

**Introduction to
Suicide Prevention**

Resource Pack

Thank You!

Firstly, thank you so much for taking part in our Introduction to Suicide Prevention Training session. Your time and participation is hugely appreciated. We hope you found the session valuable and are able to use your learning and skills developed in your professional and personal lives.

Session Outcomes

Understand
suicide
statistics

Spot the
signs

Ask about
suicide

The power
of listening

Support
and
resources

Your limits
& looking
after
yourself

Introduction to Suicide Prevention

In 2022 in Scotland, there were 762 deaths by suicide, compared to 753 in 2021. Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of these were male and the number of female deaths by suicide increased by 18.








The below looks at how you can spot the signs, support the individual and what supports and services you can connect them with.

Spotting the Signs

How might someone with thoughts of suicide present? What might we see, sense, hear or learn?

A common myth is that people will not talk about their thoughts of suicide but people can and do often talk about thoughts of suicide.

Some signs that someone may be having thoughts of suicide are below;

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Negative View of Self |  Giving Away Money or Possessions |
|  Making Suicide Threats |  Drastic Changes in Mood or Behaviour |
|  Substance Abuse |  Feeling like a Burden to Others |
|  Giving Things Away |  Possessing Lethal Means |
|  Making Funeral Arrangements |  Aggressiveness and Irritability |
|  Engaging in Risky Behaviours |  Isolation or Feeling Alone |
|  Self-Harm Behaviours |  A Sense of Hopelessness |
|  Frequently Talking about Death |  No Hope for the Future |

Asking About Suicide

If you think someone is thinking about suicide you must ask the question. We know this can feel difficult or even scary but it is the best way to open up the conversation about suicide. The only way you will know if someone is having thoughts of suicide is by asking the question directly.

How to Ask

The question must be asked in a direct and neutral way.

Try to **avoid** leading questions, for example 'you're *not* thinking of....'

Try to **avoid** asking questions that may seem to contain judgement, for example 'are you thinking of doing something *silly*'

(the reason for a person to think about suicide may seem trivial or even unimportant but to that person it is life or death)

Try to **avoid** questions that aren't clearly asking about thoughts of suicide such as;

- **Have you thought about what happens when you die?**
- **Have you ever thought about dying?**
- **Have you ever thought about hurting yourself?**

Try to **ask a neutral and closed question** where the answer can be either 'yes' or 'no' about them taking action to end their own life.

- **Are you thinking about suicide?**
- **Are you thinking about killing yourself?**
- **Are you thinking about ending your life?**

Asking someone who does not have thoughts of suicide about suicide **WILL NOT** put the idea into their head. If you think someone may be thinking about suicide **ALWAYS** ask the question.

Listening

Asking the question must never be asked in isolation and having a conversation to follow up is really important. If they answer yes to your question about suicide, then it is important to give them time and space to share their story and experience.

Listening feels like it should be easy but again we know it can be difficult, encouraging a person to talk about their thoughts of suicide is important and helpful.

There is no expectation for you to 'fix' whatever is happening for that person. It is important that we allow a person to talk about their feelings without judgement and direct them towards a suitable support.

Things to remember

- **Try not to make judgement regarding the reason someone may be feeling suicidal, try to focus on how they are feeling rather than the trigger or event that led to them feeling that way.**
- **Try not to react to behaviours shown when someone is feeling suicidal, try to remember it is again the feeling behind the behaviour that is important.**

Helpful questions

- **Why do you think you are feeling this way?**
- **What makes you feel this way?**
- **How long have you been feeling this way?**
- **Who else have you told?**
- **What can we do to help you?**
- **What support do you think you need?**

Duty of Care

Remember - If you feel like someone is an immediate risk to themselves or in immediate danger, you should seek help right away.

Looking After Yourself

Debrief Sheet

What happened?

Who did I have the conversation with? Where and how
How am I feeling?

Main points from
conversation:

What went well, and what
could have been better?

