

Newsletter October 2025

**Suicide Prevention
Scotland.**

Working to deliver Creating Hope Together

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of the Suicide Prevention Scotland newsletter.

This newsletter is a way of keeping the Suicide Prevention Scotland Network up to date with progress on implementation of the national suicide prevention strategy and also any other relevant information.

Please share this newsletter with others.

If there is anything you would like to see included in future editions or a contribution you'd like to make, please let us know via email:

phs.suicidepreventionteam@phs.scot

The document contains some hyperlinks. For example if you hover over the pictures of Creating Hope Together Strategy and Action Plan below, it will take you to the online version of the strategy and action plan.



If you've been forwarded the newsletter and would like to sign up to receive it directly please complete the form [here](#).



National Update

Since our last newsletter, we have had World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD), a day where we see a real focus across Scotland and the rest of the world on suicide prevention. This year's theme was Changing the Narrative on Suicide. Suicide Prevention Scotland took this opportunity to launch the second phase of our campaign '**What if a conversation about suicide could save a life**'. A series of four podcasts were launched, hosted by Amy Irons and featuring 12 amazing guests. Everyone involved spoke so openly and honestly about their experiences and the importance of talking about suicide. Later in the newsletter you can see the data about the reach and impact of these podcasts, which we know have been watched over a million times and have increased the number of people following our social media platforms. We are confident they have helped to increase conversations about suicide. I am incredibly grateful to Amy and all the guests for their support.



Haylis Smith
National Delivery Lead

We also saw the publication of the **National Records of Scotland data** on deaths by suicide and undetermined intent. The number of deaths was 11% lower in 2024 than in the previous year and while this brings with it some hope that this may be the start of a downward trend, we know that there were still 704 people who lost their lives to suicide which has an enormous impact of their families, friends, workplaces and communities. One death is one too many and I know that those of us working in suicide prevention will tirelessly continue to do all we can to prevent suicide. You can read my blog reflecting on the release of the NRS data **here**.

Over the last couple of months, I have also had the pleasure of speaking at a number of events, raising awareness of the work happening at local and national levels across Scotland. These events have included the Orkney Suicide Prevention Conference, Community Development Association Scotland conference, learning session for psychiatrists, Health and Social Care Partnership strategic leads and Scottish Prison Service staff. We have also taken part in a webinar on our approach with Matter of Focus to evaluation. It is always great bringing the work on suicide prevention to new and different audiences. I have some other sessions coming up, but if there are any opportunities you are aware of, then please get in touch – I'm always happy to talk about our work.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter, there is a wealth of information in it highlighting the work of the Suicide Prevention Scotland delivery team and lots of other activity from across the country.

Take care and thank you for everything you do to support suicide prevention in Scotland.

Haylis

Children & Young People Update

Children and Young People Local Suicide Forum

The forum event held in August focused on education and brought together members with Education Psychologists and Safe Guarding Leads who were invited to attend through Education Scotland. This session focused on the **recent practice stories** produced and aimed to allow members to have time to learn and reflect on their practice and connect with education colleagues in their area to plan next steps.

Enabling Conversations Toolkit

A new toolkit, designed in partnership with the V&A Dundee and co-designed by young people, parents and professionals has been launched. This resource **seeks to support young people to seek help** and **offers guidance to parents and trusted adults** who are faced with a young person seeking support in relation to suicide. The toolkit was launched during suicide prevention week at an in person event, the recordings for which are **here**.



Giving Time, Space and Compassion to Young People

The latest round of Time Space Compassion stories will be focused on practice happening across Scotland in relation to supporting young people. To celebrate this an in person event will take place bringing together the Participation Network, held by Children in Scotland, and the Local Children and Young People Suicide Prevention Forum held in partnership with COSLA and Public Health Scotland (PHS).

This shall take place at COSLA's office in Edinburgh on Monday 17th November from 12.30 until 3.30.

It will celebrate the launch of this year's **Time, Space and Compassion** practice stories, an approach to securing better outcomes for young people and children experiencing suicidal crisis by focusing on people's experiences. Past practice stories can be viewed **here**.

