.9	14.0	12.7	11.8	8.8	8.2	8.1	7.7
Meath	9.3	10.8	10.9	8.3	7.5	8.7	9.1	9.8	9.0	8.0	5.8
Offaly	13.7	14.7	17.6	16.1	16.0	12.4	11.5	9.7	11.4	12.6	13.0
Westmeath	12.1	14.4	14.9	14.0	13.1	11.5	9.5	8.3	9.8	9.7	11.5
Wexford	13.5	13.9	12.5	14.8	17.8	17.8	17.0	13.5	13.5	11.1	11.7
Wicklow	10.3	9.3	10.6	11.5	10.2	8.2	7.2	8.5	9.0	8.9	7.6
Clare	12.8	14.3	11.6	11.1	10.2	14.1	15.2	15.5	13.5	13.4	13.6
Cork C.B.	19.3	19.3	19.2	17.7	18.6	16.0	15.9	12.2	15.4	16.8	15.3
Cork Co.	13.1	13.3	13.5	13.5	11.8	11.7	10.0	10.5	10.7	10.9	9.9
Kerry	9.5	12.6	15.4	18.1	19.0	16.6	16.1	12.5	14.1	12.0	11.1
Limerick C.B.	12.4	10.8	11.9	16.6	21.3	26.0	27.1	21.8	15.9	8.8	9.3
Limerick Co.	8.6	10.8	11.4	13.3	14.0	12.4	10.1	10.0	9.8	9.5	9.9
Tipperary N.R.	14.8	14.8	14.7	14.6	9.9	14.0	12.5	13.9	12.0	13.9	10.2
Tipperary S.R.	12.0	14.1	14.3	14.6	14.2	13.4	13.4	13.4	13.1	12.7	7.9
Waterford C.B.	9.2	13.1	11.1	14.1	10.8	9.3	5.0	4.3	4.9	6.3	7.7
Waterford Co.	13.0	13.2	15.1	12.4	11.4	9.8	12.3	11.8	13.7	11.6	13.9
Galway C.B.	7.5	8.7	8.8	11.0	9.8	12.2	11.4	12.8	11.9	11.1	10.9
Galway Co.	10.6	10.9	12.5	13.1	13.6	13.3	13.3	12.6	11.8	10.2	7.9
Leitrim	8.9	10.9	14.9	16.8	15.6	12.5	9.4	9.4	10.4	12.4	11.3
Mayo	12.8	12.8	11.5	13.3	15.4	14.6	15.1	12.0	11.5	8.2	7.3
Roscommon	15.5	11.9	11.1	10.5	11.4	10.9	14.5	16.1	15.0	9.8	6.6
Sligo	6.9	7.3	10.3	11.3	11.8	9.8	9.3	8.8	9.8	10.8	8.7
Cavan	16.7	14.9	12.0	10.2	10.0	14.0	15.8	15.8	15.3	13.8	16.7
Donegal	10.1	10.9	9.6	8.0	6.4	8.9	9.3	11.6	10.8	10.2	8.3
Monaghan	9.8	11.3	12.2	10.5	13.1	13.1	16.4	12.6	14.7	15.7	17.1

European Suicide Comparisons

It is not easy to compare suicide rates among European counterparts because of the variations in registration and reporting systems in different jurisdictions. Nevertheless, Eurostat provides comparisons using standardised death rates, calculated on the basis of a standard European population (defined by the World Health Organisation).

At the time of print, Eurostat comparisons were available up to **2016** and show that in that year;

- Ireland's overall suicide rate was not high, by European comparison
- The overall rate of suicide in Ireland was **11th lowest** rate of 34 countries.

Eurostat also provides comparisons of rates of suicide of young people (aged 15-19 male and female), up to **2015**. These comparisons show that;

- The rate of suicide of age 15-19 year olds in Ireland was the **9th highest** rate of 33 countries.

These rankings have fluctuated over years previous to 2016. Further details can be found on the Eurostat website

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home>

Irish Self-harm Statistics

The National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI) is a national system of population monitoring for the occurrence of self-harm. The Registry collects data based on persons presenting to hospital emergency departments as a result of an episode of self-harm, as defined by the Registry. As of 2006 the Registry has obtained full coverage of all general and paediatric hospital emergency departments in the Republic of Ireland.

The Registry was established over 15 years ago at the request of the Department of Health and Children, by the National Suicide Research Foundation. It is funded by the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention and remains the world's first national registry of cases of intentional self-harm presenting to hospital emergency departments.

The Registry aims;

- To establish the extent and nature of hospital-treated self-harm in Ireland
- To monitor trends over time and by area
- To contribute to policy and development in the area of suicidal behaviour
- To help the progress of research and prevention.

The Registry represents an important resource both nationally and internationally, identifying key trends and risk factors for self-harm which can guide policy and further research. The Registry has informed core actions in Connecting for Life and is a key component of the outcomes framework being used to monitor progress and examine the impact of implemented actions. Internationally, the Registry has been identified as a model of best practice by the World Health Organisation.

