

## Calderdale Suicide Prevention – Overview of Key Work streams

### Briefing for Adult Health Social Care Scrutiny Board, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

#### 1. Introduction

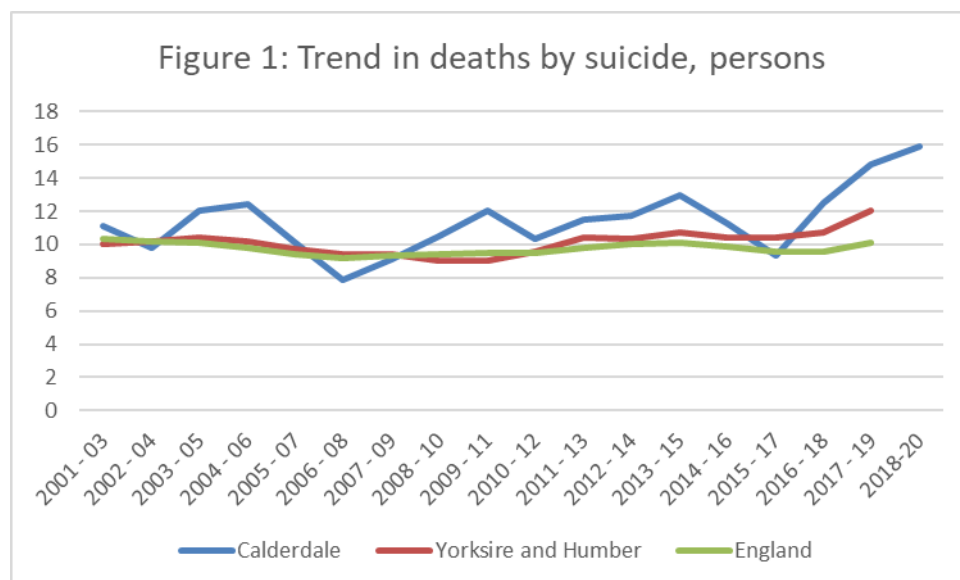
Partners in Calderdale have identified suicide prevention and public mental health as a priority and are committed to reducing mental health inequalities. This is reflected in the Wellbeing Strategy for Calderdale 2018-2024. Calderdale Council has also adopted the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.

Suicides are not inevitable and partners have a role to play by promoting an inclusive society which supports people at times of personal crisis which will help to prevent suicides.

This paper aims to set out Calderdale’s approach to preventing suicide and promoting good mental health.

#### 2. Suicide in Calderdale

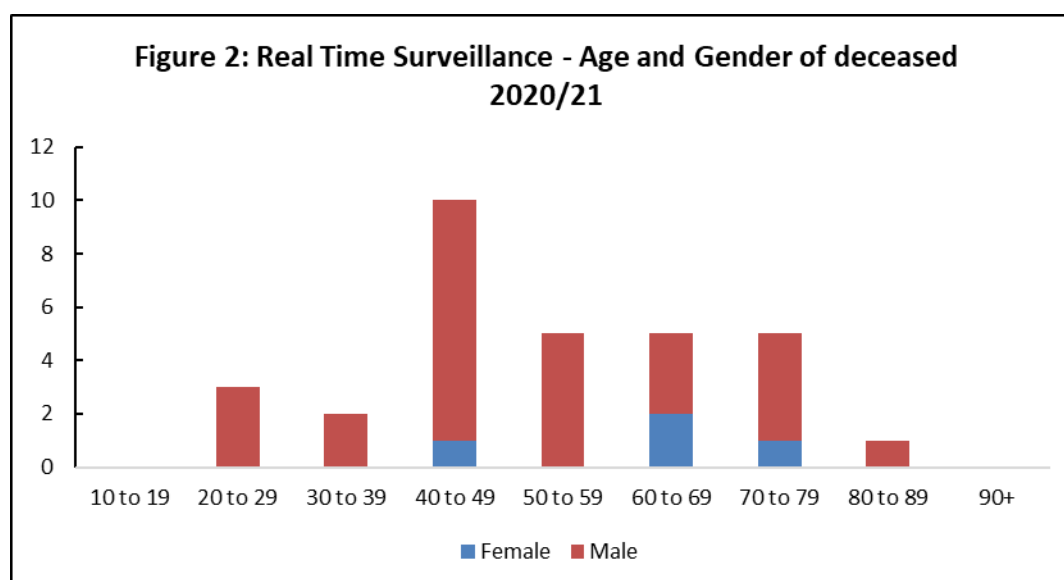
Suicide deaths in Calderdale have increased since 2015/17. Figure 1 shows the rate of suicide deaths per 100,000 in Calderdale, Yorkshire and the Humber and England. The latest official data for Calderdale was for the three years 2017-19, at which point Calderdale had the 3rd highest rate of all English upper tier authorities. Data for 2018-20 is provisional, but this indicates another rise in the rate to around 15.9 per 100,000.