At the event we will have:

- Networking lunch
- A gallery of the practice stories
- Key note speeches from those who have provided their practice in the stories
- Engagement session with Scottish Government to provide your voice to the ongoing work to support young people to access crisis support

You can book a space for this free event here - **Suicide Prevention Participation Network joint meeting with the Local Children and Young People Suicide Prevention Forum**



New Toolkit Launch: Supporting Local Suicide Prevention Planning



We're pleased to announce the launch of the **Local Suicide Prevention Planning and Implementation Toolkit**, designed to support local areas in developing and delivering their suicide prevention action plans.

The toolkit includes nine newly developed sections covering key areas such as action plan development, postvention and incident response, and involving people with lived and living experience. These resources have been shaped through collaboration with local suicide prevention leads, steering groups, topic experts, and individuals with lived experience.

Each section is packed with practical examples from across Scotland and beyond, alongside videos, podcasts, and downloadable templates. Reflective questions are built in to help users consider how each topic could be applied in their own local context.

The toolkit is designed to be flexible—there's no need to read it in order. Users can dip into the sections most relevant to their work, whether they're new to suicide prevention or looking to strengthen an existing approach.

Please share the toolkit with colleagues working in suicide prevention or related areas. And finally, a huge thank you to everyone who contributed ideas, feedback, and expertise to help shape this resource.



New resources launched for people working in local suicide prevention

[Learn more on our website](#)

Suicide Prevention Scotland.



Toolkit in focus: involving people with lived and living experience



As part of the new [Local Suicide Prevention Planning and Implementation Toolkit](#) there is a focus on [involving people with lived and living experience](#), and [youth participation practice](#). Across two sections we highlight different approaches, current practice examples and reflective questions for you to consider how the approaches described might work for your project or local area.

In the toolkit, and in an [extended practice example](#), you can read about how multi-agency partners in Dundee came together, and supported by Dundee Volunteer and Voluntary Action (DVVA) engaged with people with lived and living experience in the co-design of a new leaflet and peer support service for people bereaved by suicide in the city.

Even better, this section of the toolkit has already been put to good use with Victoria Bola-Okerinde, who has recently joined the team in Argyll and Bute:

“The lived and living experience section has been a valuable resource for understanding what meaningful involvement looks like from ensuring diversity and inclusion to creating safe and supportive spaces for participation.”

Victoria Bola-Okerinde
Health Improvement Senior, Argyll and Bute



Suicide 
Prevention
Scotland.

Argyll & Bute



If you're looking to strengthen your approach to involving people with lived and living experience then take a look at the [toolkit sections](#), listen to the [podcast](#) episode on the topic or [get in touch](#) for a chat.

New workforce wellbeing podcast series – “You First”



Working in suicide prevention and related topics is hugely rewarding. It can also be tough – even for those of us who are not involved in supporting people directly. Recognising that the negative impacts of the day to day exposure to potentially upsetting data or information can be just as real for people in these roles is important for staff and organisations. Taking steps to support wellbeing is essential. That’s why Public Health Scotland and Suicide Prevention Scotland have produced the **“You First” podcast series**.

“You First” is hosted by Janet Watson, a counsellor, writer and former journalist. She has a wealth of experience of supporting staff in difficult roles to prevent and manage burnout and vicarious trauma. Each themed episode features invited guests sharing their own experiences and suggestions for how we can look after our wellbeing when working in emotionally demanding roles.

Alongside the podcast, a **written document** has been developed which captures and expands on the key information, messages and suggestions given in the episodes.



Introducing the You First Podcast

Available wherever you
get your podcasts

Please listen, and share with colleagues who may find this beneficial. You First is available now wherever you get your podcasts.

What if... Campaign: Phase 2

Highlights and What's Next



Between 9 September and 5 October 2025, Suicide Prevention Scotland ran the second phase of its national public awareness campaign, launching weekly video podcast episodes starting on World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September). Each episode explored a different theme, co-produced with the campaign group and supported by deep dive sessions with the wider suicide prevention network. You can catch up on all episodes via the [**Suicide Prevention Scotland website.**](#)

The campaign reached over half a million people—mostly in Scotland—with more than 1.1 million impressions and 15,000+ engagements. Notably, 80% of users reached were not followers, and three-quarters of content was served organically, indicating strong relevance and quality. Instagram followers doubled, Facebook rose by 58%, and LinkedIn grew by 15%.

