

## HEALTH AND WELL BEING BOARD 28 NOVEMBER 2019

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### SUICIDE PREVENTION UPDATE: FOR INFORMATION

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#### SUMMARY REPORT

##### Purpose of the Report

1. To update Board members on the Suicide Prevention Plan for Darlington.
2. To update Board members on the local position around suicide.

##### Summary

3. The action plan for the Darlington Suicide Prevention Group was initially developed in 2016 and following a number of key regional and local workstreams and attached resources, it is currently being refreshed and will be concluded by April 2020.
4. Suicides are not inevitable, in most cases they can be prevented. Suicide rates in England have increased since 2007, making suicide the main cause of death for men under 50 years. The death of someone by suicide has a devastating and lasting effect on families, friends, and the wider community.
5. In Darlington suicide rates remain higher than the national and regional average with a rate per 100,000 population of 13.1 compared to 9.6 (England) and 11.3 (North East). The latest suicide audit for Darlington (2016-18) looks in more detail at the 29 cases within that period to draw out emerging trends, patterns and the wider social determinants of those individuals who have died by suicide in recent years as an evidence base to inform preventative measures and practice.
6. The North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Suicide Prevention Network is a collaboration of regional partners and have developed a regional multi-agency plan 2019/24 - *Suicide Prevention is everyone's business - Every Life Matters* linked into national suicide prevention strategy.
7. The Darlington Suicide Prevention Group is well established and provides a multi-agency approach to suicide prevention in Darlington. Representatives from public health, CCG, TEWV and a range of voluntary and community sector organisations meet bi-monthly to take ownership of the local action plan and to monitor and respond to changing trends in terms of local suicide rates. NHS England funding has been allocated to each local authority area via the NENC network to support this work covering a range of workstreams.
8. A revised early alert system for coordinating information around every suspected suicide in Darlington has been established to ensure timely capture of relevant

and appropriate information and to provide up to date evidence to inform local plans.

### **Recommendation**

9. It is recommended that: -
  - (a) The Board accept the update on suicide prevention plans for Darlington and note the revision of the action plan in April 2020
  - (b) Support the actions set out in the report to implement a whole system approach to suicide prevention across Darlington

### **Reasons**

10. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -
  - (a) Suicide remains a high public health priority and local authorities have a responsibility alongside key partners, to implement and deliver local suicide prevention plans
  - (b) In line with national and regional strategy, there is a drive to reduce the overall suicide rate with funding attached to encourage local multi-agency action

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### **Background Papers**

Darlington Suicide Audit 2016-2018 available on request

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S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Well Being	Local areas have a responsibility to put in place suicide prevention plans
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Diversity	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All – however suicide audit shows males aged between 40 – 69 years are most at risk
Budget and Policy Framework	No Council budget implications
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Aligned – More people healthy and independent
Efficiency	No efficiencies identified
Implications for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	No impact

## MAIN REPORT

### DARLINGTON SUICIDE PREVENTION UPDATE

#### Background

1. The purpose of this report is to update on the Darlington Suicide Prevention plan and local position. The action plan for the Darlington Suicide Prevention Group was initially developed in 2016 and following a number of key regional and local workstreams and attached resources, it is currently being refreshed and will be concluded by April 2020. A copy of the original plan can be viewed for information at Appendix 1.

#### The National Context

2. The National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England was launched in 2002 with the aim of supporting a national reduction in suicide rates. The renewed strategy *Preventing Suicide in England: A Cross-Government outcomes strategy to save lives* was published in 2012 (with a 2017 update), focuses on preventing suicide through a public health approach and establishes the case for locally developed multiagency strategies and action plans.
3. Suicides are not inevitable, in most cases they can be prevented. Suicide rates in England have increased since 2007, making suicide the main cause of death for men under 50 years. The death of someone by suicide has a devastating and lasting effect on families, friends, and the wider community.