Male and female suicide rates for Calderdale are significantly higher than the national rate. Males account for 80% of the suicides in the borough.

Real time surveillance helps us monitor suspected suicide deaths in a more timely way. In the first quarter of 2021/22 we believe there were 8 suicides in Calderdale residents - 7 men and 1 woman. In 2020/21 there were 31 suicides in Calderdale residents, however due to delays in coroners verdicts these are unlikely to be fully reflected in the data for 2020. This could lead to a further increase in 2021 data. Thirty or more suicides a year in Calderdale indicate very high rates. Current real time surveillance shows high numbers of potential suicides in both 2020/21 and the first quarter of 2021/22.

Figure 2 shows real time Calderdale data of potential suicides by age and gender. This shows that despite concerns about self-harm in Children and Young People, adults are more likely to die from suicide. However, trauma and adverse experiences in childhood can be linked to poor mental health and suicide later in life.



### 3. Risk factors and protective factors

A Calderdale suicide audit was carried out in 2019 which reviewed suicides between 2016 and 2018. This identified the groups, needs and characteristics that increased the risk of suicide, and informed the development of a multi-agency suicide prevention plan.

**Table 1: Suicide risk factors - Calderdale Suicide Audit 2016-2018**

History of self-harm	Adverse life-events
Suicide note/message left	Recent contact with GP
Previous history of suicide attempts	Recent contact with A and E
Alcohol/drugs at time of death	Diagnosed with mental health condition
History of alcohol abuse	Physical health condition

Substance misuse	Terminal illness
Contact with criminal justice system	Long term health condition affecting quality of life
Debt/financial worries	Gambling
Use of specific social media/online resources	Mention of media
Adverse childhood experiences	Recent suicide bereavement

There are also factors that can protect against suicide there protective factors include encouraging help seeking, reducing social isolation, reduce and treat depression and addressing risks associated with substance misuse, unemployment or debt.

#### **4. Suicide Prevention Action Plan**

Calderdale Suicide Prevention Group was established 2016. The group has recently reviewed and updated the multi-agency suicide prevention plan 2021-23, to include the integration of suicide prevention and good mental health into plans for the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our vision<sup>1</sup> is for Calderdale to be a place where suicides are eliminated and where people do not consider suicide as a solution to the difficulties they face; and a place that supports people at a time of personal crisis and builds individual and community resilience for improved lives.

Calderdale's approach to suicide prevention aligns with Calderdale Vision 2024, particular drawing on the theme innate kindness and resilience, by how we care for each other, are able to recover from setbacks and are full of hope.

We also work closely with regional partners including the regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Community of Improvement (COI) and West Yorkshire and Horrogate Partnership Suicide prevention Five year strategy, which aims to reduce suicides by 10% across the WY&H population.

#### **What are our Suicide Prevention priorities?**

- A Calderdale-wide approach to suicide prevention
- Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups
- Tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
- Reduce access to the means of suicide
- Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
- Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
- Support research, data collection and monitoring
- Locally identified priorities

## 5. Progress with the delivery of the suicide prevention action plan

Below is a summary of the progress made:

A collaborative approach to reducing suicide on North Bridge and Burdock Way, Halifax include restricting access by improving physical barriers, improved surveillance using CCTV and increased opportunity for help seeking with the implementation of Samaritan signs.

Support for those bereaved due to suicide is in place, with a postvention peer group support group, local workshop, a short film detailing a local families' experience of suicide it impact. The film has been screened across England and will open Suicide Bereavement UK's 8th International Conference in September.

