



Suicide Prevention Training

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)

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Connecting for Life

Oifig Náisiúnta an FSS um Fhéinmharú a Chosc
HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention



Suicide Prevention Information and Awareness Presentation

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This presentation will contain sensitive information or content relating to suicide and/or self-harm, that some people could find triggering. For example;

- You could find it upsetting.
- You could overly identify with it - personally or professionally.
- It might have a negative impact on you in other ways.

With this in mind, it is advised that you;

- Are mindful and aware of your own needs and self-care in this space.
- Take a break, opt out or mute the conversation, at any point you feel you need to.
- Talk after the meeting with a friend or colleague.



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Visit www.yourmentalhealth.ie for information on how to mind your mental health, support others, or to find a support service in your area. You can also call the Your Mental Health Information Line on **1800 111 888**, anytime day or night, for information on mental health services in your area.



Using sensitive language

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Being mindful of our use of language is important. Always use sensitive and non-stigmatising language when discussing suicide and self-harm. For example;

- Remain non-judgemental throughout and try not to make assumptions about others.
- Don't identify a person solely by their mental health difficulty and never use "a suicide" as a noun to describe a person.
- Use neutral and simple terms like;

"Died by suicide..." or "ended his/her own life..."	rather than	"Committed suicide..." (suicide is not a criminal act)
"A death by suicide..."	rather than	"A successful / completed suicide..."
"An attempt on his/her life..."	rather than	"An unsuccessful suicide / suicide attempt..."
"Self-harm..."	rather than	"Deliberate self-harm..."



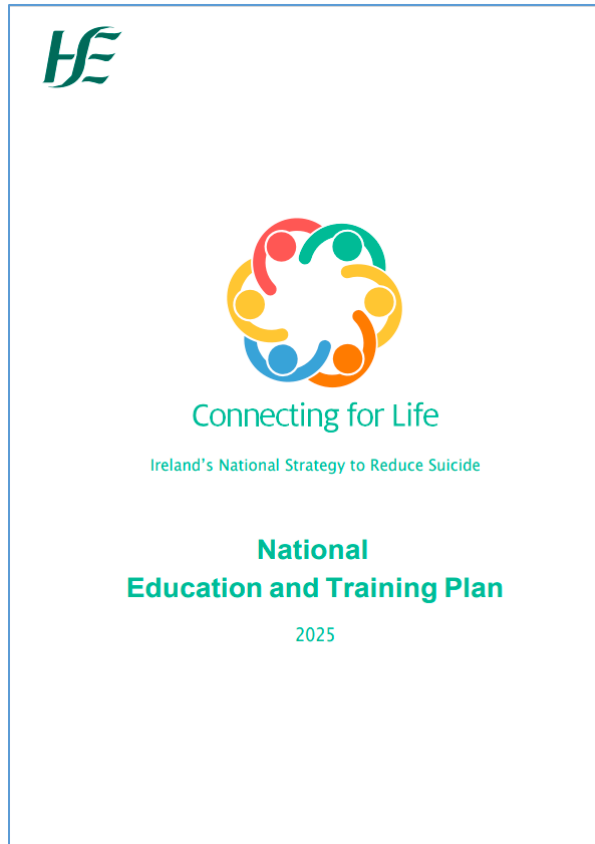
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Strategic Context: Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training

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Suicide is complex and so are its solutions – suicide prevention training is one of the tools used to support objectives of the strategy and reduce suicide rates.

When people are thinking about suicide, they can send out invitations for help – suicide prevention gatekeeper training is effective in improving participant’s knowledge, skills and confidence to intervene when someone is in suicidal distress.

Challenge the stigma & myths around suicide.



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An evidence-based approach – underpinned by lived experience experts

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The importance of asking the question?

Myth – Asking about suicide will put the idea in a person’s head.

Fact - Talking about suicide provides an opportunity to encourage others to share how they feel, to seek help and to break down stigma. Asking clearly and directly “*are you thinking of suicide?*” gives the person permission to say how they are feeling.



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Yurgof is a twenty-eight-year-old Ukrainian refugee who regularly presents to your pharmacy to manage his type 1 diabetes and depression. English is not his first language, and he struggles to understand your conversations at times. He is prescribed short-acting and long-acting insulin, has good management of his blood sugars, and takes sertraline 100mg daily for depression.

He is here in Ireland with his sister. They have recently lost a brother to the conflict, with their parents remaining stuck in the conflict zone.

Yurgof is a heavy drinker on most evenings and does not smoke. He is currently living in a hotel in the town that has been converted to support refugees, sharing a bedroom with two other men, and a bathroom with ten other Ukrainians. He has identified work in a local restaurant but is a builder by trade.

