



ASSOCIATION OF
AMBULANCE
CHIEF EXECUTIVES



UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS SUICIDE AWARENESS



DO-NOW

Welcome!

TODAY'S DO-NOW:

Please begin once you are connected to the audio & video conference.

1 REMOVE ONE DISTRACTION FROM YOUR WORKSPACE. YOU MIGHT :



2 WRITE A BRIEF STATEMENT of PURPOSE — one intention for today's session. (This will remain private to you.)



3 POST it, HANG it, or PLACE it WHERE YOU WILL SEE IT.



Welcome – how the session will work

RULES

- Be curious
- Be respectful
- Be tolerant
- Share and help one another learn
- Use the Q&A function



Overview – why this is important



Peter Reading
Chief Executive
Yorkshire
Ambulance
Service

- Why we organised today's uncomfortable conversation session
- The purpose of today's session – to increase understanding and awareness of suicide and its prevention generally as well as specifically within the ambulance service workplace and other healthcare settings.

The team today:

CEO lead



Peter Reading

Facilitators



Tracy Nicholls



Anna Parry



Rachael
Clifford



Joe
Cartwright



Steve
Poulton



David
Snelders

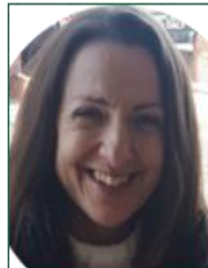


Kerry
Gulliver

Speakers

Reflections

Emotional support



Dr Catherine
Goodwin



Adam Cann

Technical support



Soma Eatwell



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Emotional support



Dr Catherine
Goodwin



Adam Cann

Catherine.goodwin@wales.nhs.uk

Adam.Cann@wales.nhs.uk

THIS
IS A
SAFE
SPACE

Agenda

Agenda

- **Welcome** – Anna Parry & Tracy Nicholls
- **Introduction** – Peter Reading
- **Context** – Rachael Clifford
- **In conversation with** Joe Cartwright & Steve Poulton
- **How to have conversations** – David Snelders
- **Reflections & Summary** – Kerry Gulliver
- **Questions (Q&A)**
- **Reflections and closing** – Anna Parry & Tracy Nicholls

