

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 September 2017

North Yorkshire Suicide Audit – Update Report

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report asks the Committee to note the information in the paper and presentation.

2.0 Background**2.1 Multi-agency Suicide Prevention Task Group (SPTG)**

- 2.2 In response to national guidance and recognised best practice, a North Yorkshire (NY) and City of York (CoY) SPTG was created in 2014. This group developed a suicide prevention plan and identified that an audit of suicides within the County should be prioritised

2.3 Suicide Audit

- 2.4 In 2015 a North Yorkshire suicide audit was conducted and covered the period 2010-2014. A report was published in 2016. The audit reports the number of deaths due to suicide and aims to provide a more accurate picture of local trends. The audit report provides an insight into the common stresses, risk factors and catalysts which led those to take their own life. The report also identifies gaps in services, in terms of their availability and accessibility.

2.5 Summary of findings

- 227 deaths due to suicide during period 2010-2014
- 82% were male
- 25% were in the 40-49 age group
- 45% were employed at the time of death
- 60% were single (including individuals who were widowed divorced or separated)
- Majority of incidence occurred at home 65.5%
- 56% died by hanging/strangulation

2.6 Risk factors

- 53% identified mental health issues
- 41% were suffering from a chronic, long term condition, these increased to 80% for those aged over 70 years.
- 40% identified emotional loss
- 36% of cases had a history of self-harm
- 33% had alcohol present at the time of death

2.7 Contact with services

- 51% had contact with their GP in the four weeks leading up to death

3.0 Progress

3.1 Annual audits will be carried out and annual reports will be produced. These audits will be expanded to include; both verdicts of suicide and coronial inquest files relating to the death of an individual where, on the balance of probability at initial investigation, it is believed by the police that the death was as the result of suicide. The audit will enable the SPTG to identify change to or emerging trends and new priorities.

4.0 Surveillance

4.1 A North Yorkshire & York Suicide Surveillance Sub-Group (NY&YSSTG) has been established to act as the multi-agency forum that will review incidents of suicide as part of the surveillance programme and provide a co-ordinated response to emerging trends and issues highlighted by the suicide surveillance process. In addition to providing a strategic response to incidents of suicide across North Yorkshire, the NY&YSSTG will also respond to issues flagged via the early alert process, particularly where cluster or contagion is identified. Since the establishment of the group there has been engagement with Scarborough Borough Council and the police due to a potential issue of suicides in a public place compared to North Yorkshire.

4.2 The presentation included with this paper will summarise the findings from the audit and identify emerging trends.

5.0 Suicide Prevention Plan

5.1 The report findings have shaped the Suicide Prevention Plan. The plan identifies 6 priorities which mirror the national strategy:

Priority 1	Reduce the risk of suicide across the North Yorkshire population, particularly targeting high-risk groups
Priority 2	Recognising and reducing common contributory factors and life stressors
Priority 3	Improve support for those affected by suicide in North Yorkshire in the days, months and years after a death
Priority 4	Further develop research, data collection and monitoring
Priority 5	Develop opportunities for training and awareness raising
Priority 6	Reducing rates of self-harm as a key indicator of suicide risk

5.2 Each priority lists key achievements to date and current actions in various stages of development. The SPTG has responsibility for the delivery of the plan, however this committee should note that the SPTG is a joint North Yorkshire (NY) and City of York (CoY) group and although some priorities will be cross

cutting there are distinct priorities within each area and as a consequence there will be 2 locally delivered plans.

6.0 Recommendation

- a) That Members note the contents of the paper
- b) Discuss how the committee would like to be support/be involved in ensuring the effective implementation of local plans

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Background Documents Nil