



National
Office *for*
Suicide
Prevention

Annual Report 2020



Connecting for Life

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Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce this Annual Report for 2020, from the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention, NOSP. This report concisely captures the work of the office during 2020, and developments in the implementation of Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2015 – 2024).



2020 was a year of challenge and change across all health services and in all our communities as we worked to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and protect public health. It was also an extremely difficult and emotional time for so many of us, our patients and service users, our friends and families, our external partners and our staff. The onset of the pandemic created great uncertainty and worry for us all. The pandemic also required us to quickly devise new and innovative ways to work together across multiple sectors, bringing all of our collective resources together to respond to a different and urgent set of needs. The level of community and cross-sectoral engagement focusing on populations at additional risk, from social isolation, from increased levels of anxiety and worry has been notable. I am glad to advise that our investment in, and focus on the implementation of Connecting for Life, and in the wide range of NGO partners who work with the NOSP, has remained firm during these difficult times for our communities and for our service users and staff. In 2020, over half of NOSP's expenditure was for grants to national organisations and frontline services working in suicide prevention and mental health promotion. While this focus on prevention and health improvement is always critical, it was even more so in 2020 and remains so into 2021 given the ongoing impact of the pandemic on us as a society. The overall budget and expenditure of the NOSP has increased significantly in the last eight years, from €5.19m in 2012, to over €13m in 2020. This is indicative of the large span of very valuable, evidence-based work to reduce suicide that is underway, and of our commitments to keep suicide prevention as a key priority, particularly as we emerge from the pandemic.

There have been other changes to how we get our work done in the last 12 months. In 2019, the HSE's CEO Paul Reid commissioned a review of HSE corporate structures, to determine what configuration and structures would most effectively support delivery of services across the HSE, for example, in hospital groups, community healthcare organisations, and all other related services. The 'HSE Corporate Centre Review' that took place during 2020, has now been completed, and a phased implementation of the new structures is underway during 2021.

As part of these changes, a new Planning function has been established within 'Integrated Operations' in the HSE, to better support the translation of policy, strategy and evidence-led priorities into services on the ground and service improvements more generally. NOSP is now an integral unit within this planning function and the intention is to strengthen and further embed our programmes of work, with an increasing range of partners and organisations to improve mental wellbeing and to prevent and reduce self-harm and loss of life to suicide in Ireland. Coming out of the pandemic, we are reflecting on the sheer commitment of staff, community partners and stakeholders, across all sectors working on this agenda. Our focus now is reflecting on what we have experienced and learned through our work and interactions over the last 12 months and further accelerating our work to implement multi-sectoral strategies, such as Connecting for Life and Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the team in the NOSP, the team of HSE Resources Officers for Suicide Prevention, colleagues in Mental Health, CHOs, HGs, and the myriad of national and local organisations, agencies, councils, partners, community groups, families who work with us on the implementation of Connecting for Life, including our colleagues in the Department of Health and other government agencies and departments. Your achievements form an integral part of our collective efforts to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities across the country, and to achieve the ultimate vision of Connecting for Life, of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost to suicide.

Dr Stephanie O'Keeffe

HSE National Director, Integrated Operations - Planning

Foreword

On behalf of the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention, NOSP, I present this Annual Report for 2020 and the summary of work contained therein. In this document you can read about the priorities and activities of the NOSP - and many other partners - during what was, a unique year.



Three significant priorities of the office in 2020, were to:

- Work closely with our wide range of NGO partners, many of whom were significantly impacted by the pandemic. The majority needed to quickly adapt their supports or service delivery methods, or had to respond to increased demand, most notably during times of significant public health restrictions. The NOSP was very pleased to provide ongoing support and engagement with the sector, where possible, to ensure consistency, coordination and innovation during the pandemic.
- Keep Connecting for Life, and the merit of our national strategy, high on the national agenda. The extension of Connecting for Life to 2024 announced by the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD in November, was a notable milestone, and an endorsement of the strategy and its sound implementation progress to date. This extension will allow us to build on the strong implementation structures and progress already achieved since 2015 - both at national level, and at local levels. Over 20 HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention are fundamental in the local implementation of Connecting for Life, and the current development of new localised plans to cover this new period to 2024.
- Participate in the development of the HSE Psychosocial Response to Covid-19, which was initiated early in the pandemic, in March 2020. The establishment of the HSE Psychosocial Response Project Group was critical in addressing the need for a national health sector psychosocial plan and in supporting the overall wellbeing, resilience and mental health of our population. The NOSP has also supported and resourced ongoing HSE mental health communications activity and responsive information for the public, which has become an area of utmost importance during the pandemic.

While we can say with reasonable certainty, that rates of suicide in Ireland are not high when compared with EU counterparts, we know that every death by suicide is one too many - and we remain fully committed to further reducing suicide in Ireland.

We also realise that there is a pressing need for more timely, real-time, and indicative information on suicide or suspected suicide in Ireland. This need has become even more apparent since the onset of the pandemic. As a result, the NOSP has now prioritised initiatives which will improve our visibility of real-time information in the future.

To conclude, I would like to acknowledge the decisive role that the NOSP has in leading and coordinating the implementation of Connecting for Life, and to thank all the team for their work and achievements. This is undoubtedly a complex undertaking, made possible with the continued support of many stakeholders in this work. I would particularly like to thank our colleagues in HSE Mental Health Community Operations, the Department of Health, and the range of lead agencies who have made extensive commitments to our national strategy. Lastly, I would like to thank the national network of HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention, and the range of diverse NGO partners for their tireless work and collaborative undertakings during 2020 and 2021.

John Meehan

HSE Assistant National Director, Mental Health, and Head of the National Office for Suicide Prevention

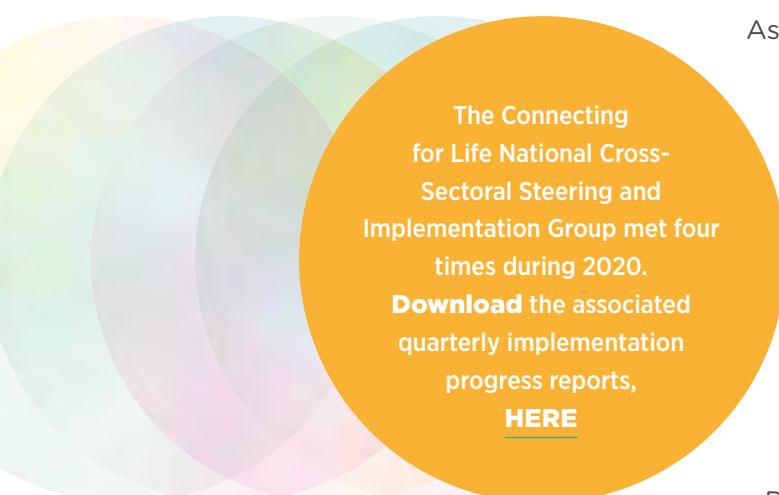
SECTION 1

The work of the NOSP in 2020

The work of the NOSP in 2020

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) was established to strategically lead on suicide prevention across the HSE and in collaboration with multiple other sectors. Principally, the work of the office has been underpinned by Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide. This whole-of government strategy has shaped the core functions of the NOSP which can be summarised as follows:

1. **Of the 69 actions in Connecting for Life, the NOSP is:**
 - a. **The lead agency assigned to deliver on 16 actions.**
 - b. **The joint lead on two actions.**
 - c. **A supporting partner for 21 further actions.**
2. **The NOSP has a pivotal role in driving the overall implementation of Connecting for Life. The strategy mandates the NOSP to support, inform, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the strategy across the HSE, government departments, statutory agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).**
3. **More broadly, the NOSP also works with the HSE, government departments and within the NGO and community sector, in an advisory and supportive role, on activities or projects aligned with Connecting for Life or on suicide and self-harm prevention, postvention and awareness.**



The Connecting for Life National Cross-Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group met four times during 2020.

Download the associated quarterly implementation progress reports,

[HERE](#)

As a whole-of government strategy, Connecting for Life requires the NOSP to provide a strategic view of implementation progress, and within an implementation structure that was established at the beginning of the strategy, in 2015.

The NOSP fulfils a central role in this implementation structure and reports to the National Cross-Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group (chaired by the Department of Health), on a quarterly basis.

For more information on the NOSP and for details of the NOSP Team, visit www.nosp.ie.



The extension of Connecting for Life beyond 2020

In November 2020, the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD and the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler TD, announced the extension of Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, to 2024.