Ask
questions /
share
comments
using **Q&A**
function

What the data is telling us

- nationally and sector level

Rachael Clifford

National Ambulance Suicide Register Lead

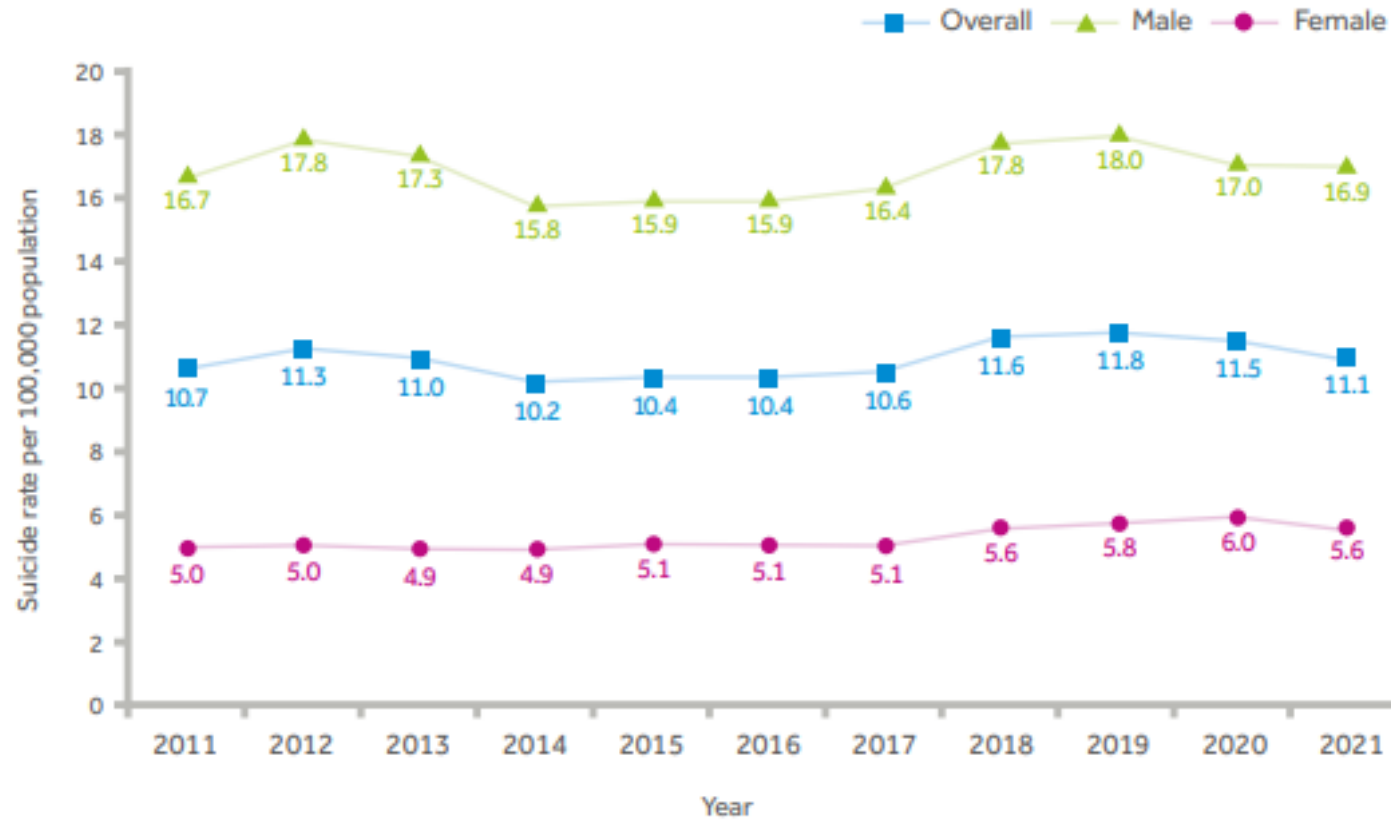


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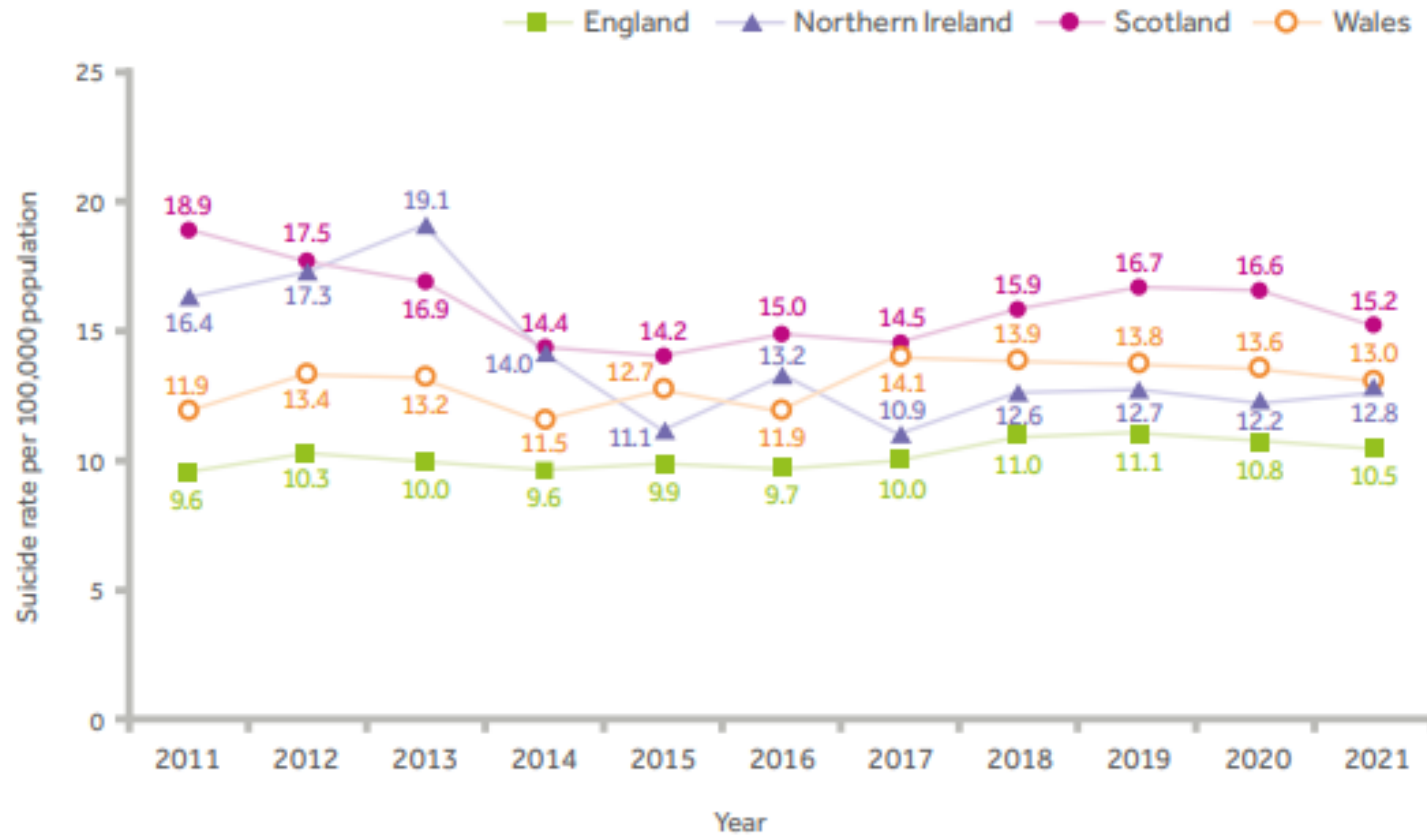
National Updates

