

Suicide Prevention in Plymouth



Plymouth Health and Wellbeing Board,
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Kamal Patel

Public Health Consultant, Plymouth City Council

Overview



- Background
- Local suicide data
- Plymouth suicide prevention system
- Key activities in 2024/25
- Priorities for 2025/26
- Recommendations

Background



- Please look after yourself and take time if you need. [Mental health support | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mental-health-support)
- Suicide is the act or instance of intentionally killing oneself.
- Only a Coroner can determine a suicide, after an inquest.
- We may talk about data and numbers, but we are always aware that these figures relate to real people.
- Every suicide is a tragic loss and has devastating and long-lasting impact upon families, friends, neighbours, colleagues and whole communities.

Background

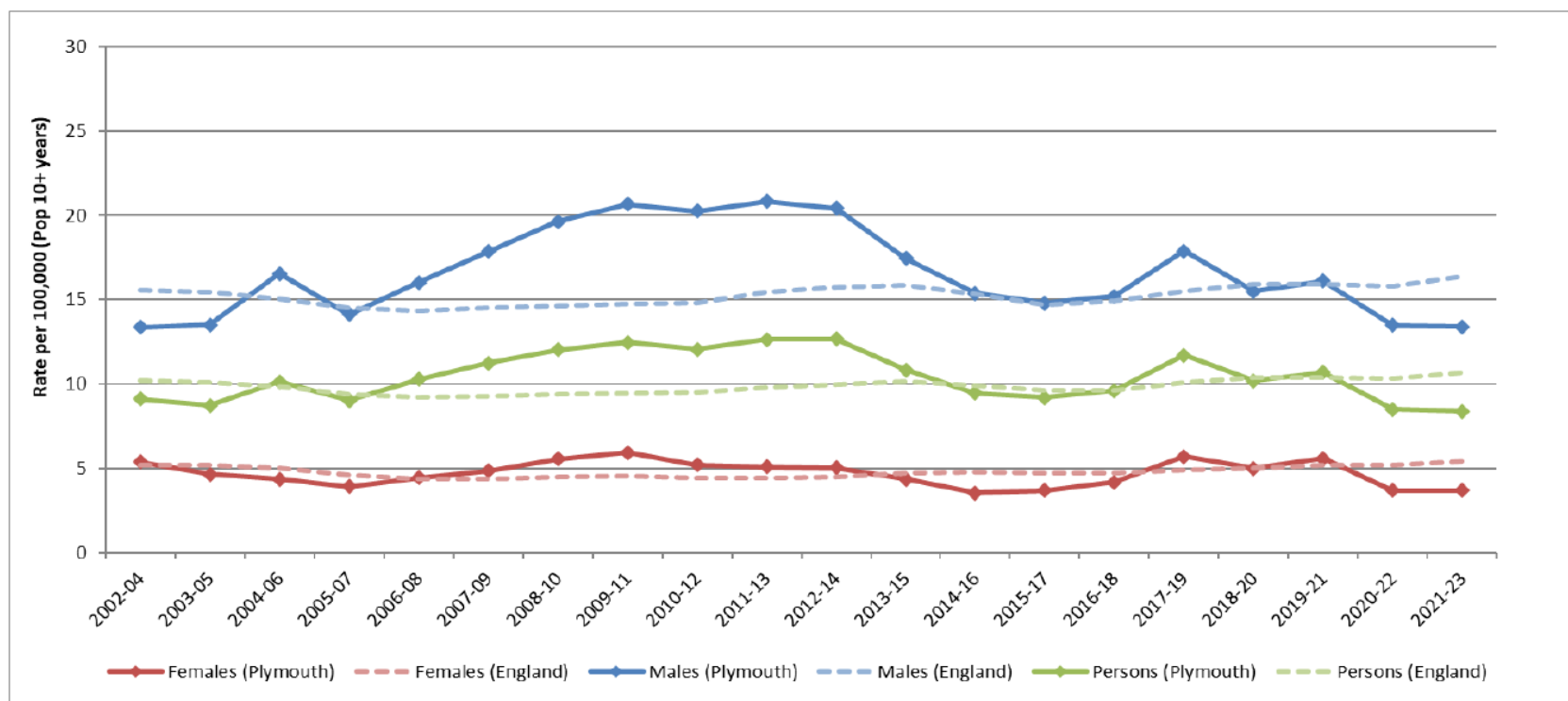


- The causes of suicide are complex and individual. There is rarely a single cause.
- Risk factors often reflect wider inequalities and economic factors.
- The impact is felt most deeply at a personal and human level. The average cost to society of each death is £1,67 million.
- 70% of people who die by suicide are not known to mental health services in the year before their death.
- Suicide can be preventable.

Plymouth Suicide Audit – Summary 2021-2023



Trends in mortality from suicide/ UI, England & Plymouth, 2002-04 to 2021-23



Source: Suicide Prevention Profile (January 2025)

What is suicide prevention?



- Suicide prevention is broad and includes everything from:
 - Measures to improve population level emotional health and wellbeing (including through the wider determinants of health).
 - Support for people with mental health issues (from early intervention through to crisis care).
 - Support for people who are bereaved by suicide.
- It is essential that the preventative approach addresses the complexity of the issue.
- No single organisation is responsible for suicide prevention and there are no simple measures to prevent suicide.
- Suicide prevention is everyone's business. A whole systems approach is required so that partners are working in collaboration towards the same priorities.