Findings from the NSHRI are disseminated via a wide range of formats, including annual and interim reports, peer-review articles and conference presentations. The latest National Self-Harm Registry Ireland Annual Report can be accessed on the National Suicide Research Foundation website, www.nsrp.ie.



Members of the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) Team at the launch of the National Self-harm Registry Ireland Report for 2017, in October 2018 (photo: Photocall Ireland)

Section 5

Financial Information

NOSP Financial Overview 2018

NOSP's budget in 2018 was €11.996m and actual expenditure was €11.999m.

The budget and expenditure of the NOSP has increased significantly in the last six years, from €5.19m in 2012. In 2018, almost 60% of expenditure supported frontline services and organisations working in the area of suicide prevention and mental health promotion.

All NOSP-funded activities are aligned with specific objectives in Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020 and form part of our coordinated efforts to successfully implement its actions.

Summary of Overall Expenditure

	2017	2018
	€	€
Grants to Agencies	6,306,741	7,017,858
Communications Projects	763,783	1,192,252
Research	181,996	206,967
Non grant expenditure (<i>office expenses, salaries etc</i>)	1,113,872	783,076
Training Programmes (<i>*2018 figure now includes National DBT Project</i>)	391,522	687,118
Regional liaison & suicide prevention services	790,000	1,307,240
HSE funded Programmes / Community Resilience Fund	1,148,367	-
Capacity building (<i>Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention</i>)	-	804,980
TOTAL	10,696,281	11,999,491

NOSP Funded Agencies 2018

	2017	2018
	€	€
Aware	227,500	297,500
BeLonG To	233,401	233,401
Community Creations / SpunOut.ie	95,000	145,000
Curam Clainne - Mayo Suicide Liaison Project	93,045	103,045
Dublin Simon Community	-	271,963
First Fortnight Ltd	155,002	155,000
GAA	50,000	50,000
GLEN	17,416	-
Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)	93,170	175,000
ISPCC / Childline	210,000	219,500
Lifford Clonleigh Family Resource Centre	80,000	-
LGBT Support and Advocacy Network	-	50,000
Men's Health Forum Ireland	42,463	49,980
MyMind	115,500	145,500
National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF)	706,944	885,576
National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)	20,638	-
Nurture	89,089	-
Pieta House	1,676,376	1,897,551
ReachOut Ireland	196,000	119,000
Samaritans Ireland	576,500	618,000
Shine (SeeChange, Headline)	277,529	267,000
Suicide or Survive (SOS)	248,000	273,000
Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)	79,000	79,000
Turn2Me	97,200	150,431
Union of Students in Ireland (USI)	45,000	76,268
Young Social Innovators	102,500	-
Exchange House	350,000	302,367
Offaly Traveller Movement	-	47,731
Mental Health Ireland (<i>Mojo Project</i>)	321,800	(11,132)
South Dublin County Partnership (<i>Heads Up Project</i>)	42,570	163,860
Offaly Local Development Company / <i>Mojo Offaly Project</i>	-	137,042
Westport Family Resource Centre (<i>National FRC Mental Health Project</i>)	65,098	16,275
Tusla (<i>National FRC Mental Health Project</i>)	-	100,000
TOTAL	6,306,741	7,017,858