On this particular day he presents very upset, practically inconsolable. Translation of what he is saying is challenging, but it's evident that he is indicating a wish to die. He is going to jump in the river, and hope for a quick end to this turmoil.





Concerned about suicide?

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- When someone is thinking of taking their own life, it is frightening for everyone involved.
- You might find it hard to understand what they are going through .
- You may feel uncertain as to how you can help.

Remember;

- Most deaths by suicide are preventable, and most people do not want to die.
- Someone who is thinking about suicide is generally in a state of extreme emotional pain.
- Suicide is everyone's business.
- People can talk themselves out of suicide, if they have someone who will listen to them.



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You have identified warnings signs – what do you do now?

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- You are worried that the person may be thinking about suicide.
- Generally, your response should follow the same steps.
- Stay calm and confident, follow the steps and seek support if you are in doubt.
- The 4 steps are; **CALM** – **C**onnect, **A**sk, **L**isten and **M**ake a plan
- **Most importantly, remember your main aim is to help the person at risk remain safe and that they get the help they need.**



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Step 1 - Connect

Connect with the person and let them know that you are concerned about them.

Some signs of distress to be aware of;

- Behaviour - e.g. agitated, anxious, isolation, needing to talk about issues, seem down, sudden changes in mood, dropping out of activities
- Physical - e.g. neglecting appearance, weight loss or weight gain, difficulty concentrating
- Feelings - e.g. weariness, exhaustion, agitation, helplessness, anger, feeling life is meaningless
- Thoughts - e.g. persistent negative thoughts, unable to solve problems, self-critical



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Step 1 - Connect

Connect with the person and let them know that you are concerned about them.

Listen and remain calm.

- If you can remain calm in the situation, you are more likely to provide the assurance necessary to support the individual, e.g.,
 - *“I’m so sorry to hear that you feel that way, why don’t we find a quieter place to talk properly”*
 - *“this is really difficult for you”*

Let the person know you hear their distress.

- *“I’m concerned about you and I want to help”*
- *“sounds like you are going through a really tough time”*



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Step 2 - Ask

Ask clearly and directly if they are thinking about suicide

- *“are you thinking about suicide / killing yourself / ending your life?”*

Simply asking the question does not give someone the idea.

- Thoughts of suicide generally develop slowly over a long period of time and after a series of difficulties in life.
- By asking the question, you let them know its ok for them to talk about suicide.
- By asking the question, you’re acknowledging their distress and giving them an opportunity to talk about what’s happening in their life.
- If the answer is yes, they are thinking about suicide, don’t panic.



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Step 3 - Listen

Listen and try to understand

- Listen to them without judgement or blame.
- Give them space to explain what is going on for them and how they feel about it.
- Avoid responses which reject how they are feeling, lessen how they feel, or try to change their view of their situation.

Examples of what **NOT** to say;

- *“It’s not that bad”, “Things will get better” , “Pull yourself together”, or “How could you be so selfish?”*
- These reactions may make the person feel misunderstood and more isolated than ever.



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Acknowledge their feelings

“It sounds like you’re dealing with a lot at the moment”

“You are going through a really tough time?”

“I’m really sorry to hear that you’re feeling like this right now”

“Can you tell me more about what’s going on for you?”

“If you want to tell me more, I’m here to listen”

Powerful question for ourselves:

“If I were in that person’s shoes - how would I feel, what would I need?”



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Step 4 – Make a plan

- Accept that the person needs help to stay alive.
- Support them in finding the help they need.
- Remember we don't have to solve all their problems.

Questions like;

- *“who would you feel comfortable talking to about this?”*
- *“who has helped you in the past?”*
- *“who would you like me to contact?”*



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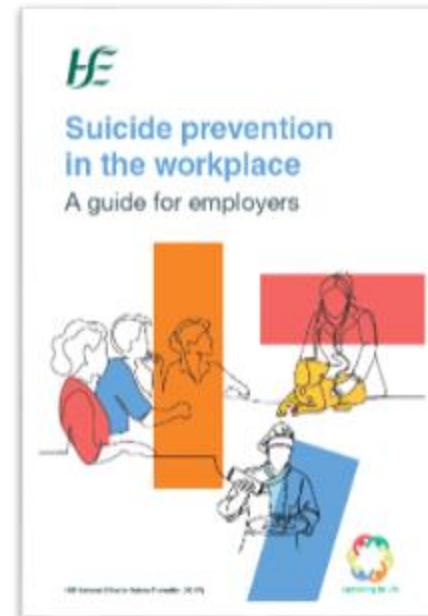
Supports