## North East and North Cumbria Suicide Prevention Network

4. The North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Suicide Prevention Network is a collaboration of regional partners and is accountable to the overarching steering group for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS) Mental Health work stream. The ICS framework aims to transform the way services are delivered to people across the North East and North Cumbria, supporting the provision of a more integrated approach to health and social care. The NENC Suicide Prevention network have developed a regional multi-agency plan 2019/24 - *Suicide Prevention is everyone's business - Every Life Matters*. The aims of the plan are to:
- To reduce the number of suicides including in high-risk groups, and by a minimum of 10% by 2021, in all areas across the ICS.
  - To reduce the incidence of self-harm and repeated self-harm.
  - To reduce the impact of self-harm and suicide.
  - To reduce the stigma of self-harm and suicide

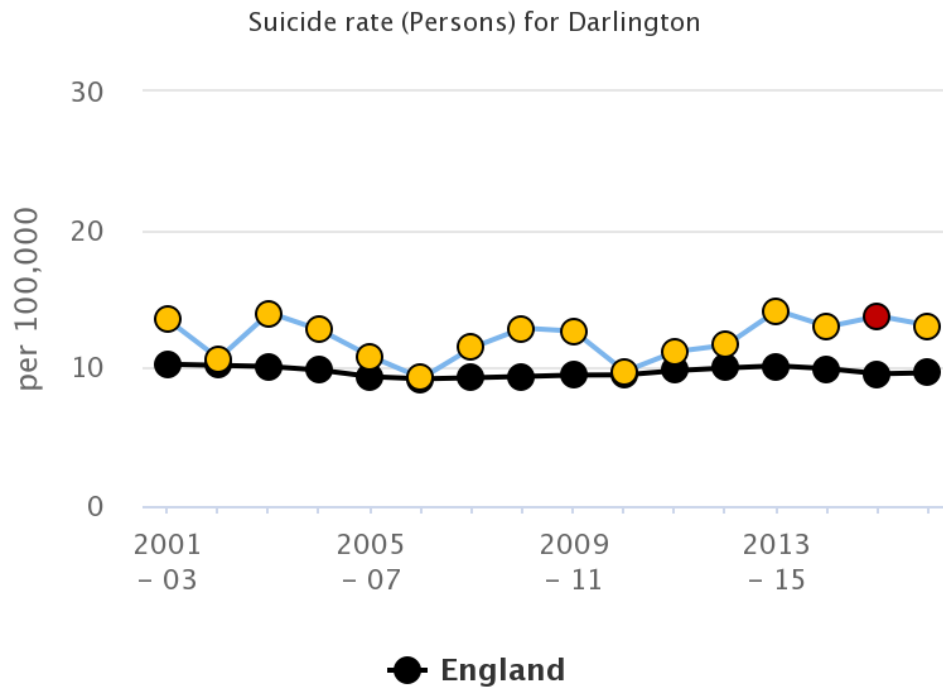
## Darlington Prevalence

5. The chart below shows how Darlington compares to the England average and the rest of the North East in terms of the most recent suicide rate per 100,000 population. Although actual numbers are low for Darlington (29 deaths in the latest 3-year audit), with a rate of 13.1, comparatively it sits higher than the England average (9.6) and the North East average (11.3). Middlesbrough is the only North East local authority area with a higher rate.

Table 1: North East Suicide Rate per 100,000 population 2016-18

Area	Recent Trend	Count	Value
England	-	14,047	9.6
North East region	-	779	11.3
Middlesbrough	-	54	15.6
Darlington	-	36	13.1
County Durham	-	176	12.8
North Tyneside	-	70	12.6
Hartlepool	-	29	11.6
Northumberland	-	91	11.3
Sunderland	-	82	11.1
Redcar and Cleveland	-	36	10.8
Newcastle upon Tyne	-	78	10.6
Stockton-on-Tees	-	48	9.2
Gateshead	-	46	8.7
South Tyneside	-	33	8.3