In line with this extension, the NOSP published a new and responsive implementation plan for 2020 to 2022, which is rooted in the principle of learning from previous experience of implementation to date. Specifically, this plan has been informed by the findings of the 2019 independent Interim Strategy Review of the implementation of the strategy. It also involved considerable consultation during 2020, with implementation partners, stakeholders and government departments.



The extension of Connecting for Life provided an opportunity to further advance and embed many already-established local implementation structures throughout the country. The local Connecting for Life Action Plans that were already in place, will in turn be extended and updated to reflect a new national implementation plan.

National implementation structures, most notably the National Cross-Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group, continue to coordinate different government departments and (departmental) strategies. The NOSP remains the named provider of cross-sectoral support for implementation of Connecting for Life.

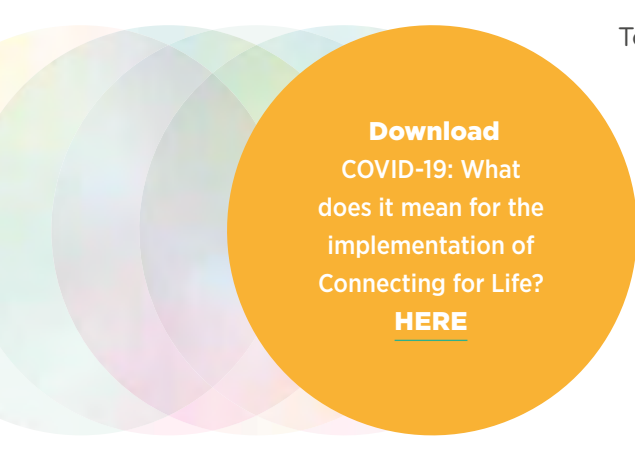
Read
the ministerial
announcement about
Connecting for Life [HERE](#)

Download the Connecting
for Life Implementation
Plan, 2020 - 2022,
[HERE](#)

COVID-19: What does it mean for the implementation of Connecting for Life?

In July 2020, the NOSP, together with HSE Strategy and Planning, published a paper examining the implications of COVID-19 for the implementation of Connecting for Life. The paper identifies some key challenges and opportunities for strategy leads, and describes the overarching themes which are likely to have implications, including:

- **The potential exacerbation of pre-existing mental health problems.**
- **The highlighting of existing identified priority groups within the strategy and the potential for emerging groups at risk of suicide and self-harm.**
- **The role social economic impacts will play arising as a result of the pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of the general population and priority groups.**
- **The structural changes required to the delivery of services and supports to reflect the changing environment within which services will be delivered.**



Download
COVID-19: What
does it mean for the
implementation of
Connecting for Life?
HERE

To mitigate the negative mental health impacts of COVID-19, the ongoing implementation of priority actions of Connecting for Life is crucial in preventing suicide during and after the pandemic. Particular attention should be given to the mental health needs of priority groups in accordance with Connecting for Life, including young people, middle-aged men, older people, homeless people, people with pre-existing mental health and physical health conditions, people who have experienced child sexual abuse, and those who experience domestic violence.

This paper had practical benefits – it informed and affirmed many of the NOSP’s undertakings during the pandemic, for example, increased engagement and networking with the NGO sector and targeted groups, and enhanced messaging about resources and services with a particular emphasis on psychosocial supports and approaches.

Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone

Sharing the Vision, a Mental Health Policy for Everyone (Department of Health) was published in July 2020. It is an ambitious, multifaceted national mental health policy to enhance the provision of mental health services and supports across a broad continuum from mental health promotion to specialist mental delivery during the period 2020-2030.

This policy was developed following a process of research into international innovation and best practice in mental health and an extensive national consultation of over 1,000 service users, family members, friends and carers and other stakeholders. The findings of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Future of Mental Health Care also contributed to this policy.

The NOSP contributed significantly to the Oversight Group that worked on the development of the strategy, since 2017. Now, on an ongoing basis, the NOSP has representation on the National Implementation and Monitoring Committee (NIMC) and its associated HSE-specific implementation structure, the HSE Implementation Group (HIG) for Sharing the Vision. This is particularly important given the shared objectives between Sharing the Vision and Connecting for Life.



Download
and read about
Sharing the Vision, a
Mental Health Policy
for Everyone,
[HERE](#)

HSE Psychosocial Response to COVID-19

At the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, the HSE formed the Psychosocial Response Project Group to address the impact of the psychological and social effects of the coronavirus pandemic. This work was initiated by Anne O’Conner, the Chief Operations Officer as chair of the HSE’s Integrated National Operations Hub (INOH), to address the need for a national health sector psychosocial plan and to support the overall wellbeing, resilience and mental health of our population. Priority groups identified as requiring particular attention included:

- **People who were bereaved during the pandemic.**
- **Healthcare workers who worked tirelessly during these times.**
- **More vulnerable groups of the general population.**



The NOSP led out on various workstreams of the Psychosocial Response Project Group, and supported the development of a framework for psychosocial structures and responses.

The Psychosocial Response Project Group:

- **Helped to align and mobilise a support helpline for health service staff.**
- **Established dedicated support information on hse.ie.**
- **Delivered self-directed, innovative online support programmes.**
- **Enhanced access to therapy and mental health services.**
- **Along with NGO partners, successfully fast-tracked new telehealth options (including innovative online, text and phone therapeutic supports).**
- **Produced a new framework that will form the basis of HSE policy and an enhanced, integrated psychosocial response plan for the duration of the pandemic and over the longer ‘post emergency’ term.**

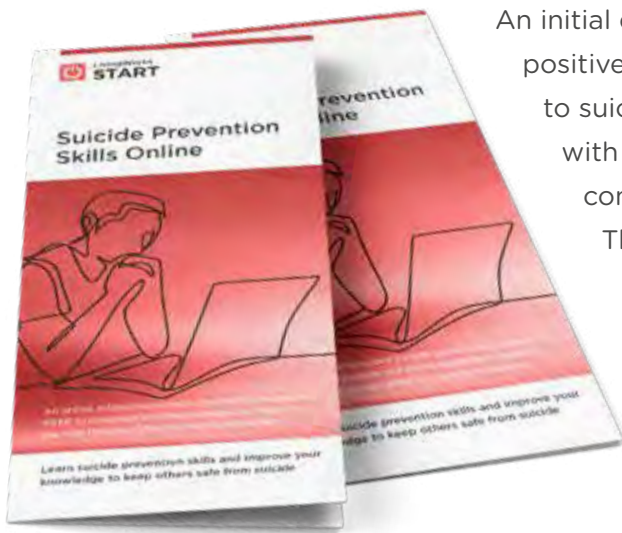
Read
more about
the work of the HSE
Psychosocial Response Group
[HERE](#)

Download the HSE Psychosocial
Response to the Covid-19
Pandemic report
[HERE](#)

Education and training

In 2020, public health restrictions associated with the pandemic meant that the delivery of face-to-face suicide prevention training programmes was paused for most of the year. In response, the NOSP utilised the online space for training delivery and continued moving toward hybrid approaches.

LivingWorks Start was introduced in 2020, and 3,700 individual licences were issued during the year. This is an online, interactive training programme that will give participants the skills and knowledge to keep others safe from suicide. It will help them identify people who are at risk, confidently ask them about the topic of suicide and connect them with resources that can help them stay safe. The programme uses a mix of guided online content, video and interactive questions.



An initial evaluation of LivingWorks Start returned positive findings including improvements in attitude to suicide prevention, increased confidence to deal with the needs of someone suicidal and increased confidence to refer to appropriate services.

The programme is accredited by the Psychological Society of Ireland.

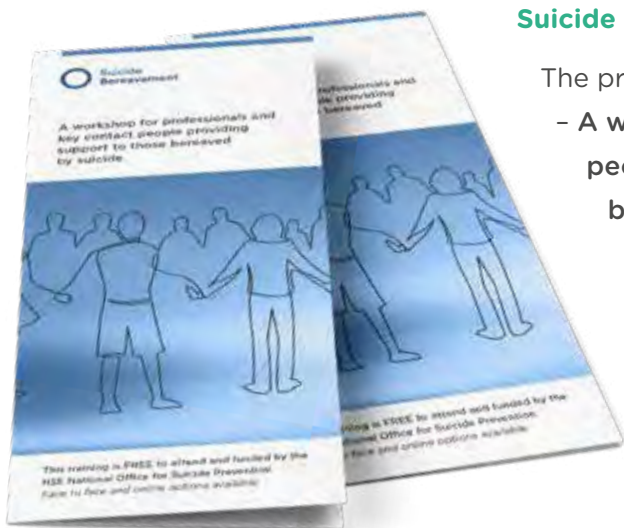
Irish residents, aged 18 and over, can request a free LivingWorks Start licence, from local coordinators.