Suicide rates in the general population



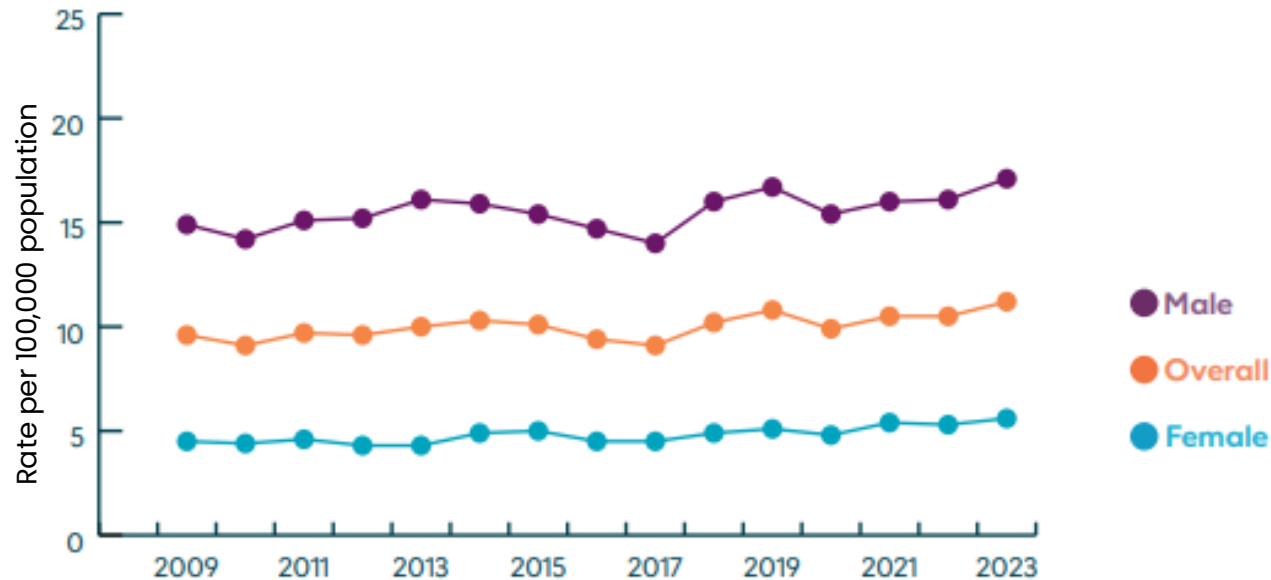
National Updates


Suicide rates in the general population, by country




National Updates

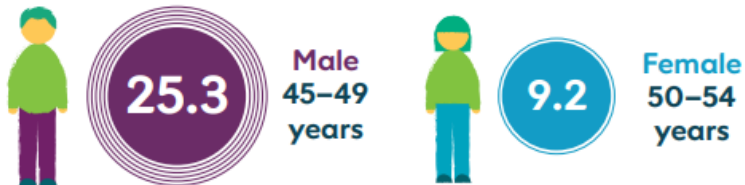
Suicide rates in England (including 2023)