- www.yourmentalhealth.ie
 - Your Mental Health Information Line <tel:1800111888>
 - My Mental Health Plan
- GP
 - [GP or health centre](#)
 - [Out of hours GP service](#)
- SCAN – Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse - Primary Care
- Text About It <https://www.textaboutit.ie/>
- Samaritans <tel:116123> / jo@samaritans.ie



Supports

- Pieta 24 hour helpline and crisis service <tel:1800247247> text HELP to 51444
- Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/nosp/resourceofficers/>



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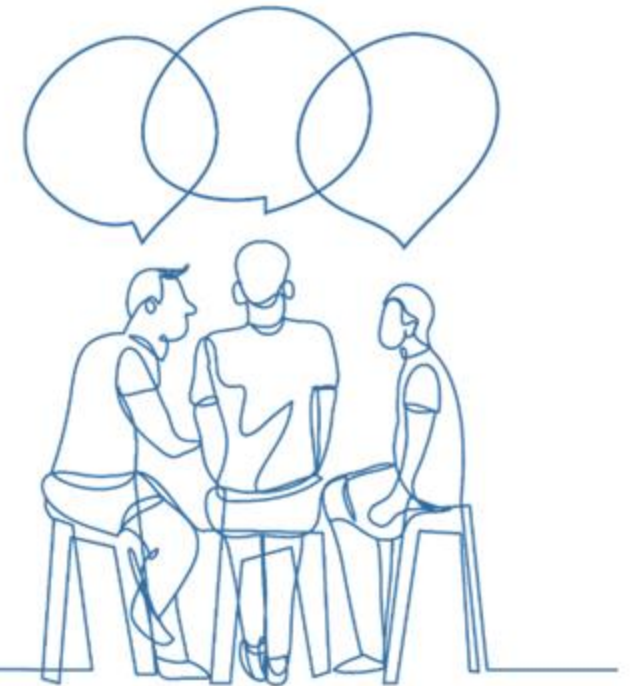


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If there is an immediate risk of suicide

- Get help. If you, or someone you know is at immediate risk of harm, go to or call the emergency department of your local general hospital. You can also contact emergency services on **112** or **999** anytime, day or night.
- Inform next of kin.
- If possible don't leave the person alone.
- Keep them safe, stay with them until they get help.
- **Debrief with a colleague, your manager or EAP service**



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Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training: Free to access in Ireland

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*We all have a role to
play in suicide
prevention.*



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Designated
Gatekeepers



Emergent
Gatekeepers





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Your call to action

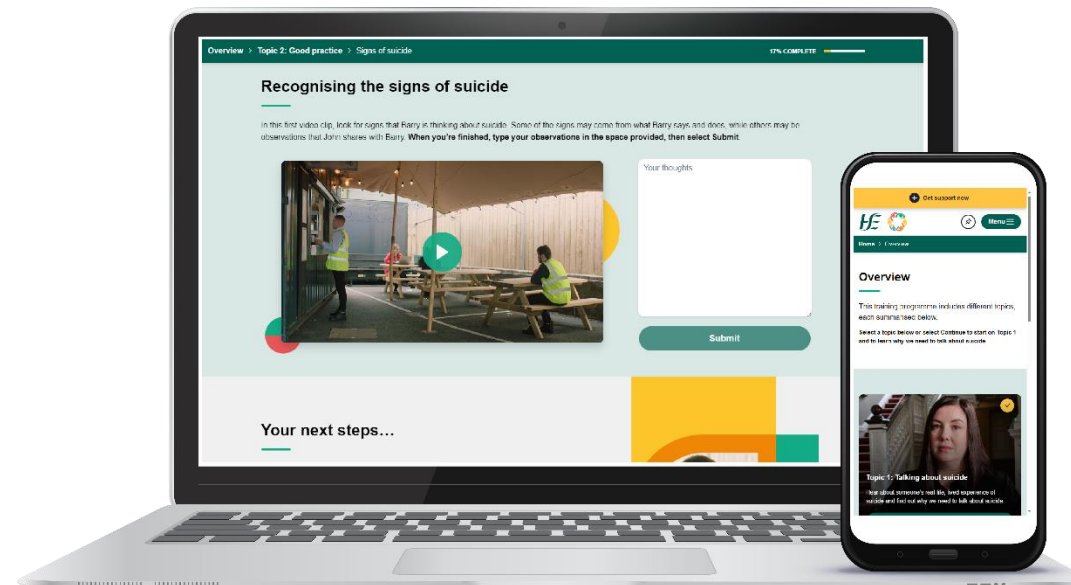
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Let's Talk About Suicide





Thank you

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Questions or follow up

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