What went well?:

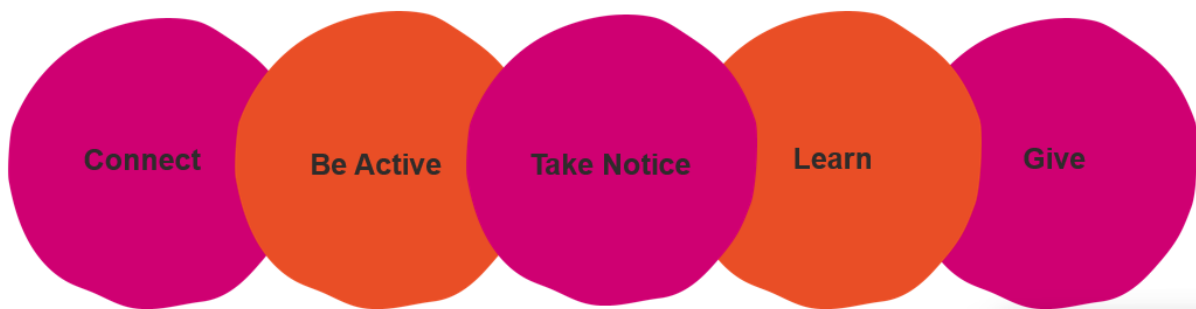
What I could do differently next time:

Actions I will take:

Actions they will take:

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO TO LOOK AFTER MYSELF?

Looking After Yourself – 5 Ways



Self-Care

Revisit your self-care kitbag we have been building throughout the Route Map.

Now you have completed the Introduction to Suicide Prevention session think about what types of self-care/5 ways activities would help you look after yourself following a conversation about suicide.

Make a list so if you need to use them you have something you can refer back to and don't have to think too much about what will help you in that moment.

Other Supports



Although the above Apps contain a comprehensive list of services available, there may be others that you know of. We also suggest that you explore what supports (professional or personal) the individual currently has, who or what has helped them in the past or who they feel would support them. We encourage engagement with a GP and GP practice. Most GP practices have a Community Link Worker based within the practice. This service offers person centred wellbeing support to be through a dedicated member of staff.

When linking an individual to a service, try to offer a 'warm hand off', where you introduce the person to the service and the service to them, this is likely to encourage more successful engagement compared to handing an individual a leaflet or number.

Some safety tips

- If you feel an individual is at immediate risk of death or harm to themselves or someone else, phone 999.
- Even a successful intervention can feel stressful and emotional, make sure you debrief with a colleague or manager following any such conversation, the Samaritans also offer a debrief service.
- These times are testing for us all, look after yourself and ensure self-care every day.
- Be kind to yourself and others.

If you need any further guidance or support then please do not hesitate to contact our Suicide Prevention team at SAMH, by emailing SuicidePrevention@samh.org.uk

National Signposting

Breathing Space

An NHS based service that offers a listening service.
Tel. 0800 83 85 87
(Monday to Thursday, 6pm to 2am & Friday to Monday, 6pm to 6am)
Website:
<https://breathingspace.scot/>

Samaritans

Crisis listening service
Tel. 116 123
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Email. jo@samaritans.org
Website:
<https://www.samaritans.org/?nation=scotland>

SHOUT

A confidential, anonymous and free text helpline.
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Text SHOUT to 85258
Website:
<https://giveusashout.org/>

NHS 24

An NHS out of hours' triage service.
Tel. 111

SAMH

For more resources and information for you or for someone you are worried about check out our website for further guidance.
<https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/suicide/suicide-prevention>

United To Prevent Suicide

<https://unitedtopreventsuicide.org.uk/>

sportscotland

Various case studies detailing the benefits of physical activity and sport on people's mental health.

<https://sportfirst.sportscotland.org.uk/articles/?tag=mental+health>

Healthier Scotland

Things you can do to help clear your head
<https://clearyourhead.scot/>