**Figure 2: Suicide rate for Darlington per 100,000 population 2001 - 2018**



**Figure 3: Suicide rate for Darlington per 100,000 population 2001 - 2018**

Period	Darlington				North East region	England
	Count	Value	Lower CI	Upper CI		
2001 - 03	35	13.5	9.4	18.8	11.3	10.3
2002 - 04	28	10.7	7.1	15.5	12.0	10.2
2003 - 05	36	14.0	9.8	19.4	12.0	10.1
2004 - 06	33	12.7	8.7	17.9	11.3	9.8
2005 - 07	29	10.8	7.2	15.6	10.1	9.4
2006 - 08	25	9.3	6.0	13.7	9.9	9.2
2007 - 09	31	11.5	7.8	16.3	10.0	9.3
2008 - 10	35	12.9	8.9	17.9	10.2	9.4
2009 - 11	35	12.7	8.8	17.6	10.9	9.5
2010 - 12	27	9.7	6.4	14.2	11.0	9.5
2011 - 13	31	11.2	7.6	15.9	11.9	9.8
2012 - 14	32	11.6	8.0	16.5	12.3	10.0
2013 - 15	39	14.2	10.1	19.4	12.4	10.1
2014 - 16	36	13.0	9.1	18.0	11.6	9.9
2015 - 17	38	13.7	9.7	18.9	10.8	9.6
2016 - 18	36	13.1	9.1	18.1	11.3	9.6

Source: Public Health England (based on ONS source data)

## Darlington compared to CIPFA neighbours

6. The chart below shows how Darlington compares to its CIPFA neighbours – those areas that are statistically nearest to Darlington - in terms of the suicide rate per 100,000 population. Darlington ranks as one of the higher rates amongst its CIPFA neighbours.

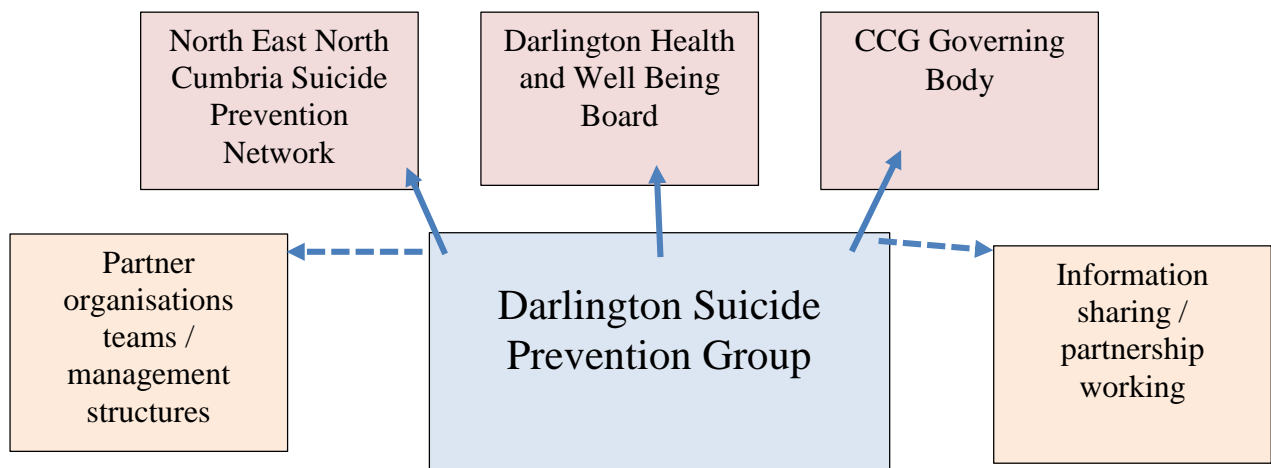
Figure 4: CIPFA Neighbours Suicide Rate per 100,000 population 2016-18

Area	Recent Trend	Neighbour Rank	Count	Value
England	-	-	14,047	9.6
Neighbours average	-	-	-	-
St. Helens	-	5	75	16.1
Rotherham	-	12	87	13.1
Darlington	-	-	36	13.1
Calderdale	-	7	68	12.5
Doncaster	-	13	98	12.3
Wigan	-	15	106	12.3
Bolton	-	6	87	11.7
Tameside	-	11	68	11.6
Dudley	-	3	80	9.7
Telford and Wrekin	-	8	44	9.7
North East Lincolnshire	-	2	40	9.6
Plymouth	-	9	68	9.6
Bury	-	10	45	9.3
Stockton-on-Tees	-	1	48	9.2
Derby	-	4	51	7.7
Warrington	-	14	41	7.2