Toolkit orders continued to grow, with 50 organisations requesting phase 2 assets, adding to the 100+ orders from phase 1. Website visits also increased, with 2,600 new visitors.

Planning for phase 3 is underway, aiming for a January 2026 launch. Co-production will remain central, with options for new channels currently being explored.

[**View the full campaign overview here.**](#)



The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales launches the National Suicide Prevention Network - Mikeysline representing Scotland as a founding partner



On World Mental Health Day, the Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales launched the National Suicide Prevention Network, spanning all four home nations and aiming to transform suicide prevention in the UK.

Four leading charities – representing England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – join the Network as founding partners, alongside the Hub of Hope, the UK's largest mental health support directory.

The Network will be chaired by Professor Ann John, a leading expert in the prevention of suicide and self-harm and Consultant in Public Health Medicine for Public Health Wales.

The Network's activity will develop over time and be led by the partners, focused on:

- Understanding and identifying the root causes of suicide
- Providing accessible support for everyone
- Fostering greater collaboration, innovation and action

More than a dozen organisations from across the UK are also joining the Network as innovation partners.

As a founding partner, Mikeysline have received 3 years of funding from the Royal Foundation to improve access to mental health and suicide prevention services in the far North of Scotland. This funding will support a second 'Hive on the Road' vehicle to engage with communities and provide services in areas, including Sutherland and the Western Isles.



Emily Stokes, CEO, Mikeysline, said:

“To cover huge distances in the Scottish Highlands and Islands, Mikeysline launched our first ‘Hive on the Road’ in 2024 – a Transit van that we can drive to local communities where people are, and meet them one-on-one inside it. Our partnership with The Royal Foundation allows us to buy and staff another much-needed van enabling us to extend our reach even further, and being part of the National Suicide Prevention Network allows us to connect with our colleagues across the UK.”



The Hive on the Road van is a warm, welcoming fully converted support space.

Football Helping South Lanarkshire Talk About Suicide Prevention



This September, two football events in South Lanarkshire showed how sport and a sense of community can help open up honest conversations about suicide prevention and mental wellbeing.

The fourth annual Clydesdale Suicide Prevention Football Tournament took place on 14 September at John Cumming Stadium, bringing together nine local teams and around 130 participants to play, connect and share messages about suicide prevention and local supports. Feedback from the day highlighted feelings of togetherness and the importance of talking more openly. Many participants said they planned to “check in with pals” and “speak out more often,” with others calling for “more events like this” and a continued focus on involving men and younger people in future prevention work.



A week earlier, the Hamilton Community Suicide Prevention Football Tournament and Community Day welcomed 177 people to Hamilton Community Stadium, including 74 community

members and 103 partners and players. More than 20 local and national organisations joined in, offering information, advice and support around suicide prevention, mental health and wellbeing.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, 85% said they took away key messages about suicide prevention, including where to find help, the importance of looking out for others and the power of talking openly.

Both events showed how community sport can be a powerful and accessible way to bring people together, especially men, to talk about suicide prevention, challenge stigma and strengthen local connections.

If you'd like to learn more about South Lanarkshire's approach or join in future community-led suicide prevention events, please contact

HamiltonClydesdaleHI@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk



Suicide Prevention North Lanarkshire



The multi-agency North Lanarkshire Suicide Prevention Partnership provides help, support and advice to people, groups and organisations about suicide prevention. This includes addressing taboos about speaking freely about feeling low and having suicidal thoughts and encouraging active discussions. By increasing awareness and understanding of suicide, we can help to support people in communities who are feeling suicidal and direct them to appropriate support and help their family and friends understand how they can support them.

What we know

The five-year average suicide rate (2020-2024) in North Lanarkshire stands at 16.5 per 100,000 population, which is higher than the national average of 14. Detailed data published in September 2025 by the National Records of Scotland shows that in 2024, there were 704 probable suicide deaths across Scotland, a reduction of 86 deaths, or 11%, compared to 2023. In North Lanarkshire, the number of probable suicides also declined, from 61 in 2023 to 57 in 2024, a decrease of 6.5%.

