

HOT TOPICS – SEPTEMBER 2021

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

World Suicide Prevention Day is always on the 10th September!

[This month we look at suicide. If you are affected by any of the issues you have researched or that you discuss in this Hot Topic, please speak to someone. In the workplace this can include your PDC, your HEI sergeant or your lecturer. There is also a link at the bottom of this document to some mental health charities]

Suicide is a very difficult and challenging subject to discuss. You may have your own experiences of being affected by suicide, perhaps through the loss of a loved one. It will undoubtedly be one of the more challenging situations that you will deal with in your role as a police officer.

In recognition of this, World Suicide Prevention Day is intended to raise awareness of how we can all create a world where fewer people die by suicide. Following a worldwide consultation, the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) has announced its new theme for 2021 to 2023 – ‘Creating Hope Through Action’ [Source: [World Suicide Prevention Day 2021 - IASP](#)]



The Office for National Statistics (ONS) provisional analysis shows that there were 11.7 suicide deaths per 100,000 people in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2020 in England, equivalent to 1,461 deaths registered; this rate is similar to rates seen in the fourth quarter of previous years [Source: [Quarterly suicide death registrations in England - Office for National Statistics](#)]



Think about the implications of those figures for policing. According to Chief Inspector Steve Baker (national mental health coordinator at the College of Policing and the National Police Chief’s Council) in an article published on 10 October 2020, *“in recent years, the police service has had to respond to an increased level of demand caused by incidents related to mental health, and from this, a culture has emerged that places the police as the first port of call when someone is in crisis”* [Source: [Dealing with mental health during the coronavirus pandemic | College of Policing](#)]

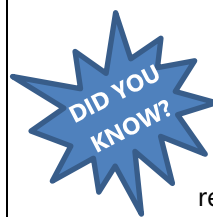


Discuss with your PDC how you might encounter incidents related to suicide and attempted suicide in your role as a police officer. What might you have to consider in these situations?

Having discussed this, think about how suicide or attempted suicide and your responsibilities as a police officer, may be encompassed by the Equality Act 2010. [If you are stuck, remember, there is no requirement that a person has a particular mental health condition to be protected under this legislation, but they must show that the mental health problem is a disability (in other words, that a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, adverse and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities). Mental Health problems could include depression, schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder].

You should also discuss the impact of our fundamental British Values, especially Respect & Tolerance.

Anyone of us can become unwell at any time – there will be days when we feel stressed or anxious, in some cases for no obvious reason. This is just as true for police officers and other emergency workers. Nobody should suffer in silence if they are struggling with their mental health. As well as turning to close friends, families or colleagues - there are plenty of charities to talk to or get advice from (*see list below*).



There is a Minister for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health. Currently, that role is performed by Nadine Dorries MP. Amongst the many responsibilities of this role are suicide & crisis prevention, mental health and COVID-19 test & trace and social distancing. In March 2021, the 5th Progress report of the Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Work Plan was published. As well as providing updates to the Work Plan, which was published in January 2019, the 5th progress report also looks at new actions in the context of the pandemic. The full report can be accessed via this link: (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Finally, please take the time to watch this short video (1m 29s) presented by the Samaritans, which provides some tips on talking to someone about suicide (click the link below)

[Talking to someone about suicide - YouTube](#)

Here are some groups you can contact when you need help:

Samaritans: Phone 116 123, 24 hours a day, or email jo@samaritans.org, in confidence
www.samaritans.org

Childline: Phone 0800 1111. Calls are free and won't show up on your bill
www.childline.org.uk

PAPYRUS: Phone 0800 068 4141. A voluntary organisation supporting suicidal teens and young adults.
www.papyrus-uk.org

MIND: Phone 0300 123 3393. Provides advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem
www.mind.org.uk

Students Against Depression: A website for students who are depressed, have low mood, or are suicidal
www.studentsagainstd Depression.org

Bullying UK: Phone 0808 800 2222. A website for both children and adults affected by bullying
www.bullying.co.uk

In addition to the support groups listed on the left, if you are concerned about yourself, a loved one or anyone else, then you can visit the site below to find out how you can get help from a mental health charity or organisation. There is a link from the page that lists an A-Z of mental health conditions and there is a 'Hub of Hope' to search for mental health charities within your local area, or one that can help with a specific problem

[Get help from a mental health charity - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)