 **4,188**
Male
74% | 17.1
per 100,000

 **1,468**
Female
26% | 5.6
per 100,000


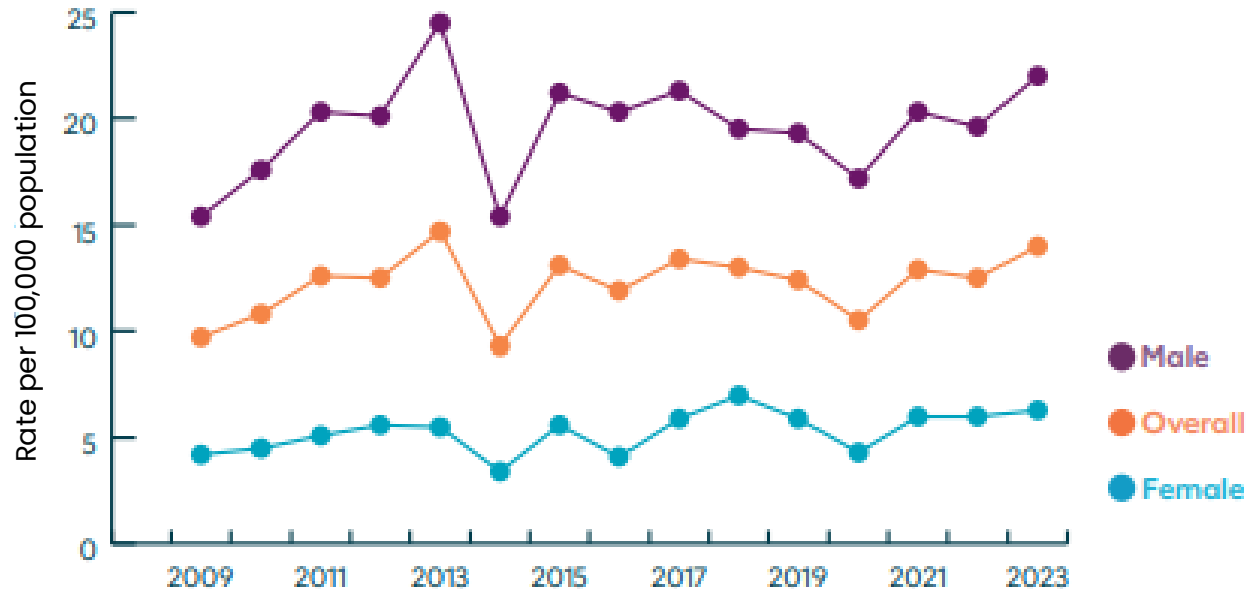
Age groups with highest suicide rate per 100,000




The suicide rate
in 2023 was
11.2
per 100,000

National Updates

Suicide rates in Wales (including 2023)