Although suicide deaths have declined, each life lost remains a deeply tragic event with lasting impact and is often the result of a combination of complex factors.

Men continue to be disproportionately affected by suicide. In North Lanarkshire, 39 men and 18 women died by suicide, down slightly from 42 and 19 in 2023. Nationally, the male suicide rate was nearly three times higher than the female rate; locally, it was approximately twice as high.

The suicide mortality rate in Scotland's most deprived areas was two and a half times higher than in the least deprived areas and although SIMD-specific data is not available at the local authority level, unverified, data suggests that over half of suicide deaths in North Lanarkshire were completed by people living in the most deprived communities. Local data also indicates that the age groups most affected by suicide in North Lanarkshire are individuals aged 30–44 and 45–59.





We have in the main, focused on groups most at risk of suicide and those hardest to reach and use a suicide-safer community approach that aims to build communities that talk openly and freely about suicide, promoting wellness and mental health and supporting those bereaved by suicide.

Over the last three years two campaigns aimed at the younger age group and those aged over 35 have been running.

1. A powerful video targeting young adults aged 16–24 encourages them to talk more openly about suicide and to seek help if they are worried about it themselves or have concerns about friends and family.

<https://youtu.be/hzN8SYZlTPo>

1. The second video targets over 35s and encourages people to think about people you may know that could be having suicidal thoughts and how to help them talk about it. **<https://youtu.be/GF9IHOpSU5U>**

In the last year alone, these videos have delivered nearly 3 million impressions and achieved over 26,000 click throughs to the council web page.

We have launched a ‘Let’s Talk’ badge, which is used as a tool to encourage people to discuss its meaning, which helps to remove barriers to accessing support.



Creating Hope In Our Community

Healthy n Happy's 'Creating Hope In Our Community' campaign is dedicated to promoting positive mental health and a more informed approach around suicide prevention in Cambuslang and Rutherglen, through creative, engaging and impactful activities. They are delighted to be working with local residents, community groups, charities, statutory services and businesses, to share experiences, build capacity and explore how they can collectively help to raise awareness and prevent suicide, improve mental wellbeing and address local need in CamGlen.

Now in their second year of funding the campaign was kick-started with the exclusive viewing of the very moving, uplifting and hopeful film 'The Low Road', followed up with a Q & A with the Director and Producer, Stephen Mulhearn & Sophie Marsh. This event was jointly hosted with Cruse Scotland, with the support of 1st Class Credit Union. They have also hosted 2 highly successful events featuring inspiring guest speakers - and are excited to be planning another. In addition, they have delivered a number of essential and impactful mental health training sessions such as ASIST and Self Harm Workshops. They have also run Scottish Mental Health First Aid courses - the next of these being across 3 Fridays – 7, 14 and 28 November, 9.30am-2.30pm at Number 18 Venue, Rutherglen. Click here for details and to book on: <https://www.healthynhappy.org.uk/events-1/scottish-mental-health-first-aid-5>



To be part of this vital Creating Hope in Our Community movement, please:

- Email peopleandcommunities@healthynhappy.org.uk
- Call 0141 646 0123 (press 3)
- Visit their dedicated webpage: <https://www.healthynhappy.org.uk/what-we-do/creatinghopeinourcommunity>

Breakfast Reception during the Aberdeen Tall Ships Races



Colleagues from Aberdeen City HSCP were delighted to accept an invitation as special guests of SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health) for a Breakfast Reception during the Aberdeen Tall Ships Races on Monday 21st July at 8am in Aberdeen Harbour. Despite the early start they made their way along to the Morgenster (a Class A Tall Ship) in the Port of Aberdeen. They had a light breakfast and an inspiring morning hearing about the exciting plans for The Nook, a pioneering walk-in mental health support hub – set to launch in Aberdeen in 2026.



