

# **Suicide Prevention update**

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# Suicides in North Yorkshire

All sudden deaths that are **suspected** to be death by suicide are collated by local Coroner Officers and shared with Public Health. This enables epidemiological monitoring of patterns, trends, clusters or contagion and the completion of regular audits.

All suspected suicide deaths are monitored by Public Health, with quarterly, anonymised updates to key colleagues via the Safeguarding Adults Board and North Yorkshire Strategic Suicide Prevention group.

This information informs local priorities and actions, in addition to the ongoing development of the North Yorkshire Suicide Action Plan managed by the Strategic Suicide Prevention Group.

# Context

As part of the Suicide Prevention work that sits within the North Yorkshire Public Health team, we lead on the following:

- Establishment, and maintenance, of an Information Sharing Agreement with the local Coroner's Office
  - The information shared today is in accordance with that agreement
- Analysis of weekly suspected suicide data received from the Coroner's Office
  - This is not real time surveillance but includes data provided by the coroner using the Suspected Suicide definition (slide 4)
- Regular Coronial file audits and reports
- Management of the North Yorkshire Suicide Prevention Strategic Group to bring together the wider system on this topic
  - A Suicide Action Plan sits under this group that Public Health lead on the development and implementation of actions

# Definition

Suspected Suicide – as agreed between Public Health and Coroner's Officer

- A sudden death identified by staff within the Coroner's Office as a suspected suicide as part of the **pre-inquest** process using information from a range of sources to help build **an initial understanding of circumstances of a death**.

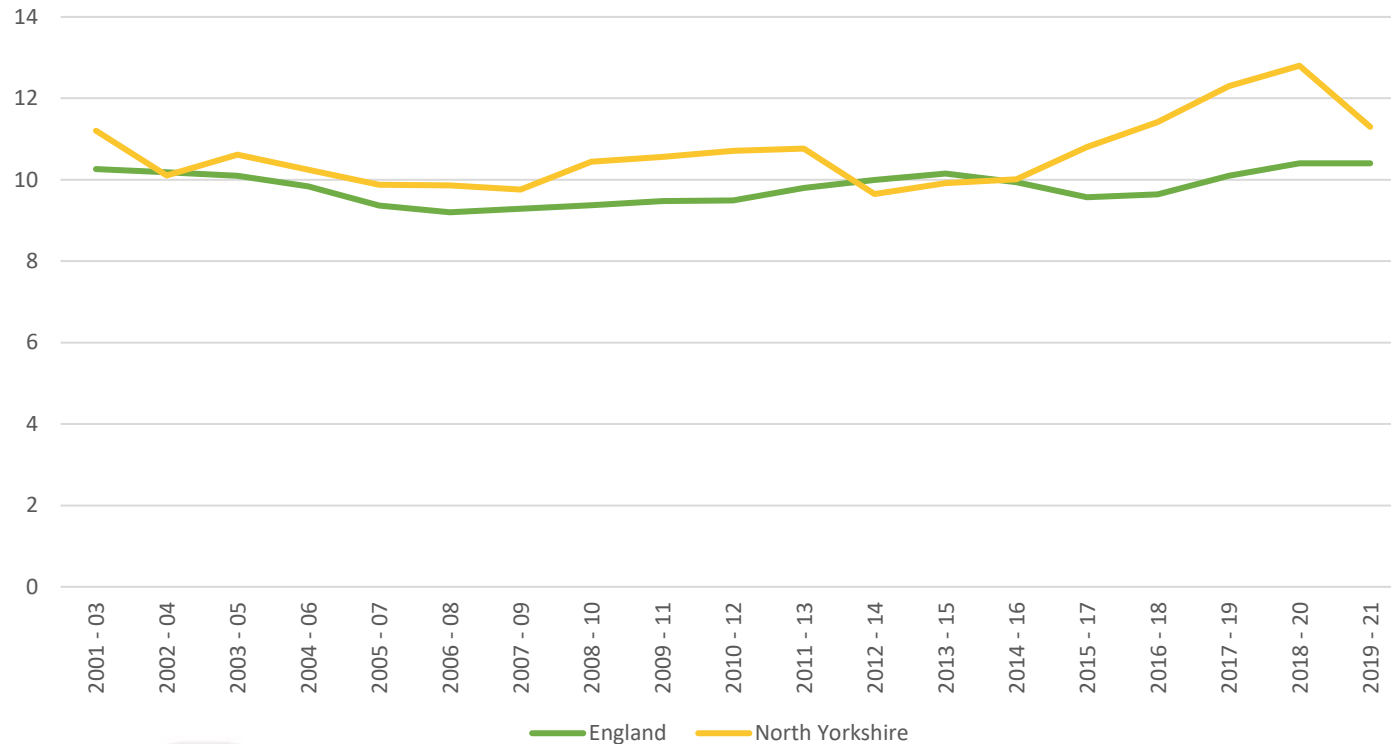
## Suicide

- A death in which a conclusion of suicide has been reached at Inquest. On the **balance of probabilities**, the Coroner is satisfied that they have died as a result of their own actions and that it was their intention to die.