“I did the course myself and it was very interactive - not at all what I expected – quite powerful, very real scenarios.”

“I completed the Living Works Suicide Programme and found it really useful, relevant and up-to-date. Really effective online training programme and a good refresher too if you have done any previous suicide prevention training.”

Read more
about LivingWorks
Start and find details for
local coordinators [**HERE**](#)

Download the Pilot Evaluation
by the NOSP, of
LivingWorks Start
[**HERE**](#)



Suicide Bereavement

The professional bereavement training programme – **A workshop for professionals and key contact people providing support to those bereaved by suicide**, was repurposed for online delivery. Participants complete a one hour e-module followed by a four hour facilitated workshop. Three workshops were piloted in Q4 2020, for ongoing rollout into 2021.

“The workshop re-inforced previous knowledge and validated the importance of actively listening. It also reassured me in my approach to supporting someone who is bereaved by suicide.”

“Having the opportunity to practice the skills of engagement was so helpful and has given me confidence in my interactions with people who have been bereaved by suicide.”

Responding to a Person in Suicidal Distress: A guidance document for public-facing staff or volunteers

Developed by the Connecting for Life Policy and Protocols Cross Sectoral Working Group during 2020, 'Responding to a person in suicidal distress: a guidance document for public-facing staff or volunteers' aims to support staff and volunteers working in public-facing roles to interact with people who present or contact the service in distress or at risk of suicide and self-harm.

The practical guide can be incorporated into staff induction packs or training manuals. It will inform and promote the use of standardised approaches across different settings.

During the year, the NOSP also worked with government departments and agencies to develop and deliver an associated online presentation to staff teams, who in the course of their work may come across individuals in distress. The presentation was delivered to staff teams across the Department of Social Protection and to members of the Defence Forces in 2020.



Download
Responding to a
Person in Suicidal
Distress
[**HERE**](#)

Suicide prevention and policy-making

In 2020 the NOSP developed and published practical guidance and information for policy-makers in government departments, about suicide prevention and how to integrate suicide prevention into policy-making functions. This guidance supports Connecting for Life action 3.1.1. - 'Integrate suicide prevention into the development of relevant national policies, plans and programmes for people who are at an increased risk of suicide or self-harm' It was developed after close consultation with relevant stake-holders, during the year.



Download
the Suicide
Prevention Impact
Assessment Toolkit, and
the supporting review
document
[**HERE**](#)

The Irish College of General Practitioners and Connecting for Life

The NOSP and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) have continued partnership initiatives in alignment with Connecting for Life – in particular relating to action 3.1.5, to ‘Provide and sustain training to health and social care professionals, including frontline mental health service staff and primary care health providers. This training will improve recognition of, and response to, suicide risk and suicidal behaviour among people vulnerable to suicide.’

It is widely accepted that GPs fulfill a critical gatekeeper role, and are incredibly important in recognising and providing the necessary treatment to individuals who may be at risk of suicide. While GP trainees are taught to conduct clinical suicide risk assessments as part of their training, there have been identified needs to include a stronger focus on mental health and suicide prevention across the programme of continuing education that the ICGP offers.

GP gatekeeper training

The NOSP and ICGP continue to collaborate on the delivery of gatekeeper suicide prevention training to all GPs in training. Level One training is delivered by 4 Mental Health, who are 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.

Over 600 GPs have been trained to date. An independent evaluation is now underway and will establish the benefits of having GPs trained in the recognition and management of suicide risk in this way and how this will help to improve the standardisation of care for those at risk of suicide.

ICGP education webinars

During 2020 and with the onset of COVID-19, the ICGP delivery of a series of weekly webinars became an important mechanism to support GPs and trainees on a wide range of topics. Webinars are delivered live and up to 2,500 attend every week. Each live webinar attracts 1 external CPD credit for all who register and consume the learning content.

The series has included the addition of new webinars on: Dealing with patients with suicidal ideation and/or self-harm; Triage patients with suicidal ideation and/or self-harm; Diagnosing and managing early psychosis in General Practice, and; Managing the aftermath when patients die by suicide. First Episode Psychosis also featured as a key topic in the ICGP Winter Meeting 2020 Virtual Conference (General Practice – Managing Uncertainty, Preparing for the Future) in November 2020.

Collaboration between the NOSP and the ICGP is ongoing, to develop further mental health and suicide prevention specific continuous medical education material for GPs, into 2021.



For more information on the range of ICGP Education Webinars, visit [HERE](#)

The National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework

In October 2020, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, launched a new National Framework to address the issues of student mental health and suicide prevention. The Framework has been developed as part of the Higher Education Authority's commitment to Connecting for Life action 3.3.3 - to 'Work with the HSE to develop national guidance for higher education institutions in relation to suicide risk and critical incident response, thereby helping to address any gaps which may exist in the prevention of suicide in higher education'.

This new National Framework was developed in collaboration with students, mental health and suicide prevention specialists, academics, researchers and institutional staff.

The resulting framework delivers on a commitment to develop national guidelines for the higher education institutions (HEIs) in relation to suicide risk and critical incident response, thereby helping to address any gaps which might exist in the prevention of suicide in higher education.


To support the implementation of the framework, the HEA and the NOSP funded the delivery of Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS) training to over 230 student counselling staff members in 2020.

Download
the National Student
Mental Health and
Suicide Prevention
Framework
[HERE](#)

Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services: A celebration

In February, the NOSP held a celebration event with NGO partners, to mark the publication of the 'Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services: Working together for high-quality services' and the involvement of all those who contributed to the project. Topics covered at the event included the importance of co-production, a learning approach to quality improvement, the strengths and challenges of implementation, evaluation, and self-care.

Co-produced by the NOSP and NGO partners working in the area of suicide prevention, the guidance is underpinned by the best available evidence. It aims to support organisations to deliver high-quality, evidence-based suicide prevention services and is an important step in assuring quality in the provision of suicide prevention services. The development of this best practice guidance is set out in Connecting for Life action 5.1.1.




Download
the Best Practice
Guidance for Suicide
Prevention Services
[HERE](#)

Improving Suicide Bereavement Supports in Ireland report

HSE Mental Health Operations with the NOSP, published a new report and set of recommendations on Improving Suicide Bereavement Supports in Ireland, in January 2020. This framework sets out 10 core action areas that encompass 21 actions identified as essential for the improvement of suicide bereavement supports and services. The report also identifies the ownership of the actions that will allow for the improvement and sustainability of services in this area.

Connecting for Life has two specific actions in this area - action 4.3.1 'To deliver enhanced bereavement support services to families and communities affected by suicide of those people known to mental health services' and action 4.3.2 'To commission and evaluate bereavement support services'. In 2018 HSE Mental Health initiated an improvement project 'Enhancing Suicide Bereavement Supports' and a working group and Project Steering Committee were then established.

HSE Mental Health Operations and the NOSP collaborated on the publication of 'Improving suicide bereavement supports in Ireland' and a part-time National Suicide Bereavement Support Coordinator was introduced to work on the implementation of the actions set out in the report.



Download
the Improving
Suicide Bereavement
Supports in Ireland
report [HERE](#)



Building Capacity for the Evaluation of Social Prescribing

In 2019, HSE Health and Wellbeing, the NOSP and the Department of Health commissioned an evaluability assessment of Social Prescribing in Ireland. This assessment is a key input to the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for Social Prescribing in Ireland.

The evaluability assessment within this report is limited to 12 Social Prescribing projects in operation in Ireland identified by the HSE at the project commencement stage. The objectives of this project were, to undertake an evaluability assessment of Social Prescribing projects in Ireland by:

- Providing an overview and synthesis of current Social Prescribing services and programmes in Ireland in terms of the underlying theory of change and programme logic models.
- Assessing the capacity of the current Social Prescribing system in Ireland to collect process, output and outcome data to support impact evaluation.
- Developing a Minimum Data Outcomes Framework for Social Prescribing services in Ireland, using a consensus-based methodology, and providing recommendations on how to establish a system to collate and report on outcomes nationally.