## Darlington Suicide Prevention Group

7. The Darlington Suicide Prevention Group is well established and provides a multi-agency approach to suicide prevention in Darlington. Representatives from public health, CCG, TEWV and a range of voluntary and community sector organisations meet bi-monthly to take ownership of the local action plan and to monitor and respond to changing trends in terms of local suicide rates. In terms of accountability this group feeds into the regional NENC suicide prevention network via public health representation, into Darlington Borough Council through the Health and Well Being Board and via the CCG Governing Body.

Figure 5 – Accountability



## Suicide Prevention Action Plan

8. The Darlington action plan was developed in 2016. In line with the priorities included in the all age suicide prevention strategy *Preventing suicide in England; a cross government outcomes strategy to save lives*, the key priorities of the local plan include:
  - (a) Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups
  - (b) Tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
  - (c) Reduce access to the means of suicide
  - (d) Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
  - (e) Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
  - (f) Support research, data collection and monitoring
9. A number of local actions within each of these areas have been identified and taken forward via multi-agency and collaborative working. Following a strengthened focus and drive to work more joined up across the region as part of the ICS framework, several new opportunities around suicide prevention have come to the fore to strengthen the work being carried out within Darlington.

## Resources

10. NHS England funding has been allocated to the NENC network to support suicide prevention work in each local area. This funding has been provided on a 2-year programme 2018- 2020 to fund the following key areas of work:
  - (a) Suicide Audit
  - (b) Grass Roots small grants
  - (c) Workforce Development and training
  - (d) Postvention
  - (e) Team Talk

## Suicide Audit

11. As part of the national strategy it is recommended that each area carries out an audit to draw out emerging trends, patterns and the wider social determinants of those individuals who have died by suicide in recent years as an evidence base to inform preventative measures and practice. These have been carried out on a 3-year basis with the latest data covering 2015 – 2018.
12. Summary information shows that 29 people took their own life in Darlington in this 3-year period. Of those 29:
  - (a) 79% were male
  - (b) 21% were female

- (c) 76% were aged between 40 and 69 years
- (d) 38% were employed at the time of their death
- (e) 83% were single (including individuals who were widowed, divorced or separated)
- (f) The most common method was by hanging

13. Given the small number of cases, it is not possible to draw any statistically significant trends or to rely on this data to exclusively identify those groups most at risk or the most significant contributing factors. It does however, provide a snapshot of the local profile, informs local planning and contributes to the work ongoing to tackle the issue. The information from the audit will be used by the Darlington Suicide Prevention Group to inform the update and review of the local action plan.

### **Grass Roots small grants**

14. Funding was made available in 2018/19 to support organisations across Darlington to deliver projects that supported the aims of the Darlington Suicide Prevention plan. Bids were invited between £500 and £5,000 and four voluntary sector organisations were successful in securing funding. Projects included the development of a Men's Shed, mental health awareness training, bespoke support groups and support and access into employment. The second round of this funding for 2019/20 was promoted and closes at the end of November 2019.

### **Workforce Development and Training**

15. To build capacity across the system, funding has been allocated to workforce development aligned to suicide prevention building on the findings of local audits and to allow areas to respond to identified gaps and local need. In Darlington, the audit highlighted similar numbers of those employed and unemployed and there is a need to have a whole system approach to tackling the issue so that key partners including the private sector, schools, DWP and the public and voluntary sector are enabled to raise awareness, build resilience and inform their workforce, clients and wider community.

### **Postvention**

16. There is strong evidence to show that those bereaved by suicide are more at risk of suicide themselves. Part of local action planning needs to consider how family and friends are supported with the right information and advice. As numbers in Darlington are low this is a key issue to ensure that those partners who are best placed to offer this support have consistent and correct information and signposting at the right time.