Gillian Munro and Jenni Campbell (AHSCP)



Liam Yule (SAMH)

The Nook represents a bold step forward in ensuring everyone in Scotland has immediate access to compassionate, community-based mental health support. We heard more about the vision, the impact it will have locally, and how we can be part of its journey. We were joined by SAMH leadership, who will spoke about the difference The Nook will make particularly here in the Northeast. It was a very enjoyable networking event despite the haar and sway of the boat!

More information on The Nook can be found here: samh.org.uk/about-us/the-nook



Suicide Prevention Award

'Thinking out of the Box'



North Ayrshire RAMH Wellbeing & Recovery College proudly received the Suicide Prevention Award for Ayrshire & Arran in the 'Thinking Outside the Box' category. Funded by NA HSCP, the college offers short, self-management courses where individuals become 'students' of their own wellbeing. Courses include the CHIME model (Connection, Hope, Identity, Meaning, Empowerment), CBT principles, Transactional Analysis, Trauma to Recovery, and creative outlets like art, poetry, drumming, and song writing.



Jeanette Allan Rec College Manager
Alison Stell Rec College Student

Alison, a current student of the Recovery College sent a moving nomination for the Award:

"I had been a patient in the NHS Mental Health system for 15 years. To say I was jaded is putting it mildly. I'd done every type of group imaginable and eventually attempted suicide. At first, I was extremely cynical and kept saying 'no'. I had low expectations and an attitude that was a health professional's nightmare.

They made me feel welcome—but more than that, they changed my outlook. I was no longer a 'patient', I was a 'student' of my own mental health. That reframing mattered. I expected nothing. My well of belief had run dry.

Slowly, I saw staff and peers genuinely cared. The Trauma Course wasn't about discussing trauma—it gave us tools to manage it. I was empowered to fight back. I discovered an ability to paint, craft, and create. I shared my art in an exhibition. My creativity had always been there—I just couldn't access it until these courses reminded me life has meaning. I reduced serious medication. I wasn't psychotic—I was in pain. The fog lifted. I'm now looking at employment and securing the future I want. Honestly, they save people. They restore worth and meaning. They saved me."

For further info click here:

[North Ayrshire Wellbeing & Recovery College | RAMH](#)



Towards better outcomes: reducing mental health inequalities and helping to prevent self-harm and suicide.



NHS Education for Scotland and Public Health Scotland are pleased to announce the launch of a new eLearning module.

"Towards better outcomes" is designed for learners across sectors and settings who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who are at risk of mental ill health, self-harm or suicide.

The new module builds on the knowledge and skills developed through our "Ask, Tell, Respond" resources and promotes rights-based approaches, with a focus on Time, Space and Compassion (Scottish Government, 2023).

Drawing on person-centred stories and encouraging ongoing reflection, the module helps learners identify practical ways to address mental health inequalities through their work.

Towards better outcomes

START COURSE



Towards better outcomes: reducing mental health inequalities and helping to prevent self-harm and suicide.

Please access the module and share news of its launch with your networks using this link: [Skilled level resources](#) | [Turas](#) | [Learn](#)

Related resources:

- Ask, Tell, Respond modules: [Informed level of practice](#) | [Turas](#) | [Learn](#)
- [Time, Space and Compassion](#)

Contact: mentalhealth@nes.scot.nhs.uk



Coming Soon: Person-Centred Safety Assessment – A New Learning Opportunity



NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is currently developing a new educational resource: the Person-Centred Safety Assessment learning programme. This programme is initially designed for staff working in clinical health settings such as unscheduled care and mental health crisis services, where individuals experiencing suicidal crisis often present. Future iterations will explore and consider appropriate adaptation and use in other sectors, including social care and third sector services.

Every interaction with someone experiencing suicidal thoughts is a critical opportunity to offer compassionate, meaningful help. This new programme focuses on understanding the person's unique experience of distress and how it impacts their life, relationships, and sense of safety.

Importantly, the programme aligns with the latest NICE guidelines, which recommends moving away from the use of predictive risk assessment tools to a more person-centred approach that supports collaborative safety planning and therapeutic engagement. This shift recognises that risk cannot be accurately predicted and that meaningful conversations are more effective in promoting safety and hope.