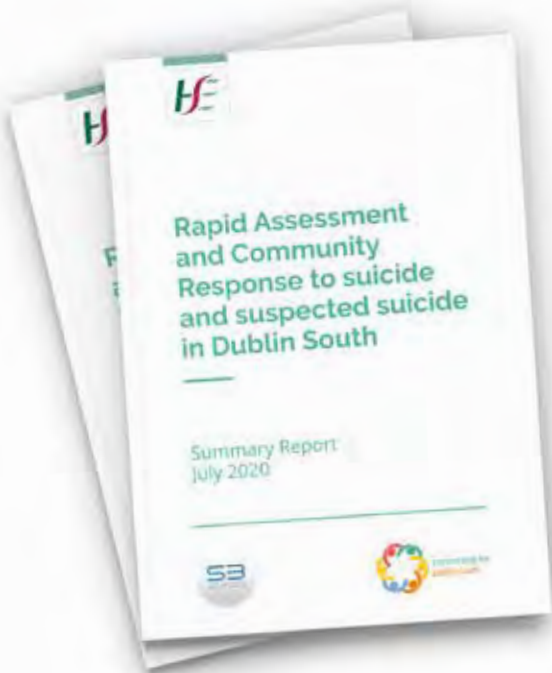
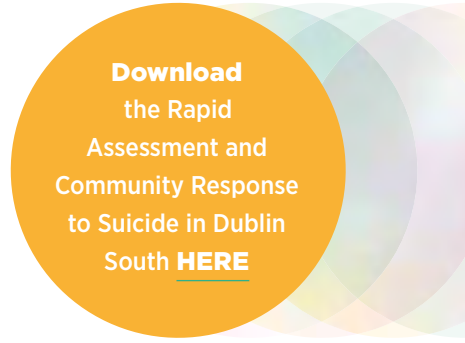
Download
Building Capacity for
the Evaluation of
Social Prescribing: an
Evaluability Assessment, and the
Summary Report [HERE](#)

Watch the HSE Health and Wellbeing
launch webinar - Social Prescribing
in Ireland: Building the
Evidence Base [HERE](#)

Rapid Assessment and Community Response to Suicide and Suspected Suicide in Dublin South

In early 2020, the NOSP commissioned a rapid assessment of suicide and suspected suicide within the Ballyfermot community. The purpose was to:

- Efficiently work with key stakeholders to gain insights and understanding about the range of factors that may be affecting suicidal behaviour in the community.
- Identify how best to support those impacted to minimise any possible contagion.



This assessment – conducted by S3 Solutions with the support of the NOSP – explored a suicide cluster in the Ballyfermot area in 2019 and outlined the perceived area-level factors influencing the cluster and related contagion, under different themes.

Equipped with this knowledge, the Connecting for Life area-level Implementing Team and the local HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) would be well positioned to develop targeted interventions to support the success of all response efforts. Since publication, the assessment has informed the work of the newly established interagency group, Ballyfermot SPACE (Suicide Prevention and Community Engagement).

The NOSP Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects

At the end of 2020, the NOSP introduced its first grant scheme for collaborative research projects on priority groups in Ireland. Goal 3 of Connecting for Life focuses on these priority groups, i.e., groups in the population which may be at increased risk of suicide and self-harm.

The purpose of this research grant scheme is to:

- **Further understanding of the groups that are at increased risk for self-harm and suicide.**
- **Promote and support collaborative research projects between researchers and services working in the area of suicide prevention in Ireland.**

Applicants were asked to select one of a listed number of Connecting for Life priority groups and to submit a research proposal for this group. Applications were invited from suitably qualified researchers (applied and academic) and service organisations working in the area of suicide prevention. Single applicants were welcome but collaborative applications between researchers and service organisations were preferred as part of this call. This scheme is now closed (applications were open from 1st December 2020 to 29th January 2021) and abstracts of successful projects have now been published on www.connectingforlifeireland.ie.

The Harmful Impact of Suicide and Self-harm Content Online, a Review of the Literature

In 2020 the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), with the support of the NOSP, completed a literature review of the Harmful Impact of Suicide and Self-harm Content Online. This review relates to Connecting for Life action 1.4.1, 'Engage with online platforms to encourage best practice in reporting around suicidal behaviour, so as to encourage a safer online environment in this area.'

This review will inform the position of the NOSP in relation to this action and extend the knowledge and understanding of the types of harmful suicide or self-harm content online in Ireland.

The primary aims of this review were:

- **To identify, review and summarise the literature and evidence on the impact of harmful suicide or self-harm content online.**
- **To propose clearly defined descriptions of categories of online material that are considered to be harmful in relation to suicide and self-harm.**



Download the Harmful Impact of Suicide and Self-harm Content Online, a Review of the Literature [HERE](#)

HSE Mental Health Communications

The NOSP provides significant ongoing input to wider HSE mental health communications activity. In particular, the Mental Health Communications Steering Group is continuing to work on the development of a new mental health campaign strategy for the HSE, in line with key policy documents such as Connecting for Life and Sharing the Vision. Two significant ongoing communications streams are the HSE Your Mental Health Campaign (previously Little Things), and website www.yourmentalhealth.ie. Both are led by HSE Mental Health Community Operations, but resourced and supported by the NOSP.

During 2020, with the onset of the pandemic, the Mental Health Communications Steering Group also worked responsively to;

- **Develop and maintain trusted COVID-19 specific content for HSE websites (including www.yourmentalhealth.ie) on topics such as minding your mental health, young people and older people's mental health, bereavement, and grief.**
The www.yourmentalhealth.ie site had over 1.5 million visits in 2020 and the article 'Minding your mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic' was the most visited page (236,000 visits).
- **Increase radio and social activity with content and messaging tailored and aligned with the wider public health messaging at any particular time or phase of the pandemic.**
- **Support the development of, and promote the introduction of, a range of digital mental health interventions from the HSE and funded partners - encompassing mental health information and signposting, online self-help, online person to person supports (one to one or in groups), and health services and therapy delivered using technology, including video consultation.**
- **Facilitate mental health representation and public messaging at HSE COVID-19 Media Briefings.**



The National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT Project)

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). It is an evidence based talk therapy treatment for people with BPD and emotion dysregulation, which is provided within Community Mental Health Services in Ireland.

A number of DBT teams have been established in Community Mental Health Teams across the country. Following the publication of The National Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Project Ireland Report (2013-2018), the Project is now working to ensure the sustainability and long term-implementation of DBT in Ireland. The Department of Health and the NOSP has provided funding to the Project, via the National DBT Office, to establish its own DBT Training team in Ireland. This will involve the introduction of a modular approach whereby staff can build their experience over time. This will also allow staff to train in additional modules as required, so they can provide elements of the intervention to meet the system's changing requirements. This rollout is ongoing during 2021.

For more information on the National DBT Project, visit <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/dbt/>

Suicidality during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Longitudinal Study

The COVID-19 Psychological Research Consortium (C19PRC) brought together an international, multi-disciplinary team of clinical and research psychologists to study the psychological, social, political and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the general population. The first wave of the UK survey (the parent strand of the consortium) took place from March 2020.

The NOSP was pleased to support and participate in the analysis of data collected from the Republic of Ireland arm of three waves (spanning March to August) of the C19PRC study. This was led by Dr Philip Hyland, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology, Maynooth University and a member of the C19PRC International Group.

This study¹ outlines the lifetime prevalence of different indicators of suicidality in the Irish general population and whether suicidality has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ Hyland, P., Rochford, S., Munnely, A., Dodd, P., Fox, R., Vallières, F., McBride, O., Shevlin, M., Bentall, R. P., Butter, S., Karatzias, T., & Murphy, J. (2021). **Predicting risk along the suicidality continuum: A longitudinal, nationally representative study of the Irish population during the COVID-19 pandemic.** *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 00, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12783>

World Suicide Prevention Day 2020

The World Health Organisation estimates suicide accounts for over 800,000 deaths globally, every year. Every life lost represents someone's partner, child, parent, friend or colleague.

World Suicide Prevention Day (10th September) is an annual event, first introduced by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP). During this time, the IASP emphasises the importance of raising awareness of suicide and highlighting the causes of suicide and associated warning signs. They encourage sharing personal experiences to understand and address the many component parts of suicide more fully. They promote caring for those in distress in your community – reminding us all that taking a minute to reach out to someone could change the course of another's life.

The role of collaboration was, for the third consecutive year, the theme on World Suicide Prevention Day 2020 – 'Working Together to Prevent Suicide'. To mark this day, the NOSP produced and disseminated a wide variety of creative materials, messages, and social media assets. These were made publicly available to a wide network of stakeholders, and especially those involved with Connecting for Life nationally, and locally.



SECTION 2

HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention

HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention

HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention (ROSPs) work across a range of Community Health Services, Community Health Organisations (CHOs) and areas nationwide. Reporting within local healthcare structures, the ROSPs coordinate the development, and support implementation of regional Connecting for Life suicide prevention action plans which are aligned to the national strategy.