296
Male
77% | 22.0
per 100,000



90
Female
23% | 6.3
per 100,000

Age group with highest suicide rate per 100,000




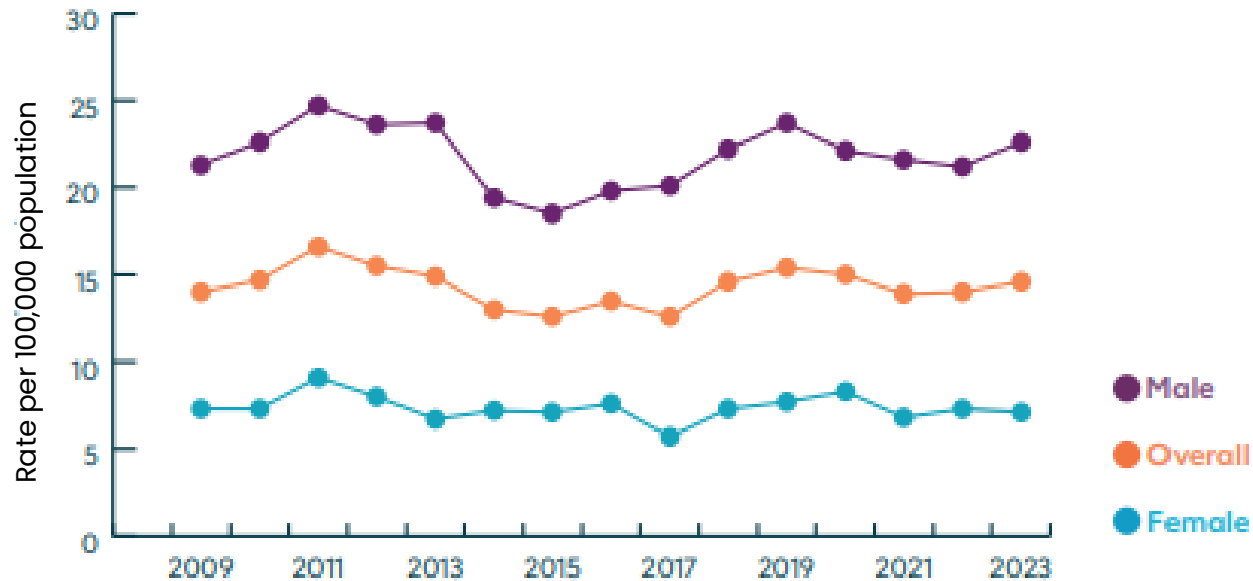
Male
30-34
years

Many age-specific suicide rates are considered unreliable by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) when they are based on fewer than 20 deaths in an age group. Female age-specific rates are not included here for this reason.




National Updates

Suicide rates in Scotland (including 2023)



590
Male
75% | 22.6
per 100,000



202
Female
25% | 7.1
per 100,000

Age groups with highest suicide rate per 100,000



The suicide rate in 2023 was
14.6
per 100,000

National Updates

Suicide rates in the general population, 15-19 year olds



Highest total figure for 20 years
Highest figure for girls for 40 years

National Updates

National risk factors for suicide risk



Risk factors do not predict risk of suicide at a single point in time, but instead indicate increased risk of a whole population over it's lifetime.

(Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2020)



National Updates

National protective factors for suicide risk





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Joe Cartwright in conversation with Steve Poulton



**THE
AMBULANCE
STAFF
CHARITY**

Supporting ambulance staff through difficult conversations



David Snelders

National Training and Clinical Manager



Recognising the signs



**CHANGES IN
BEHAVIOUR**



**WITHDRAWAL,
IRRITABILITY,
FATIGUE**



VERBAL CLUES



**EXPRESSIONS OF
HOPELESSNESS, SAYING
“ I CAN’T GO ON”**



**PHYSICAL
SYMPTOMS**



**DECLINE IN WORK
PERFORMANCE.
CONSTANTLY LATE FOR SHIFTS**



**NEGLECTING SELF-
CARE, NOTICEABLE
FATIGUE**



Setting the stage for a meaningful conversation

1. Choose the right time and place

Private, quiet space free from interruptions

2. Check your own mindset

Be calm, patient and non judgemental

3. Know your resources

Know what support is available (OH, EAP, other staff, crisis line)



How to start the conversation

- **Begin with observations and concerns:**

“I’ve noticed you’ve seemed down lately; is everything ok?”

- **Ask open ended questions:**

“What’s been going on?”

- **Active listening:**

Use affirmations like, “I hear you” or “That sounds difficult”

- **Ask directly about suicide**

“sometimes people in tough situations think about ending their lives. Have you had these thoughts?”



Responding with Empathy

- **Dos**

- Validate feelings: “ It’s ok to feel overwhelmed” or “ It must be incredibly difficult for you”
- Reassure them: “You’re not alone” or “I’m here for you; you don’t have to face this alone”

- **Don’ts**

- Avoid dismissing their plan: “It’s not that bad” or “ you have so much to live for”
- Don’t focus on yourself: “I know how you feel”



Supporting them to take the next step

- **Encourage professional help**

Suggest reaching out to services like OH, mental health teams, ambulance crisis line, Samaritans

Assist in contacting these services if necessary. Offer to make calls or set up appointments