Developed in collaboration with the NCISH Learning and Improvement Group – led by the Scottish Government and including NHS boards, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, third sector organisations, and people with lived experience – the programme builds on NES's existing suite of suicide prevention resources collaboratively developed with Public Health Scotland (PHS) available on [TURAS](#).

The e-learning module component of the learning programme recently completed a successful pilot, receiving positive feedback from both NHS staff and individuals with lived experience.



One participant shared:

“The module was informative and thought-provoking. It helped me reflect on how I approach conversations with people in crisis and gave me tools to do so with more confidence and compassion.”



Following the pilot's conclusion in June 2025, further enhancements are currently being made based on feedback. The full rollout is planned for 2025/26.

Fae the Source

We're excited to invite you to engage, watch and share a new YouTube docuseries, Fae the Source, which is a five-part docuseries, exploring masculinity, men's mental health and what it means to grow up as a man in Scotland today. This is a Scottish Government funded project through Young Scot and linked to the established AyeFeel suite of mental health resources. This has been created in response to the reported rise in “toxic masculinity” and the growing concerns of our children and young people around misinformation and “false narratives”.

Presented by gamer and former teacher Duncan, Fae the Source brings together open, honest conversations with experts in youth justice, violence reduction, fitness, and youth advocacy. Across five episodes, the series dives into the pressures many young men face - from stereotypes and social expectations to personal struggles - and how these shape identity and wellbeing.

The series is now streaming on YouTube ([Talking Masculinity in the Gym: Fae The Source](#)), with additional mental health resources available at [young.scot/ayefeel](#).

We would appreciate it if you could share this new venture widely and promote amongst your own stakeholders and the young people you work with. Thank you for helping us shine a light on this important topic, your support can help ensure more young people feel seen, heard and supported.



Events



Suicide Prevention in Rural Areas (Rural Social Work Forum series)

This webinar will introduce Scotland's Suicide Prevention Strategy: [Creating Hope Together](#), that is delivered by a collective of National public and third sector organisations supported by a network of Suicide Prevention Leads in local areas. It will highlight how you can connect to this network, and showcase some examples of good work taking place specifically designed to support rural communities.

For more information and to book tickets follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1848150480839?aff=oddtcreator>



Date: 18th November 2025, 1-2pm



Online



Theme: Suicide Prevention in Rural Areas



Cost: Free



Reading Corner



Views of Suicide-Bereaved Adults Regarding the Significance of the Deceased's Death Date

Recent academic publication, based on data from the National Suicide Bereavement Survey:

[Full article: Views of Suicide-Bereaved Adults Regarding the Significance of the Deceased's Death Date](#)

Briefing on young people's experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings

NSPCC Learning has published a Helplines insight briefing on young people's experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings. Professionals can use these insights to consider how they might respond to and support young people if they talk about thoughts and feelings like this.

More info can be found here: [Young people's experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings](#)

Scottish suicide information database

This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents data on deaths due to probable suicide registered with the National Records of Scotland (NRS) during the 14-year period 2011–2024. The main report presents analysis of selected information held in the Scottish Suicide Information Database (ScotSID). There is a particular focus on contact with healthcare services.

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/scottish-suicide-information-database/a-profile-of-deaths-by-suicide-in-scotland-2011-to-2024/>



Key documents and information

Key documents around suicide prevention

Local Area Suicide Prevention Planning & Implementation Toolkit



Document 1: Introduction



Document 2: Action Plan Development



Document 3: Outcomes, Monitoring & Evaluation



Document 4: Governance & Collaboration



Document 5: Data & Information



Document 6: Involving People with Lived & Living Experience



Document 7: Youth Participation Practice



Document 8: Postvention & Incident Response



Document 9: Induction Pack

You can also listen to our accompanying podcasts on topics covering data, suicide bereavement, involving people with living and lived experience and work around children and young people.

Knowledge and Skills Framework for Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention

Locations of Concern guidance

Cluster guidance

Public Memorial guidance

Time Space Compassion - supporting people experiencing suicidal crisis: introductory guide

Creating Hope Together - strategy.

Creating Hope Together - action plan

Creating Hope Together - EQIA

Creating Hope Together - strategy (easy read).

Creating Hope Together - action plan (easy read).

Outcomes Framework

