

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 4 December 2018

World Suicide Prevention Day

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| Item number | 7.4 |
| Report number | |
| Executive/routine | |
| Wards | All |
| Council Commitments | |

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to summarise suicide prevention activity in Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh and National Choose Life programmes consider the training programme (with approximately 45,000 people trained in Scotland in suicide prevention) is a factor in the national and local decline in suicides.

Through the City of Edinburgh Council, approximately 500 places on suicide prevention training per annum have been made available to staff from the Council, NHS, Education, Police, Scottish Prison Service, Faith Communities and 3rd sector services.

World Suicide Prevention Day

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Note the training provided to key stakeholders
- 1.2 Note the activities to de-stigmatise suicide
- 1.3 Note the decrease of the suicide rate in the City of Edinburgh
- 1.4 Note the support provided to those affected by suicide

2. Background

- 2.1 The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee have asked for an update on suicide prevention activity in relation to World Suicide prevention day specifically and suicide prevention activity in general.

3. Main report

- 3.1 In the 2004-2014 recording period, Scotland's suicide rate fell by 18%. Edinburgh's rate did not. However, the latest figures from the Scottish Public Health Observatory show that Edinburgh's suicide figures are falling
- 3.2 2013-2017 shows that after a decade when Edinburgh's suicide rate remained static:
 - There is a 3.4% reduction in the suicide rate in City of Edinburgh
 - Male suicide rates decreased by 2% and;
 - Female rates decreased by 7%
- 3.3 Choose Life Edinburgh is committed to maintaining its range of activities. This includes continuing to deliver existing suicide prevention training programmes as we transition to a new Scottish model of suicide prevention training in 2020.
- 3.4 The current training programme is comprised of:
 - 'safeTALK' a half day suicide alertness training
 - ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) a two day suicide prevention training for all working with high risk groups, and;
 - STORM (Skills Training on Risk Management) a two day skills based suicide prevention training for all professionals who have a key role at assessing risk of suicide e.g. Mental Health Officers; Nursing staff. These will continue to be

delivered until evaluations allow for a full shift to the new nationally developed programme in 2020.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Fewer suicides
- 4.2 There is significant evidence to establish the correlation between reduced suicide rates and the delivery of a suicide prevention training programme which delivers training to staff working with high risk groups. This has resulted in improved confidence and competence of staff in identifying and supporting people with thoughts of suicide. This is evidenced through post training feedback of trainees who have used the skills to support people at risk.
- 4.3 Annual delivery of safeTALK suicide alertness training as a pilot to school's 17 & 18yr old pupils enabling them to support those in their social circle as they leave school.
- 4.4 First ever delivery of safeTALK suicide alertness training to newly qualified social workers planned for the 9th of November 2018. Social work students receive no suicide specific training.
- 4.5 Publicising the work of this pilot to engage additional schools.
- 4.6 Small amounts of the Choose Life funding allocated to support to organisations such as the Edinburgh Crisis Centre, the Samaritans in order to support their on-going work to prevent suicide.
- 4.7 Financial support pledged to 'Living Warriors', to provide on-going accommodation to provide monthly delivery of a support group for survivors of a suicide attempt.
- 4.8 Financial support pledged to Survivors of Bereavement of Suicide (SOBS) to provide on-going accommodation to provide a monthly delivery of a support group for those bereaved through suicide.
- 4.9 Annual planning by Edinburgh's Choose Life Coordinator to support and deliver events to publicise suicide prevention messages and work during the week surrounding World Suicide Prevention Day. This year the day was 10 September.
- 4.10 This year activities included:
 - delivery of a 'safeTALK' suicide alertness training on the 3rd of September to a wide variety of professionals including staff from Autism Initiatives; social work; SafeZone Edinburgh; Link Living and Action for Children.
 - a non-faith guided time for reflection for those touched by suicide at St. Augustine's Church on the 9th of September organised in partnership by Choose Life Edinburgh; NHS Mental Health Chaplains and Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

- a free suicide themed film (The Hours) financed by Choose Life on the 10th of September at the Filmhouse screened to approximately 90 people. This was followed by post film input from the Edinburgh Samaritans; the Crisis Centre; Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide; Living Warriors and the Edinburgh Choose life Coordinator.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 Work carried out by Choose Life Edinburgh are to be carried out within existing resources.

6. Equalities impact

- 6.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is being carried out on the Choose Life Edinburgh in December 2018, which will be published on the Transform Edinburgh and the Council website. The anticipated completion date is late February 2018.
- 6.2 High risk groups are targeted by advance publicity for suicide prevention training courses to organisations working with them.

7. Sustainability impact

- 7.1 The work of Choose Life Edinburgh is in line with Scotland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan 'Every Life Matters'. The vision for the new national strategy is to create a Scotland where :
- people at risk of suicide feel able to ask for help and have access to skilled staff and well-coordinated support;
 - people affected by suicide are not alone;
 - suicide is no longer stigmatised;
 - we provide better support to those bereaved by suicide and
 - through learning and development, we minimise the risk of suicide by delivering better services and building stronger, more connected communities

8. Consultation and engagement

- 8.1 Edinburgh's Choose Life Coordinator consults members of the Choose Life Steering Group comprising representatives from:
- The Edinburgh Samaritans
 - The Edinburgh Crisis Centre
 - Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide
 - Living Warriors

- The Advice Shop
- LGBT Health and Wellbeing
- LGBT Youth Scotland
- NHS Lothian
- Amey (Forth Road Bridge)
- City of Edinburgh Council Learning and Development
- City of Edinburgh Council Mental Health Officer service
- Advocard
- Police Scotland
- Penumbra

9. Background reading/external references

Scotland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan

<https://beta.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2018/08/scotlands-suicide-prevention-action-plan-life-matters/documents/00539045-pdf/00539045-pdf/govscot:document/>

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