## **Team Talk**

17. A regional programme of work has been developed to look at linking in with grass roots sports clubs in the Durham, Darlington and Tees areas to raise awareness around mental health, suicide, build resilience and reduce stigma, thinking about taking the key messages to places where people go and feel comfortable in a supported environment. As a locality group there is opportunity to link into this to determine how this is rolled out and which groups and clubs to target.

## **Early Alert System**

18. Whenever there is a suspected suicide, the Police as first responders, complete an initial CID27 form and send it to the Coroner's Office. Historically this information was then sent to NECs on behalf of the CCG who would summarise the information, send a summary to the public health team and send an audit tool requesting follow up information from the relevant GP practice. This system was often problematic in terms of keeping timely up to date information and sometimes there were missed opportunities between agencies.
19. As of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019, a revised system has been implemented whereby the public health team will receive notifications direct from the Coroner's Office. This will minimise the transfer of information and allow for a real-time log of all suspected suicides to be maintained. Public Health will also be responsible for requesting primary care information on a revised, shorter form.
20. Routinely the logged data will be cross checked with the Coroner's Office to check which suspected suicides were confirmed at verdict. This will remove the need to conduct out a full 3-year audit as all the information required will be recorded within the early alert system. An annual summary will be produced to inform the Suicide Prevention Planning Group.
21. It is intended that the early alert system for reporting of drug related deaths in Darlington is aligned to the revised Suicide system utilising the good working relationship with the Coroner's Office.

**APPENDIX 1**

**Darlington Suicide Prevention Plan 2017-2020  
Updated May 2019**

<b>1. Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups</b>					
	<b>Key Area of Action</b>	<b>Desired Outputs</b>	<b>Co-ordinators/ Leads</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Update</b>
1a	Men are a high-risk group in Darlington. Reducing risk in men, especially in middle age by developing treatment and support settings that men are prepared to use	Scoping and delivery of, 'Men's Sheds' in Darlington which provide opportunities for men to create networks of support  Delivery of regional Mental Health Resilience through Football project. This programme works with football clubs to engage men in mental health improvement through sport.	Darlington Suicide Prevention Group  Public Health England & NEMHDU	2018  2017	DBC Public Health grants given to three VCS agencies to establish men's shed projects in Darlington.  Team Talk NENC programme being commissioned to tap into grass roots sports clubs.
1b	Mental Health Service Users are a high-risk group in Darlington	Scoping and delivery to a commitment to a, 'zero suicide ambition' within the mental health trust  IAPT & Crisis Review  Suicide Rapid Response Service	Darlington Suicide Prevention Group Including CCG and TEWV  NECS  MIND/Insight	2016  2018  Ongoing	IAPT review ongoing Suicide Rapid service decommissioned by Darlington CCG but continues in Durham run by Mind.

<b>2. Tailor Approaches to improve mental health in specific groups</b>					
	<b>Key Area of Action</b>	<b>Desired Outputs</b>	<b>Co-ordinators/ Leads</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resource</b>
2a	There is a national and local focus on improving the mental health of children and young people (CYP) through the national <i>Future in Mind</i> (FIM) strategy and local CYP mental health transformation plan as well as mental health being a focus of the Darlington Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP)	<p>Delivery of mental anti-stigma campaign to CYP</p> <p>Mindful Schools delivery</p> <p>Mental Health First Aid Training to school staff and school nurses.</p> <p>Samaritans, 'Step by Step Service'</p> <p>Distribution and delivery of <i>Help When We Needed It Most: How to Prepare for And Respond to Suicide in Schools and Colleges</i></p> <p>Darlington Mind Self-Harm Prevention Project for Children and Young People</p>	<p>Darlington Suicide Prevention Group</p> <p>Samaritans</p> <p>MIND Tees Valley YMCA</p>	<p>2017</p> <p>2016-2017</p> <p>2017</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Future in Mind</p> <p>Funding was used to deliver an anti-stigma campaign in colleges and MHFA for school staff.</p> <p>Mind YP self-harm prevention project delivered to 3000 children in Darlington schools. Funding ends in Jul 19 – extension requested with BBC Children in Need – decision Jul19</p>
2b	Improving mental health in those who are vulnerable due to economic circumstances eg. unemployed, in financial hardship, homeless	Awareness raising of mental health in local businesses to reduce stigma and support individuals back into work and within the workplace e.g. Mental Health First Aid (MFHA) and ASIST training	Darlington Partnership, Darlington Cares, Public Health	2018	Darlington Partnership had MH as their theme for 2017. DBC Public Health funding free MHFA courses from grants.