ROSPs work together through a Learning Community of Practice, which facilitates collaboration and sharing of knowledge and skills, so as to improve approaches to practice within the group.

In 2020, the ROSPs began the process of updating their local action plans, in line with the extension of Connecting for Life to 2024 and publication of the national implementation plan. To support this process, the NOSP commissioned an external point in time assessment of suicide prevention at an area level across the 17 Connecting for Life area level action plans. This was conducted using the self-evaluation instrument for assessing suicide prevention at sub-national (regional/local) level (SUPRESE). The SUPRESE tool, developed by Professor Stephen Platt with support from Public Health Scotland, enabled a review across all elements of local plan implementation.

In 2020 the HSE NOSP provided funding of €1.1m to support the implementation of local actions and the delivery of suicide prevention training at a CHO level.

The following are some highlighted activities from 2020.

CHO 1 (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan)

In 2020, a total of 915 LivingWorks Start licences were issued across the five counties in CHO 1, with 180 of these issued to members of An Garda Síochána in Donegal and a further 185 members of the community and voluntary sector completing suicide prevention training in courses such as ASIST and safeTALK. In Sligo/Leitrim, the local Connecting for Life Community Group coordinated initiatives to promote positive mental health under the umbrella of the Five Ways to Wellbeing. In Cavan/Monaghan online webinars focusing on psychosocial supports were delivered to specific sectors of the community such as the GAA and the education and youth work sectors. These were delivered to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day, World Mental Health Day and also to specific sectors of the community. In the same area, a number of community responses to local deaths by suicide were also facilitated. In Donegal, consultation involving GPs, Emergency Department and Consultant Psychiatrists resulted in the

development of the 'GP Pathway to Services' for people presenting with suicidal ideation or intent at GP level.

CHO 2 (Community Healthcare West)

With the support of HSE Mental Health Services, and with funding provided through the NOSP, the 'Westbewell' Group was established in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon in 2020. Comprising of HSE ROSPs, HSE Communications Officer, CYPSC Coordinator and a Mindspace Mayo Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing representative, the aim of the group is to communicate key mental health messages and promote training and education events in CHO 2. The Westbewell website (www.westbewell.ie) features a directory of services and supports and a frequently updated current news and events section. The establishment of Westbewell is in line with the aims of Connecting for Life, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon – specifically to develop a coordinated Mental Health Communications Strategy for the CHO area, including the promotion of timely, safe, evidence-based mental health messages, mental health supports and education and training programmes.

CHO 3 (Mid West Community Healthcare)

In CHO 3, face-to-face suicide prevention training continued at pace until March 2020 before the focus switched to the delivery of online training with over 250 LivingWorks Start licences issued between March and December. From March, the Office for Suicide Prevention Mid-West was particularly active in developing and providing information for distribution to service users, referrers and stakeholders. This comprised of comprehensive information on what mental health supports and services were available during public health restrictions, and how they could be accessed. Links and pathways were maintained with all the statutory, community and voluntary services. Later in the year, to mark World Suicide Prevention Day in September and World Mental Health Day in October, a range of materials were distributed to GPs, pharmacists, Public Health Nurses, mental health teams, elected representatives, sports clubs, schools and other community organisations.

CHO 4 (Cork, Kerry Community Healthcare)

22 suicide prevention training programmes were held across Cork and Kerry in early 2020. Over 400 LivingWorks Start licences were then issued during the rest of the year, when training moved online. During the pandemic, ROSPs engaged proactively as part of Cork Kerry Community Response Teams and with community partners who were working on the front line. Timely guidance, information and signposting resources were introduced. For example, the Youth Resource Booklet (2nd edition) was printed for young people across youth services, educational stakeholders, parents and sports clubs. The 'Getting

Through COVID-19 'Together' newsletter was introduced to support communities with trusted mental health information and signposting. New 'Numbers When You Need Them' materials (specific to COVID times) were included in Mental Health Resource Packs (prepared by senior citizen volunteers who were cocooning) and distributed to all post offices and pharmacies across Cork and Kerry. Funding and provision of the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service in Cork and Kerry – operated by Pieta – is ongoing, to provide timely, practical support for those bereaved by suicide. Lastly, in support of men's mental health, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare worked with local partners to produce and launch a new Mental Health Men's Cook Book. This was supported by a local Health Project (Niche) with input from 10 men over 10 weeks.

CHO 5 (South East Community Healthcare)

In 2020, 355 LivingWorks Start licences were issued to those availing of online suicide prevention training in CHO 5 with over 80 volunteers from Alone in that cohort. The ROSPs in South East Community Healthcare were instrumental in the establishment of two Social Prescribing Services for Carlow and Kilkenny while also providing signposting and support to the Local Authority Helplines across the five counties in CHO 5 in the latter half of the year. The HSE Bereavement Counselling Service for Traumatic Deaths, delivered through the Suicide Resource Office, provided counselling to nearly 200 people in 2020, who were bereaved by traumatic death.

CHO 6 (Community Healthcare East)

Over 400 LivingWorks Start licences were issued in the Community Healthcare East area in 2020. The development of materials and resources continued at pace with revised online and offline versions of the 'Numbers when you need them' wallet cards and posters circulated to over 200 locations in CHO 6, ensuring increased awareness of services and supports for both the general public and priority groups in the area. The new Jigsaw service in Wicklow came into operation in 2020, providing supports for young people aged 12 to 25 with mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

CHO 7 (Dublin South, Kildare, West Wicklow)

In 2020, following a high number of deaths by suspected suicide in the Ballyfermot area, the NOSP funded research – a 'Rapid Assessment and Community Response to suicide and suspected suicide in Dublin South'. Published in October, the recommendations to be implemented by the cross sectoral group, SPACE Ballyfermot included: the development of a local Critical Incident Protocol; improved signposting and referral protocols for young women under 18 (who are at risk or vulnerable and have disengaged from youth services), and; the creation of a Peer Support Network amongst local residents.

Elsewhere in CHO 7, as part of the ‘Minding Me: Supporting Expectant and New Mothers in Kildare and West Wicklow’ interagency partnership, a wellness week took place in October to raise awareness of perinatal mental health and to engage mothers in the area with local services and outline pathways to care. During the week, over 600 women attended virtual events that focused on issues related to physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing in pregnancy and birth.

CHO 8 (Midlands, Louth, Meath CHO)

During 2020, the Midlands Louth Meath ROSP collaborated with AIT Student Counselling Service, the AIT Healthy Campus co-ordinator and AIT Students Union to develop a suicide prevention training and information signposting initiative for Third Level students that focused on the provision of online suicide prevention training to students across a range of academic disciplines. In recognition of COVID-19 and its impact, a series of workshops were developed and delivered to healthcare workers and staff providing advice and guidance in relation to the management of fatigue, self-care techniques and emotional and psychological wellbeing. During the year there were also very concentrated communication initiatives with the aim of providing advice and guidance on the availability of mental health services and resources during the pandemic. Informative and focussed signposting material such as posters, postcards and wallet cards were developed and distributed widely.

CHO 9 (Dublin North City and County)

The very early stages of 2020 saw the ‘Connecting our Communities’ conference at Croke Park with over 150 delegates attending. The aim of the conference was to acknowledge the interagency collaborative work throughout North Dublin between the statutory and community services, with 50 support agency exhibition stands showcasing their work. The implementation process for Connecting for Life Dublin North City and County Suicide Prevention Action Plan continued in 2020 with 99 local actions achieving full implementation. The ‘Dispose of Unused Medicines Properly’ (DUMP) campaign pilot was completed, and planning was progressed for a CHO-wide campaign. Dublin North City and County information packs were distributed to over 1,000 organisations, and contained information on mental health, suicide prevention and bereavement service provision and access during the pandemic. Participation and local support of a wide variety of national campaigns and initiatives was ongoing, for example, World Mental Health Day, the annual Green Ribbon Campaign, and Dublin Pride.

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More contact details for HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention can be found on www.nosp.ie

Talk to someone in confidence, anytime...



SAMARITANS

Call free day or night on

116 123

Samaritans is available 24 hours a day, for confidential, non-judgmental support.

Freephone
116 123

Email
jo@samaritans.ie

www.samaritans.ie

text about it

50808

Text 50808 is a free 24/7 text service, providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support for people going through a mental health or emotional crisis.