Talking about suicide



- Talking about suicide is hard.
- Asking about suicide can relieve the person of the internal burden if approached sensitively and compassionately.
- Worry about language shouldn't stop us talking about suicide...however,
- There is stigma associated with suicide and thoughts of suicide, Stigma reduces help-seeking behaviour.

Preferred language	Try to avoid
Die by/ death by suicide	Commit suicide (it is not a crime) Completed/successful suicide
Suicide attempt	A 'successful', 'unsuccessful', or 'failed' suicide attempt
Thoughts of suicide	'Just', 'only', 'threat', 'attention seeking'

Suicide bereavement service



- People bereaved by suicide are more likely to die by suicide themselves
- Bereavement support - NHS Devon commissioned service
- Provide support for anybody (adults and children) affected by suicide for as long as they need
- Historical and recent suicide deaths
- No waiting lists – support starts within 48 hours of contact.



Suicide Prevention Training



[Wellbeing at Work \(Livewell Southwest\) Events | Eventbrite](#)

Plymouth Suicide Prevention Strategic Action Plan



1. Improve data and evidence to ensure that effective evidence-informed and timely interventions continue to be developed	2. Priority groups:
2. Provide tailored, targeted support to priority groups , including those at higher risk at a national level	a) Children and young people
3. Address common risk factors linked to suicide at a population level by providing early intervention and tailored support	b) Middle-aged men
4. Promote online safety and responsible media content to reduce harms, improve support and signposting and provide helpful messages about suicide and self-harm	c) People who have self-harmed
5. Provide effective crisis support across sectors for those who reach crisis point	d) People in contact with mental health services
6. Reduce access to means and methods of suicide where this is appropriate and necessary as an intervention to prevent suicides	e) People in contact with the justice system
7. Provide effective bereavement support to those affected by suicide	f) Autistic people
8. Make suicide everybody's business so that we can maximise our collective impact and support to prevent suicides.	g) Pregnant women and new mothers
	3) Common risk factors:
	a) Physical illness
	b) Financial difficulty and economic adversity
	c) Gambling
	d) Alcohol and drug use
	e) Social isolation and loneliness
	f) Domestic abuse

Children and Young People Suicide Prevention Action Plan



Priority area	Level of intervention
1. A whole-system approach to emotional health and wellbeing	Population
2. Children and young people knowledge and awareness of emotional health and wellbeing	Population
3. Training, awareness and information provision	Population Targeted
4. Support in educational settings	Population Targeted
5. Approach to children and young people at risk	Targeted Individual
6. Bereavement support and response to suspected and confirmed cases of suicide in children and young people	Targeted Individual

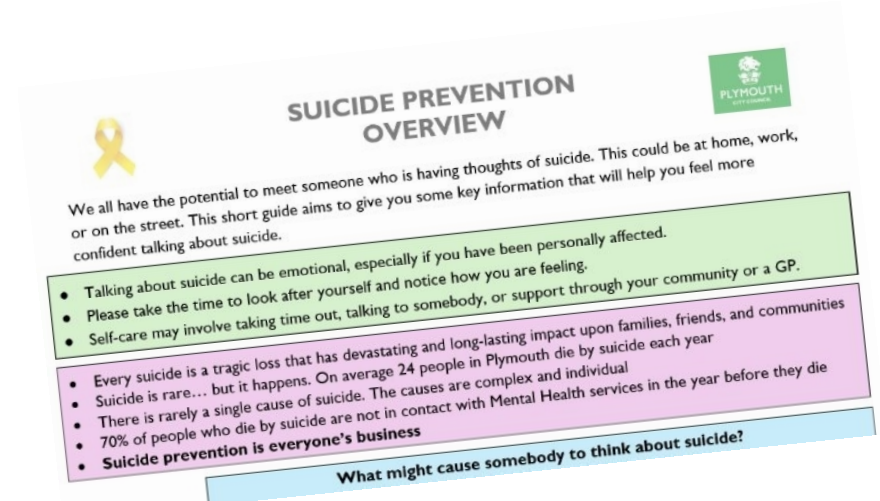


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SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP**

2024/25 Key activities



- Grassroots suicide prevention small grants
- Coroner's Audit 2017-2021
- Domestic abuse and suicide conference
- World suicide prevention day awareness event
- Suicide prevention guide and talk to councillors



Priorities for 2025/26



- Collaboration with Devon ICS
- Men's mental health promotion
- Children and young people suicide prevention work
- Suicide prevention training update

Shared Devon ICS Suicide Prevention Plan



- Recommend moving to a single ICS-wide action plan with core partners
- Using national strategy as framework
- Enable greater coordination, maximise limited resources and reduce duplication
- Stronger collective voice
- Enhance collaboration with countywide partners
- Maintain strong local engagement and networks and focus on local priorities
- Maintain accountability and engagement with Health and Wellbeing Boards

Recommendations



- **The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to review, feedback and comment on suicide prevention activity undertaken in 2024/25 and the Plymouth Suicide Prevention Strategic Action Plan.**
- **The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to support the development of an ICS level suicide prevention action plan.**