



HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 25 NOVEMBER 2021

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY UPDATE

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on developments in Suicide Prevention work across the County delivered by the County Council's Public Health Department and its Partnership Group, the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (LLR) Suicide Audit and Prevention Group (SAPG).
2. The report provides an overview of the actions taken to address and prevent suicide within Leicestershire, delivered via the LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

Link to the local Health and Care System

3. Suicide Prevention will be a key focus within the Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2032 as part of the cross cutting mental health theme. It also forms a key part of the LLR Mental Health Design Group Plan.
4. The LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy priorities align with the following outcomes from the Leicestershire County Council's Revised Draft Strategic Plan 2022-26 which was approved for consultation by Cabinet on 26 October 2021:
 - Wellbeing and opportunity: The people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.
 - Keeping people safe: People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.

Recommendation

5. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to support the co-ordinated suicide prevention work being undertaken across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area and note the progress made to date in delivering upon the priority areas set out in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Suicide Prevention Strategy.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

6. The national suicide prevention strategy, Preventing Suicide in England: A cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives, was first published in 2012. Its key aims

are to reduce the suicide rate in the general population in England and better support those bereaved or affected by suicide. It was updated in 2017 to including tackling self-harm as an issue in its own right.

7. In April 2020, members of the Health and Wellbeing Board were provided with an update (via email in lieu of meetings of the Board not taking place as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic) concerning the revised Suicide Prevention Strategy. The report sought member's views on the draft Suicide Prevention Strategy for Leicestershire and an accompanying Action Plan for 2020-23 which had been developed by the LLR Suicide Audit and Prevention Group (LLR SAPG).
8. The Cabinet approved the Strategy and associated Action Plan on 23 June 2020.

Background

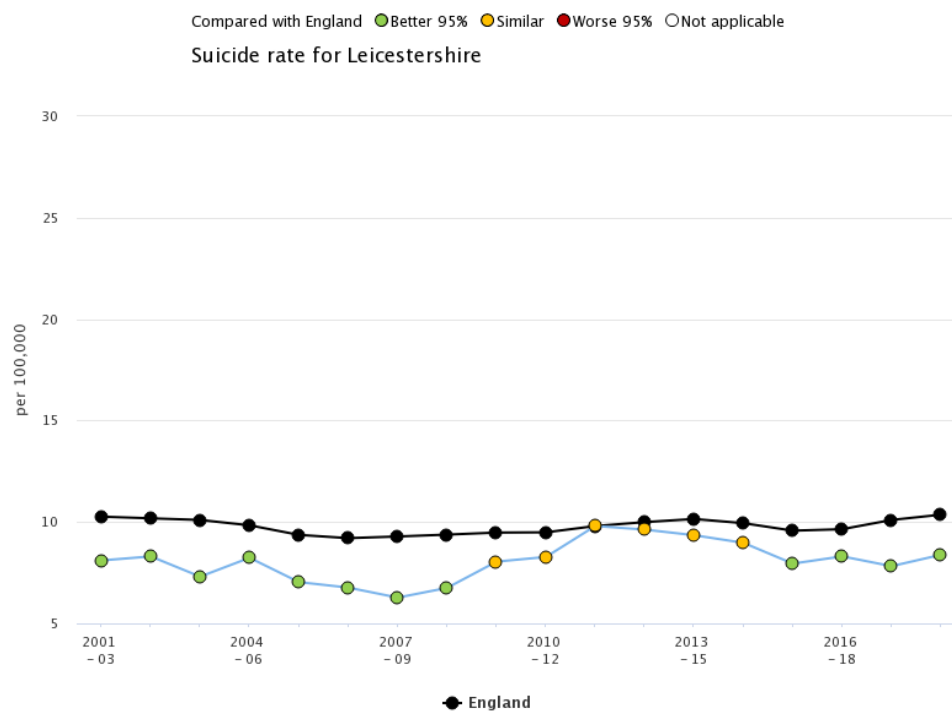
LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy