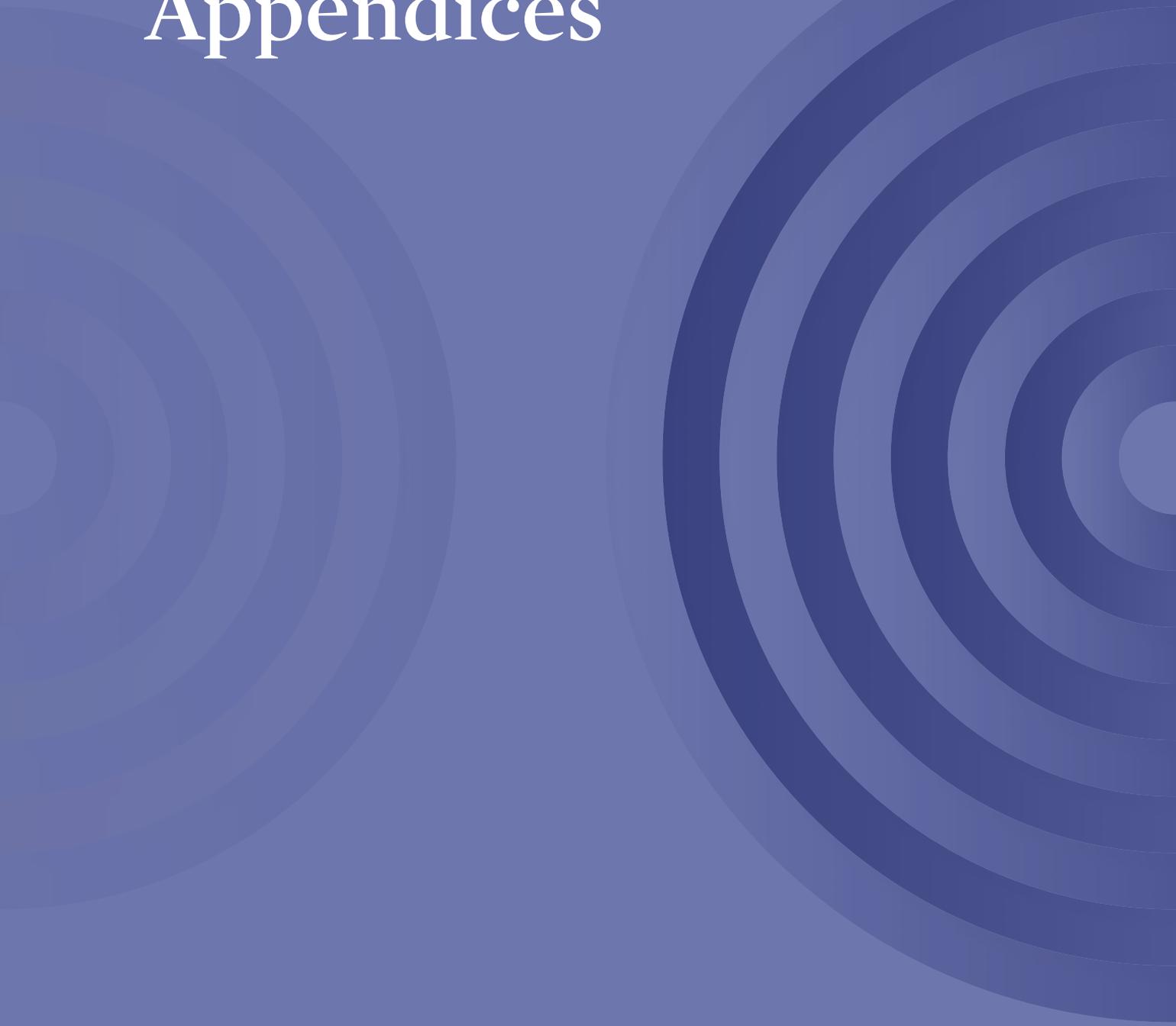


Dr Justin Brophy, Íde Delargy (Practitioner Health) and Prof Ristéard Ó'Laoide (St Vincent's University Hospital), at St Vincent's University Hospital, promoting the Green Ribbon Campaign with healthcare workers in mind, May 2018.

Working in healthcare can sometimes be demanding and workers can often neglect their own needs, especially the need for a balanced lifestyle and to take positive steps to maintain and protect their health. Greater awareness, greater acknowledgement and greater engagement with improving the health of the healthcare workforce are always to be encouraged.

Section 6

Appendices



Appendix 1: Are you, or someone you know, in crisis?

A mental health crisis often means that a person no longer feels able to cope or be in control of their situation. A crisis could also mean that a person might harm themselves, harm someone else, or is vulnerable to suicide. In a crisis it is important to get help as quickly as you can for yourself or the person you are concerned about.

You can get professional help through;

GP and health centres

A GP can offer support for anyone in crisis. If possible, ask someone to come along with you. Find a service near you on www.hse.ie or look up your nearest out of hours GP service

Hospital emergency services

Go to or call the emergency department of your local general hospital.

Telephone emergency services

You can contact emergency services on 999 or 112.

HSE Mental Health Services

If you are being supported by a mental health team, or have been in the past, contact the service for support in a crisis.

Samaritans

The Samaritans telephone service is available 24 hours a day. For confidential, non-judgmental support:

- Freephone 116 123
- Text 087 2 60 90 90 - standard message rates apply
- Email jo@samaritans.ie

You might need to try a few options before you find appropriate support but don't give up trying - there is help available. If possible, ask someone to come along with you to the support service you contact.

In a crisis it is important to get help as quickly as you can for yourself or the person you are concerned about.

yourmentalhealth.ie
Information | Support | Services

Appendix 2: The NOSP Team

- John Meehan
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- Gemma Cox
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- Philip Dodd
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- Anita Munnelly
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- Hugh Duane
Research Assistant
- Brid Casey
National Programme Manager – NGO Sector with responsibility for the Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services
- Ailish O’Neill
National Education and Training Programme Manager
- Paula Skehan
Freedom of Information Decision Maker, Data Protection Champion, Events and Meetings
- Fidelma Morrissey
Administration Officer
- Sharon Nolan
Finance Administrator
- Ciarán Austin
Communications Manager (Acting)
- Adèle Fitzpatrick
PA to Assistant National Director
- Regina Barry
Assistant Staff Officer

Other Members of the NOSP Team during 2018

- Justin Brophy
Clinical Advisor (until October 2018)

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- Oliver Skehan
- Sinead Hardiman
- HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention
- HSE Communications Team
- HSE Mental Health Community Strategy and Planning
- HSE Mental Health Community Operations Team
- The Department of Health
- The NGO, voluntary and statutory organisations that contributed to this report
- The Central Statistics Office

This report was printed in August 2019 and is available;

- To download at www.nosp.ie or www.connectingforlifeireland.ie
- To order at www.healthpromotion.ie.





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Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service