# Data - Suicides

Suicide rate, persons

Source: OHID



The total number of suicides has decreased in North Yorkshire between 2018-20 and 2019-21.

The suicide rate has fallen from 12.8 per 100,000 in 2018-20 to 11.3 per 100,000 in 2019-21; similar compared to the England average.

There are a higher proportion of male than female suicides which is in line with the national trend.

# Local Developments

- North Yorkshire Suicide Prevention Strategic Group continues to meet quarterly with representation from key partners working across North Yorkshire.
- Public Health worked closely with partner organisations working in communities across the county to support development of funding ideas for the recent Government-led VCS Suicide Prevention Grants.
- Worked closely with key national partners within Suicide Prevention to strengthen local links and presence (e.g. Samaritans, Papyrus and SOBs).
- Supported organisations working within communities on specific projects to offer advice and guidance based on best practice and evidence.
- Postvention support offer continues to be made for any person bereaved by suicide to provide timely support and intervention.
- Development of a localised cluster response plan in line with national guidance

# Audit Process

- Most of the work undertaken by Public Health for Suicide Prevention occurs pre-Coronial inquest around suspected suicides (as per definitions)
- In line with national guidance, audits should be conducted of deaths in which a conclusion of suicide has been reached at inquest to inform local prevention work and action plans
- Audits allow a comparison of local suicide data and trends with those identified nationally and regionally, as well as highlighting local risk factors, "at risk" groups or areas of higher incidence
- The last audit was completed in 2021 for a review of deaths by suicide in 2017. Currently developing plans to conduct an audit of the intervening, full calendar years completed since the last audit was completed – likely to be 2018-2021.

# National Strategy

- New cross-government strategy published in September 2023 to lead on Suicide Prevention efforts across England from 2023 to 2028.
- Reflects that considerable progress has been made since the last strategy in 2012, and whilst the national suicide rate is not significantly higher than in 2012, it is not falling.
- Therefore, the aim of this cross-government strategy is to bring everybody together around common priorities across the NHS, local government, the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sectors, employers and individuals.
- It sets out actions that can be taken to:
  - reduce the suicide rate over the next 5 years – with initial reductions observed within half this time or sooner
  - improve support for people who have self-harmed
  - improve support for people bereaved by suicide



# National Strategy – continued...

To achieve these aims, a range of priority areas for action have been developed including:

- The improvement of data and evidence to ensure that effective, evidence-informed and timely interventions continue to be adapted
- Provide tailored, targeted support to priority groups, including those at higher risk.
- Address common risk factors linked to suicide at a population level by providing early intervention and tailored support.
- Promote online safety and responsible media content to reduce harms, improve support and signposting, and provide helpful messages about suicide and self-harm
- Provide effective crisis support across sectors for those who reach crisis point
- Reduce access to means and methods of suicide where this is appropriate and necessary as an intervention to prevent suicides
- Provide effective bereavement support to those affected by suicide
- Make suicide prevention everybody's business so that we can maximise our collective impact and support to prevent suicides

# Action Plan

- Underneath this new cross-government strategy there is a comprehensive action plan that sets out how this strategy will be put in to action, in addition to how it will be monitored across the course of its timeframe
- The recent VCS Suicide Prevention Grants were one of the key actions to stimulate activity within voluntary organisations who often lead community-based work
- Another announcement was the development of a new nationwide near real-time suspected suicide surveillance system that, once launched, will improve the early detection of and timely action to address changes in suicide rates or trends. Led by OHID, it launched on 30th November 2023
- The only actions where local authorities are cited as the lead agency reflect the need to ensure robust information is collated locally to inform interventions, as well as making use of local near real-time suicide surveillance systems to connect families, friends, carers and loved ones to bereavement support.

# Real-time Suicide Surveillance

- To establish a real-time suicide surveillance system in line with current international best practices, we conclude that the following criteria should be met:
  - a rapid, routine collection of provisional data sourced from at least one reliable data source to facilitate timely prevention efforts
  - ongoing data review to ensure high sensitivity
  - the development of a core, automated machine learning system to assist rapid data entry and quick transition to analysis
  - visualization
  - reporting of emerging spatial, temporal or spatio-temporal clusters, as well as risk factors and vulnerable populations on a need-to-know basis.
- Work is underway to review our current surveillance system in place to look at how to bring it in line with recommendations from the new strategy
- The development of the new national, near real-time dashboard will be considered as well to look at utilising existing data sharing routes to inform local practice

# Questions