9. The LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy concentrates on key messages including that suicide is everyone's business and focuses on nine key priorities as follows:
 - i. Target support at key High-Risk Groups and at High Risk Settings
 - ii. Protect people with a history of self-harm
 - iii. Preventing suicide in public places
 - iv. Support Primary Care to Prevent Suicide
 - v. Engage with Private Sector to Enhance their Efforts to Prevent Suicide
 - vi. Support Provision of Enhanced Suicide Awareness Training
 - vii. Better use of media to manage messages about suicide
 - viii. Raise awareness with better data and better use of data
 - ix. Provide a coordinated mental wellbeing approach to COVID-19

LLR Suicide Audit and Prevention Group

10. Oversight and co-ordination of suicide prevention in Leicestershire sits under the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Suicide Audit and Prevention Group (LLR SAPG). The group is jointly led by Public Health departments in Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council.
11. The SAPG meets quarterly. Membership of the group includes representation from: Local Authority; Mental Health service commissioners and providers; NHS Emergency department; NHSE; Leicestershire Police; Voluntary and Community sector organisations.
12. In addition to providing updates to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the SAPG reports into the wider Mental Health system via the LLR Mental Health Design Group.

What the data tells us



Source: PHE Fingertips and Office for National Statistics, 2021

13. The suicide rate for Leicestershire has increased from 7.8 (per 100,000 population) in 2017-19 to 8.4 (per 100,000 population) in 2018-20.
14. In 2018-20, the suicide rate for Leicestershire was significantly lower than the national rate of 10.4 per 100,000 population.
15. National and international studies to date, have not found a significant rise in the risk of suicide since the pandemic began. However, there may be increases in suicides in some populations or geographical areas.
16. The LLR SAPG receives Real Time Surveillance Data (RTSD), provided by Leicestershire Police. This is data collected around an unexpected death which may be due to suicide before a Coroner's decision has been made. The RTSD enables support to be given to high risk individuals, in a timely way to help prevent further harm and also provides insights into unexpected deaths, such as emerging trends and 'clusters'

Progress on delivery of the Suicide Prevention Strategy

17. The COVID pandemic, and the required response of partners, has impacted on the delivery of the LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy. However, progress has been made in addressing the following priority areas since 2020 including:

i. Target support at key high-risk groups and at High Risk Settings

- **The Tomorrow Project** (Suicide Bereavement) continues to provide postvention support to those bereaved by suicide - a risk factor for suicide.
- **Men's Mental Health Peer-Support Groups** have been commissioned. Men in middle-age are at greatest risk of suicide. Evidence shows that early intervention in the community, alongside other men, can reduce suicide risk.
- **Veterans Virtual Café**
Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT) have a staff member who works with veterans including establishing a Virtual café for Veterans – Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trusts' Buddy2Buddy Veterans' Virtual café. This initiative is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund and is LPT's response to Covid-19 and Social issues facing our Military Veteran Community.

ii. Support Primary Care in its suicide prevention role

- A successful funding bid to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has seen the development of GP and Primary Care Suicide Mitigation training to improve clinical confidence and competence around suicide prevention.

iii. Preventing suicide in public places

- The County Council has a subgroup in place that looks at those higher risk locations to work with partners including British Transport Police, Leicestershire Police, and voluntary sector representatives. Initiatives have taken place at 'higher risk' network rail sites including raising awareness of help and support available.

iv. Protect people with a history of self-harm

- A Community Self-Harm Programme has been commissioned using 'Contain Funding' to address self-harm. This is an LLR programme led by Public Health, Leicestershire County Council. The focus is on both lower level prevention and early intervention work, as well a community-level service to support individuals who self-harm - a risk-factor of suicidality. This is supported by the CCG and the wider SAPG.
- Self-Harm Mobile App (DistrACT) has been procured to provide an alternative source of support.

v. Engage with Private Sector to enhance their efforts to prevent suicide

- Further work is needed in this area, this will involve engaging with private sector organisations to raise awareness of the suicide prevention agenda and sources of information, support, and suicide prevention training. This work is due to take place by June 2022.