Text HELLO to **50808**, anytime day or night

www.text50808.ie

pieta
1800 247 247

Pieta provide free individual counselling, therapy and support for people who are thinking about suicide or have been bereaved by suicide.

Freephone
1800 247 247

Text HELP to **51444**

www.pieta.ie

yourmentalhealth.ie
Information | Support | Services
1800 111 888

The **YourMentalHealth** Information Line is available anytime day or night, for information on mental health services and supports near you.



SECTION 3

Partnership with the NGO sector

Partnership with the NGO sector

During the year, 21 agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) received funding from the NOSP to specifically work in alignment with the goals and actions in Connecting for Life. Services and initiatives that are delivered across this diverse sector, play a crucial role in advancing suicide and self-harm prevention, postvention and mental health promotion efforts in Ireland.

A dedicated NGO Programme Manager in the NOSP works to ensure that funded initiatives align to the strategic objectives and actions of Connecting for Life. In many cases, these NGOs work with specific priority groups that have been identified in the national strategy, for example, people with mental health problems, those bereaved by suicide, the LGBTI+ community, the Traveller community and younger people.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place with all funded NGOs ('Section 39' agencies), which:

- **Ensures ongoing alignment with the national strategy.**
- **Captures, monitors, and evaluates work through regular and consistent reporting mechanisms.**
- **Acknowledges the contribution of NGOs to the implementation of Connecting for Life.**

The NOSP and these NGOs work collaboratively – to create networking opportunities, shared learning, and allow cross-pollination of ideas. For example, in 2020 the NOSP introduced monthly networking calls with representatives from all funded NGOs. Importantly, NOSP-funded NGOs also have representation on the Connecting for Life National Cross Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group, which meets quarterly and is chaired by the Department of Health.

The impact of the pandemic on NOSP-funded NGOs

During 2020, NOSP-funded NGOs reported a considerable impact of the pandemic, especially on how they delivered services and their ability to reach very vulnerable people in need of support, while adhering to public health advice and restrictions.

Most face-to-face services (e.g., counselling and therapeutic interventions, one to one, and groups), training events, workshops and campaigns stopped and there was a rapid transition to remote working and adapting services to phone or online. For many, this required investing in ICT systems and reworking service privacy, safety and quality assurance processes, where necessary.

Many NGOs had to cancel or postpone public fundraising activities, and this caused some additional financial uncertainty in the sector. For some, restructuring and changed working hours were required to meet changing needs and increased demands on services.

NGOs who work with the NOSP also reported a wide variety of issues arising from people who used their services, or made contact with them, during 2020. For example: health and safety concerns; loneliness and isolation; domestic violence at home; unemployment and financial concerns; work-related stress; increased substance misuse; concerns about lack of access to mental health services; access to, or availability of, other health services; accommodation difficulties; lack of privacy or technological resources to access online services; stress among students due to exam uncertainty, and; anxiety about COVID-19 testing and results.

During the year, NGOs had to reassess and reprioritise the needs of people using their services. This meant transitioning to virtual solutions and technologies for services, while also adapting to remote working for staff and volunteers. There was also a need to rapidly develop COVID-19 related information and content about their services and supports.

The NOSP sought to build on the collaborative working with funded NGOs and to offer supports, structures and opportunities for enhanced communications, networking and sharing of resources. This included weekly communications (via telecall). After the initial three months of the pandemic, this communication was facilitated monthly. The NOSP provided some once-off additional funding to NGOs where possible, to add capacity to frontline services in their response to increased or different demands for services. This was made possible through a once-off allocation from the Department of Health to the NOSP.

For more detailed information see **Financial Information, Section 5**.

Aware

www.aware.ie



The NOSP supports the delivery of Aware Life Skills programmes, which have been designed using the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). These programmes are evidence-based and delivered free of charge by trained Aware facilitators. They consist of 90-minute sessions over six weeks, online or in person. With the help of a series of easy-to-follow booklets and expert guidance, participants can learn how to better manage the stress of everyday life, recognise, and manage unhelpful thoughts, learn new ways of thinking and ultimately, begin the journey to a healthier and more confident life.

BeLonG To Youth Services

www.belongto.org



BeLonGTo's National Network Programme and Mental Health Programme of works are supported by the NOSP. These encompass a range of services and mental health initiatives for young LGBTI+ people delivered nationally through local networks across the country. These support the wider objectives of the national organisation, to ensure young LGBTI+ people are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences in Ireland.

Community Creations (spunout)

www.spunout.ie



Funding from the NOSP supports spunout in their provision of high quality and trusted online content, video content, information and campaigns for young people. This helps to promote help-seeking behaviour among young people, and improve their mental health literacy, including on lesser understood mental health issues such as eating disorders, self-harm, suicide, and mental health disorders.

Dublin Simon Community

www.dublinsimon.ie



Dublin Simon Sure Steps Counselling Service receives funding from the NOSP, specifically to facilitate the provision of the service out-of-hours, at evenings and weekends. This is a low threshold, primary care level service for the homeless client base as well as for an increasing number of other homeless services across the Dublin Region. The service has evolved to provide two interlinked strands – general counselling and a suicidality/self-harm focused programme of interventions.

First Fortnight

www.firstfortnight.ie



First Fortnight works to challenge mental health stigma through creative arts, interactive events and the provision of creative therapies to marginalised groups. NOSP funding supports the annual First Fortnight Mental Health Art and Culture Festival (which is held every January) and the provision of Art, Music and Group Creative therapies for people who are experiencing homelessness.

GAA

www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/community-and-health/healthy-club/



The NOSP is a supporting partner in the GAA Healthy Clubs initiative, which aims to help GAA clubs explore how they support the holistic health of their members and the communities they serve. Funding from the NOSP specifically supports the provision of a National Health and Wellbeing Coordinator for GAA Healthy Clubs, and the promotion of safeTALK suicide prevention training programmes across the GAA. Additional strands of work include general mental health promotion, suicide prevention and critical incident response initiatives.

ISPCC / Childline

www.childline.ie



Childline provides a range of active listening services for children and young people up to and including age 18, across phone, text and online chat, with additional information and resources online. Funding from the NOSP supports the provision of these services for young people, 24 hours every day, 365 days every year - in particular, the ongoing recruitment, selection, training, development, support and supervision of Childline volunteers.

LGBT Support and Advocacy Network

www.lgbt.ie



LGBT Ireland is alert and responsive to those within the community facing high levels of intersectional stigma and discrimination, in particular LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma, LGBTI+ asylum seekers, older LGBTI+ people and those within the community experiencing high levels of mental distress. Funding from the NOSP specifically supports the training function of LGBT Ireland and the organisation's efforts to provide support and information to LGBTI+ people and their family members. This includes the development of a network of peer support groups across the country, the delivery of mental health and suicide prevention initiatives for the LGBTI+ community, and the provision of a support helpline.

Men's Health Forum Ireland

www.mhfi.org



NOSP funding to the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, has been to specifically support the three-year Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland Project. The core aims of this project have been to develop effective and relevant resources, a training programme, and a sustainable delivery mechanism which will help to improve the mental health and wellbeing of 'at risk' middle-aged men in Ireland.

MyMind

www.mymind.org



MyMind provides a range of counselling and psychotherapy services online, and face-to-face across the country. Services are available for children, adolescents, adults, couples and families in 15 different languages. NOSP funding to MyMind allows for the provision of free counselling sessions to the most economically disadvantaged, and subsidised sessions for those who are unemployed, employed part-time, or students.

National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF)

www.nsrp.ie



The NSRF is an independent, multi-disciplinary research unit that delivers research projects in suicide, self-harm and mental health. Funding from the NOSP ensures these projects can contribute to the surveillance, research, implementation, evaluation and the evidence base for strategic goals and actions of Connecting for Life. The NOSP also funds the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI) which is operated by the NSRF. It is the world's first national registry of cases of intentional self-harm presenting to hospital emergency departments.

Pieta

www.pieta.ie



Funding from the NOSP supports the provision of free one-to-one therapeutic services and the 24/7 Pieta helpline to people who are in suicidal distress, who engage in self-harm, or those who are bereaved by suicide. The NOSP also specifically funds the provision of the Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service (SBLO) nationally. This service delivers proactive and practical support to individuals, families and communities who have experienced a loss through suicide.

Samaritans Ireland

www.samaritans.ie



Samaritans Ireland is a national organisation which supports the work of 21 Samaritans branches all across the island of Ireland. Samaritans provides a long-established free 24-hour telephone listening service in Ireland, every day of the year. NOSP funding to Samaritans Ireland supports the delivery of the freephone telephone service. It also contributes to Samaritans' core costs for the delivery of a wider programme of works, including research and outreach projects.