		<p>Liaise with statutory and voluntary organisations who work with those affected to ensure signposting of support</p> <p>Raise Awareness of resources &amp; training Promote reducing the risk of suicide: a toolkit for employers</p>			Toolkit never produced.
2c	People who misuse alcohol and/or drugs are an important group to target interventions towards due to increased risk.	<p>Work with local treatment services provider to offer awareness training in order to increase knowledge of staff. Including ASIST, safeTALK, MHFA</p> <p>Link with drug related death group to facilitate any shared learning.</p>	<p>NECA &amp; Public Health</p> <p>Public Health</p>	<p>2018-20</p> <p>2016</p>	Considered as part of new substance misuse service.
2d	Explore the roll out of the GP and Primary Care Suicide prevention awareness e-learning programme	Increased awareness of mental health and reducing stigma	NHS England, Darlington CCG, LA Leads	2018	To be taken forward in 2019/20
<b>3. Reduce access to means of suicide</b>					
	<b>Key Area of Action</b>	<b>Desired Outputs</b>	<b>Co-ordinators/ Leads</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resource</b>
3a	The majority of suicides in Darlington happen within the home but Darlington has a busy railway station where prevention work is very important.	Support & learn from the Rail Industry Suicide Prevention Programme (Samaritans, British Transport Police & Network Rail) to reduce suicide on the railways.	Darlington Suicide Prevention Group	2017 onwards	Mind invited to talk to railway staff at Darlington on suicide prevention in 2018

3b	Suicide Prevention to be considered at design stage	Encourage local authority planning to include health and safety consideration Reference to prevention work in strategies and master plans	DBC Planning department	2018 onwards	To be taken forward
<b>4. Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide</b>					
4a	Recently bereaved to suicide are a high risk vulnerable group.	Support for those recently bereaved by suicide with advice and guidance  Promotion use of PHE guidance 'Help Is At Hand'	VCS Coroner's Office Public Health	2018/19	Joint work proposed with Mind and DBC Public Health funded by CCG for Suicide Audit in 2019-20
<b>5. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour</b>					
5a	There are important issues to consider when covering suicide in the media. Inappropriate reporting of suicide may lead to imitative or 'imitational' behaviour.	Promotion of Samaritans, ' <i>Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide</i> ' to all partners  Increase positive mental health attitudes in the media and promote help seeking behaviour	Darlington Suicide Prevention Group  DBC Communications Team	2018/19	Regular press releases issued by Mind. DBC funding Mind to deliver 24 free half day emotional resilience courses in Darlington in 2019-20.
<b>6. Support Research, Data Collection and Monitoring</b>					

	<b>Key Area of Action</b>	<b>Desired Outputs</b>	<b>Co-ordinators/ Leads</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resource</b>
6a	Production of timely annual Darlington suicide audit	Identification of high risk groups, patterns and areas locally	Public Health, Police & Coroner's office	2018/19	Suicide Audit completed November 2019
6b	Ensure local suicide early alert system for potential suicides	Identification of and timely intervention for potential clusters  Robust intelligence and recording system to learn from attempted suicides	GPs, NECS & Public Health	2016 onwards  2018/19	Further work needs to be done by CCG/NECS as part of GP training.
6c	Mental Health Service Users are a high risk group in Darlington	Work with Darlington MHN to understand and improve the physical health improvement opportunities for those with mental health conditions	Darlington Mental Health Network (MHN)		Work ongoing