vi. Support provision of enhanced suicide awareness training

- A successful funding bid to the CCG has seen the development of GP and Primary Care Suicide Mitigation training to improve clinical confidence and competence around suicide prevention.
- The Rural Community Council are contracted to provide Suicide Awareness and Self Harm Training. For 2021, 8 suicide Awareness Sessions and 4 Self-Harm sessions will be delivered. Some specifically aimed at schools to tackle the anecdotal rises of self-harm which have been highlighted.

vii. Support local media (including social media) to deliver key messages about suicide prevention

- Partner organisations have adopted use of Samaritans' Media guidelines for reporting suicide and work has taken place with local media partners to promote the responsible reporting of suicides locally.

viii. Raise awareness with better data and better use of data

- Real Time Surveillance Data (RTSD) is provided by Leicestershire Police. This is data collected around an unexpected death which may be due to suicide but before a Coroners decision has been made. The RTSD enables support to be given around high risk individuals, in a timely way to help prevent further harm and also provides insights into unexpected deaths, such as emerging trends and clusters. The data is used to enable front line partners at an operational level e.g. in health and voluntary sector to provide an appropriate response. The RTSD data is also presented to the SAPG on a quarterly basis to raise awareness and to highlight any emerging concerns.

ix. Work with key partners to provide a coordinated mental wellbeing approach to COVID-19

- In order to deal with potential consequences of Covid-19, weekly SAPG meetings have been initiated since early 2020 to ensure clear communication between relevant stakeholders in response to 'unexpected deaths' reported via RTSD. This has allowed for a rapid response to those individuals requiring support as well as early warning of emerging trends or clusters. The weekly group has provided an opportunity to ensure awareness across partners and a co-ordinated response at an operational level.

18. Working with Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Leicester City Council and Leicestershire Police, suicide mental health resources and communication plans have been developed, both for adults and for children and young people. The online resources are accessed by approximately 1,000 people per month via the Start a Conversation website and social media campaign.

19. The Start a Conversation Website serves as key resource for the public and professionals to access high-quality resources and signposting to services. Since

March 2020 the Covid-19 and Mental Wellbeing Page has received just under 5000 unique visits.

20. The second annual Suicide Prevention Conference was held virtually in September 2020, delivered by Public Health. The conference saw 16 events, spread over five days, and was attended by over 450 individuals. A further event has recently taken place for 2021 which included a week's programme of online activity. The event saw 450 session bookings across the week-long event with a range of suicide prevention information shared by 15 different specialist organisations. Collected attendee feedback shows an increase in knowledge and confidence as a result of attendance.
21. Through the NHS Long Term Plan, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) have committed to expand the Suicide Prevention Programme to all areas of the Country. Working together with the CCG and Leicester City Council, the SAPG were successful in a Wave 4 bid to reduce suicide's across LLR. A Suicide Prevention Project Officer will be recruited to oversee the development and the delivery of the project, which will focus on place and neighbourhood-based community mental health improvement work, to contribute to reducing suicides.

Resource Implications

22. The programme is largely funded through a combination of Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Public Health budgets, with some contributions from the CCG and Wave 4 Trust monies (NHSE). The County Council contributes in the region of £170,000 per year. A variety of stakeholders contribute to the delivery of the programme including the Leicester City Council, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Leicestershire Police and the voluntary sector including the Samaritans.

Conclusion

23. A programme of work continues to deliver the priorities of the LLR Suicide Prevention Strategy, and significant progress has been made, however further work needs to be undertaken, under the guidance of the LLR Suicide Audit Prevention Group to fully implement all aspects of the Strategy.

Relevant Impact Assessments

Equality and Human Rights Implications

24. The implementation of the Strategic approach to suicide prevention and the elements of the action plan are subject to consideration of equality and human rights implications. In particular, different elements of the plan e.g. commissioning of new services are subject to an EHRIA assessment.

Partnership Working and associated issues

25. The Strategic approach and action plan are documents that have been developed and approved by key stakeholders. The LLR Suicide Audit Prevention Group has representation from a variety of stakeholders demonstrating a partnership approach.

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Appendix

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Suicide Prevention Strategy 2020-23

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