Shine (See Change, Headline)

www.seechange.ie / www.headline.ie



Shine delivers two important national projects with funding support from the NOSP:

- See Change is Ireland's national stigma reduction programme, working to change minds about mental health problems and end stigma. NOSP funding supports the See Change Ambassador and Workplace Programmes, and the national, annual Green Ribbon Campaign.
 - Headline is Ireland's national programme for responsible reporting of suicide, and representation of mental ill health. NOSP funding supports Headline's digital reach, Media Trust Initiative, education programmes, media monitoring and the annual Mental Health Media Awards.
-

Suicide or Survive (SOS)

www.suicideorsurvive.ie



Suicide or Survive is focussed on breaking down the stigma associated with mental health issues and ensuring that those affected have access to quality recovery services that are right for the individual. With the support of the NOSP, Suicide or Survive delivers a variety of suicide and self-harm prevention initiatives. These include Wellness Workshops and Supporters Programmes (delivered online and in person), the Eden Programme (for people who have attempted suicide or have had suicidal thoughts) and WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan, a two-day programme that helps people to develop their own tailored mental health Wellness Recovery Action Plan).

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

www.teni.ie



TENI is an organisation whose mission is to advance the rights and equality and improve the lives of trans people and their families in Ireland. Funding support from the NOSP supports TENI's training and awareness activities nationwide. For example, workshops that are targeted at health professionals working in public and voluntary and community services, and TENI's peer support groups for trans people and their families.

Turn2Me

www.turn2me.org



Turn2Me provides a wide range of innovative mental health peer support, group support and counselling services, all easily accessible online. Funding from the NOSP specifically supports the delivery of online counselling, peer to peer and self-help services.

Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

www.mentalhealth.usi.ie



The USI is the national representative body for students in 3rd level education. Funding from the NOSP contributes to the provision of a dedicated USI Mental Health Programme Manager who leads on a range of mental health promotion and awareness activities. Of note is the USI's central role in the development and implementation of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework (2020).

Exchange House

www.exchangehouse.ie



Exchange House National Travellers Service, with the support of the NOSP, provides a range of Traveller-specific mental health and suicide prevention services to the Traveller community. Their aim is to improve the overall wellbeing of Travellers and reduce the likelihood of suicide or self-harm within the community. They do this by working with Traveller groups (such as community and resident groups) and Traveller organisations and services, including Primary Healthcare Projects and Traveller Action Groups. They also provide direct mental health support to Travellers experiencing mental health issues including psychotherapy and CBT.

Tusla (National Family Resource Centre Mental Health Promotion Project)

www.familyresourcementalhealth.ie



Funding from the NOSP (via Tusla) supports the delivery of the Mental Health Promotion Project across the network of Family Resource Centres nationwide. This project includes the promotion of suicide and self-harm awareness training programmes, and the Suicide Prevention Code of Practice training, across the network of 121 Family Resource Centres across the country.

Find *trusted* information and support for your mental health



Support and information for people impacted by anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder and other mood conditions.

1800 80 48 48

www.aware.ie



Supporting LGBTI+
Young People in Ireland

Support, advocacy and information for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland.

www.belongto.org



Free and low cost counselling online, and face-to-face, with services available in over 14 languages.

www.mymind.org



Ireland's youth information website - with a large variety of health and mental health information - created by young people, for young people.

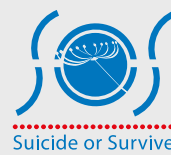
www.spunout.ie



EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND
National Travellers Service

The National Traveller Mental Health Service, including a wide range of education, training, individual support and group work.

www.exchangehouse.ie



Accessible mental health and wellness programmes to help you learn ways to manage and maintain your mental health.

www.suicideorsurvive.ie

SECTION 4

Suicide in Ireland

Suicide in Ireland

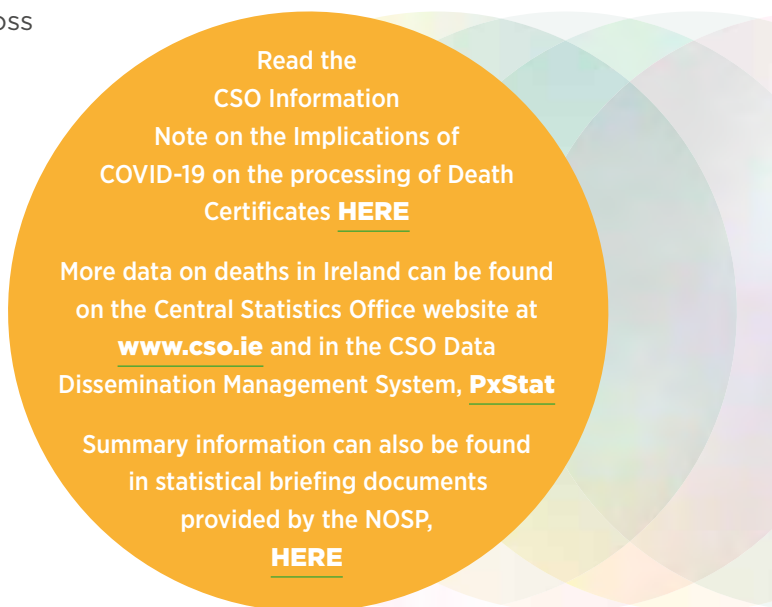
In Ireland, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides mortality data including deaths by suicide. Death due to intentional self-harm is classified as an unnatural death and therefore, must be referred to the Coroner for investigation. This investigation can take a protracted length of time to complete for various reasons (such as getting medical reports, health and safety reports, engineer's report, the involvement of the Director of Public Prosecutions etc.) and this delays the registration of such deaths.

Data from the CSO is published in different stages:

1. **Numbers of deaths are provided firstly based on 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'.**

These numbers are not easily comparable across different years - at any given time, data for different years is at different stages.

Furthermore, during 2020, the public health restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on the ability of Coroner's Courts to hold public hearings. Consequently, this will have impacted on the number of deaths registered and subsequently assigned an Underlying Cause of Death of intentional self-harm.



Read the
CSO Information
Note on the Implications of
COVID-19 on the processing of Death
Certificates [HERE](#)

More data on deaths in Ireland can be found
on the Central Statistics Office website at
www.cso.ie and in the CSO Data
Dissemination Management System, [PxStat](#)

Summary information can also be found
in statistical briefing documents
provided by the NOSP,
[HERE](#)

Number of suicide deaths and rates of suicide, 2005 to 2020

This table includes rates that have been calculated from CSO data to reflect late registered suicide deaths (i.e. historic suicides that have been registered in years after the occurrence year data has been finalised for publication).

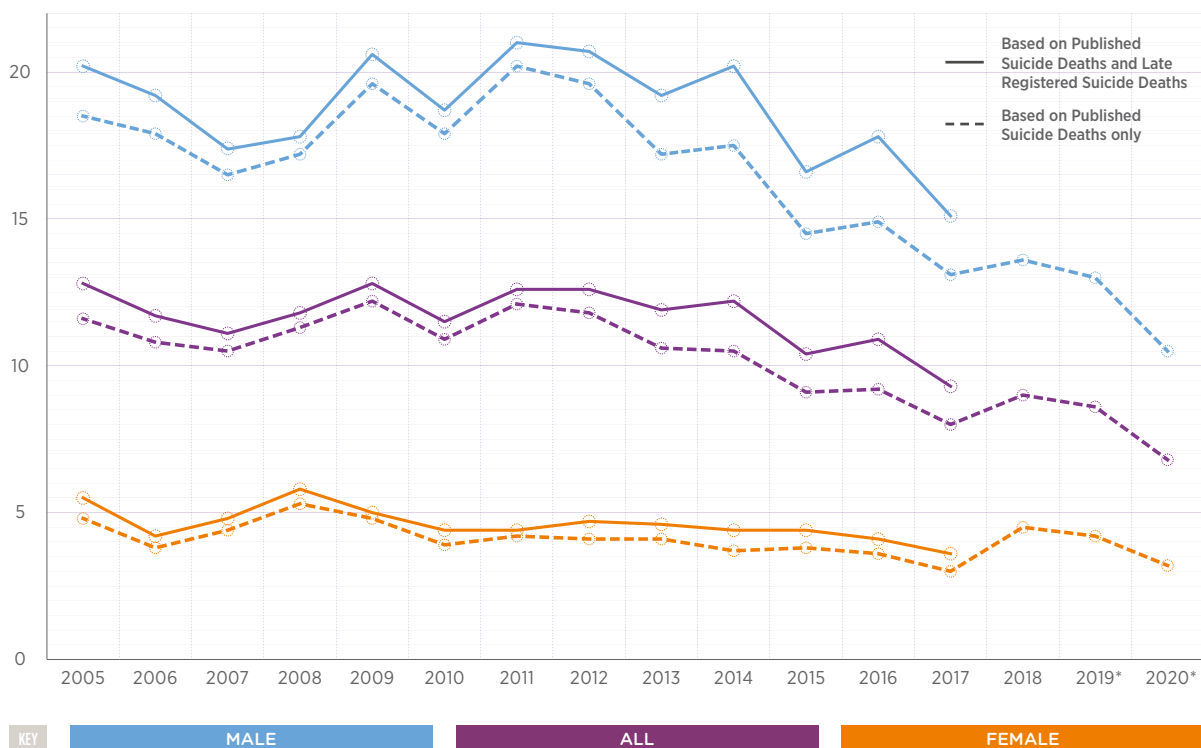
*At the time of this report, data used for 2019 and 2020 was provisional and late registered deaths for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were not yet published. Rates are crude rates per 100,000 population.