- Design and distribution of over 2000 credit card size [Crisis Cards](#) containing key local and national organisations to signpost people in emotional distress to support that they need..
  - Six local voluntary and community sector organisations secured funding from West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership to deliver suicide prevention projects: ROKT foundation is delivering a wall climbing programme (targeted at young men and women aged 18-35yrs with mental health conditions.
  - Brunswick and Happy Valley Pride will deliver a 6-8 week campaign called 'Mind your Head' focusing on the mental health of the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning) community in Calderdale.
  - Invictus Wellbeing is delivering the Just Brew project for young people 12-17yrs who are affected by poor emotional wellbeing.
  - Get fit 4 Mental Wellness ran an 8 week activity, resilience and awareness course for women.
  - Noah's Ark Support Our Supporters (SoS) Network provides online supervision and learning and development for school and voluntary sector staff that work with young people and adults with mental health conditions.
  - Phoenix Radio will run a bi-weekly radio show from September focusing on good mental health and preventing self-harm and suicide.

## 6. Integrating suicide prevention into existing services and programmes

### 6.1 Starting Well (children aged 0-5 and their families)

The Public Health Early Years' Service (PHEYS) and the Healthy Early Years Support (HEYS) Service promote good physical and mental health in young children and family members, signposting to support where necessary.

### 6.2 Developing Well (children and young people aged 6-25)

- Healthy Futures Calderdale Provider Alliance brings together partners working to promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of school-aged children and young people. This includes a resilience building programme in schools, that promotes emotional health and wellbeing, and includes signposting to local mental health projects and services such as Open Minds:
- <http://www.openmindscalderdale.org.uk/> and Kooth on line counselling.
- Training is available for school staff from Open Mind (CAMHS) on:
  - Introduction to Mental Health
  - Anxiety in Children and Young People
  - Depression and Low Mood in Children and Young People
  - Self-Harm Awareness
  - Suicide Awareness
  - Building Resilience

### **6.3 Living & working Well – Adults**

Healthy Minds provides support services in Calderdale to help improve people's emotional health and wellbeing from general wellbeing through to crisis and suicidal ideation. Below is a summary of the programmes delivered by Healthy Minds.

- Safespace offers 1-1 emotional support in evenings and weekends.
- Recovery & Support service helps people find what works for them to manage their mental health. Pre-lockdown, support was primarily through peer support groups. During the pandemic there has been increased demand for one to one support. . In addition to these services, Healthy Minds has supported 600 people with 2599 calls, peaking at 112 calls in one day. Overall in the past year, Healthy Minds has supported over 1120 people.
- A new Link Worker service will offer intensive 1-1 support for people whose distress is such that they frequently contact services, including A&E. By addressing the root causes of their distress, the aim is to change these patterns and achieve more positive coping strategies.
- Healthy Minds is also supporting the Covid-19 mental health recovery by providing support to vulnerable people who are anxious about the end of Covid-19 restrictions.
- Healthy Minds hosts the Calderdale Cares 4 Us programme, which provides wellbeing support to public and voluntary sector employees and volunteers whose mental wellbeing has been impacted by their role in responding to Covid-19. This includes emotional support for care home staff for whom the pandemic has been an ordeal.

## **7. Conclusion and next steps**

We don't yet know the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic will have on suicide. However, the impact that the pandemic and associated lockdowns have had on the economy and relationships, mean that exposure to suicide risk factors is likely to have increased.

Action to address suicide risk factors and promote protective factors is integrated into Calderdale's recovery plan.

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**Appendix 1 - For more information about mental health support, please visit:**

Samaritans offer a free, confidential service, 24 hours a day, on **116 123**.

[Healthy Minds](#) – a Calderdale mental health charity providing support.

[Recovery College](#) is open to any adult who wants to improve their emotional wellbeing.

The [Open Minds](#) website helps you with questions about emotional health and wellbeing if you are a young person, parent, carer or professional in Calderdale.

For advice, visit: [Looking after your emotional health and well-being](#) (Calderdale CCG).

[Mind](#) – the national mental health charity providing advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

[Every Mind Matters](#) – simple steps to look after your mental health and wellbeing.

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Appendix 2 – Calderdale Suicide Audit 2016-18