		Published Suicide Deaths*		Late Registered Suicide Deaths**	Published & Late Registered Suicide Deaths***	
		Number	Rate	Number	Number	Rate
2020*	Males	259	10.5	-	-	-
	Females	81	3.2	-	-	-
	Total	340	6.8	-	-	-
2019*	Males	317	13.0	-	-	-
	Females	104	4.2	-	-	-
	Total	421	8.6	-	-	-
2018	Males	327	13.6	-	-	-
	Females	110	4.5	-	-	-
	Total	437	9.0	-	-	-
2017	Males	310	13.1	49	359	15.1
	Females	73	3.0	15	88	3.6
	Total	383	8.0	64	447	9.3
2016	Males	350	14.9	67	417	17.8
	Females	87	3.6	12	99	4.1
	Total	437	9.2	79	516	10.9
2015	Males	335	14.5	49	384	16.6
	Females	90	3.8	15	105	4.4
	Total	425	9.1	64	489	10.4
2014	Males	399	17.5	65	464	20.2
	Females	87	3.7	16	103	4.4
	Total	486	10.5	81	567	12.2
2013	Males	391	17.2	49	440	19.2
	Females	96	4.1	11	107	4.6
	Total	487	10.6	60	547	11.9
2012	Males	445	19.6	26	471	20.7
	Females	96	4.1	13	109	4.7
	Total	541	11.8	39	580	12.6

* CSO PxStat Table VSD32 / ** CSO PxStat Table VSD33 / *** CSO PxStat Table VSD33

Crude rates calculated using Table PEA04, Estimated Population

Rates of suicide in Ireland, 2005 to 2020



This graph includes rates that have been calculated from CSO data to reflect late registered suicide deaths (i.e. historic suicides that have been registered in years after the occurrence year data has been finalised for publication). At the time of this report, data used for 2019 and 2020 was provisional and late registered deaths for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were not yet published. Rates are crude rates per 100,000 population.

Self-harm in Ireland

The main source of Irish self-harm data is the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland (NSHRI). The NSHRI is operated by the National Suicide Research Foundation and 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.

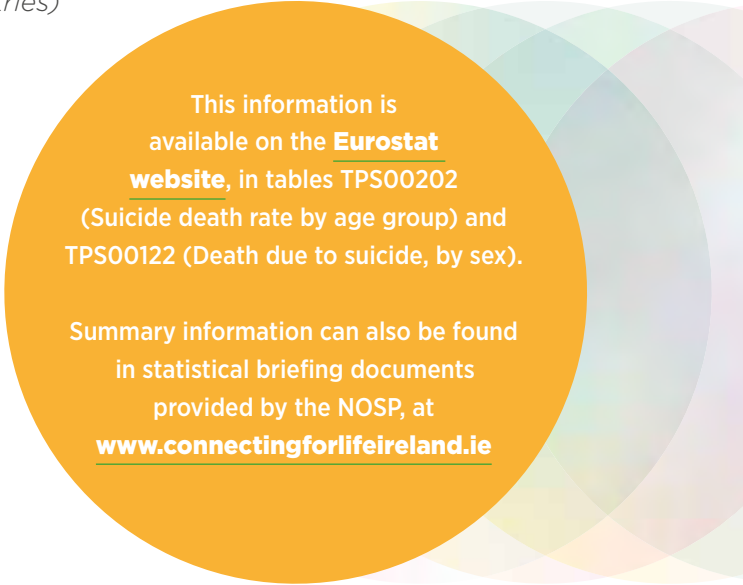
Read more about the NSHRI and access their annual reports on the National Suicide Research Foundation website [HERE](#)

European comparisons

It is not easy to compare suicide rates among European counterparts because of the variations in registration and reporting systems in different jurisdictions, and over time. Eurostat provides comparisons using standardised death rates, calculated on the basis of a standard European population (defined by the World Health Organisation). These rankings have fluctuated over different years. The comparisons should be interpreted with care for the above reasons.

Comparisons are available (at time of print) most recently for 2018 and show that in that year, Ireland's suicide rate was;

- **22nd highest for all ages** *(of 33 countries)*
- **16th highest for ages 15 to 19** *(of 31 countries)*
- **23rd highest for ages 50 to 54** *(of 33 countries)*
- **30th highest for ages 85+** *(of 33 countries)*



This information is available on the **Eurostat website**, in tables **TPS00202** (Suicide death rate by age group) and **TPS00122** (Death due to suicide, by sex).

Summary information can also be found in statistical briefing documents provided by the NOSP, at **www.connectingforlifeireland.ie**

SECTION 5

Financial information

Financial information

In 2020 the NOSP's budget was €13.8m and actual expenditure was €13.3m.

The budget and expenditure of the NOSP has increased significantly in the last eight years, from €5.19m in 2012. In 2020, 53% of expenditure was for grants to national organisations and frontline services working in the area of suicide prevention and mental health promotion. Additional grants are allocated to more local agencies, via CHOs.

*Additional once-off funding was allocated to specific projects in 2020. This was made possible through a once-off allocation (€589,872) from the Department of Health to NOSP, with a particular emphasis on pandemic-specific response or adaptation projects.

NOSP expenditure in 2020

	2019	2020
Grants to Agencies	6,575,877	*7,077,545
Communications Projects	799,729	953,842
Research	144,697	373,739
Non grant expenditure (Office expenses, salaries, overheads, etc)	1,005,066	1,327,540
Training Programmes (Non-clinical training, clinical training and National DBT Project)	1,518,028	1,234,833
Connecting for Life - (Strategy and best practice guidance supports)	58,779	15,828
Regional liaison & suicide prevention services Capacity building	1,307,240	1,307,240
Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention, Local Connecting for Life Implementation Plans and grants to agencies via CHOs	848,242	1,020,793
TOTAL	12,257,658	13,311,360

NOSP grants to national agencies in 2020

	2019	2020	*Additional once-off funding in 2020
Aware	297,500	297,500	147,500
Bodywhys			25,410
BeLonG To Youth Services	241,403	255,593	53,400
Community Creations / spunout	110,000	130,000	45,600
Curam Clainne - Mayo Suicide Liaison Project	93,045	Now funded by HSE locally	-
Dublin Simon Community		196,607	50,000
First Fortnight Ltd	155,000	162,000	-
GAA	60,000	50,000	60,000
ISPCC / Childline	209,500	209,500	50,000
LGBT Support and Advocacy Network	50,000	115,000	-
Men's Health Forum Ireland	49,930	53,430	-
MyMind	188,500	185,500	75,000
National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF)	944,588	989,699	-
Pieta House	2,252,074	1,841,576	-
Samaritans	645,000	580,000	-
Shine (See Change, Headline)	267,000	243,484	-
Suicide or Survive (SOS)	278,000	228,000	54,000
Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)	79,000	79,000	100,000
Turn2Me	278,398	269,426	87,575
Union of Students in Ireland (USI)	61,690	65,745	-
Exchange House	307,000	302,000	-
Offaly Traveller Movement	71,539	Now funded by HSE locally	-
Mojo Men CLG (Mojo Project)	57,885	Now funded by HSE locally	-
Tusla (National FRC Mental Health Promotion Project)	100,000	100,000	-
Accruals	-221,175	-25,000	-
		6,329,060	748,485
TOTAL	6,575,877	7,077,545	



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á Forbairt

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