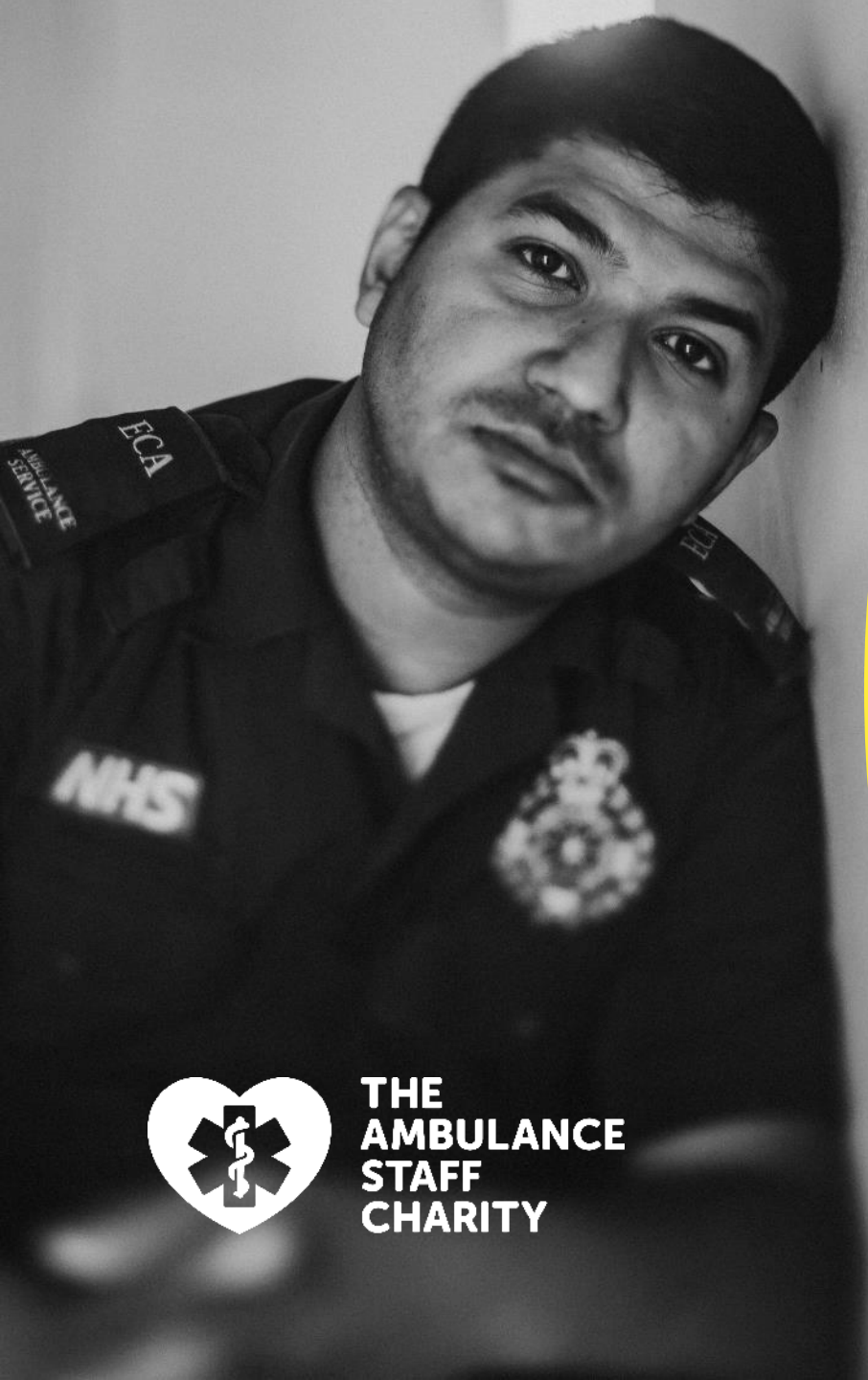
- **Emergency situations**

If in imminent danger, call for ambulance, or escort the individual to A&E

- **Follow up**

Regularly check to show ongoing care





Ambulance Staff 24/7 Crisis Phonenumber

Immediate and ongoing suicide
and mental health crisis care for
UK ambulance staff

Call: 0300 373 0898



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Completely
independent



Private and
confidential



Run by qualified
professionals



Experienced in
supporting
ambulance staff



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Reflections and signposting

Kerry Gulliver
Director of People, EMAS



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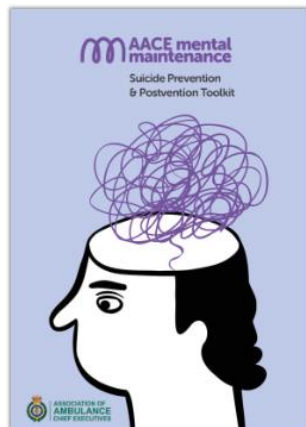


Suite of publications





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[AACE-Suicide-Toolkit-A5.pdf](#)



[AACE-Employee-Toolkit-A5.pdf](#)



[AACE-MM-Managers-Toolkit.pdf](#)



[AACE-MM-Personalised-Plan-A5.pdf](#)



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leading the development of the paramedic profession

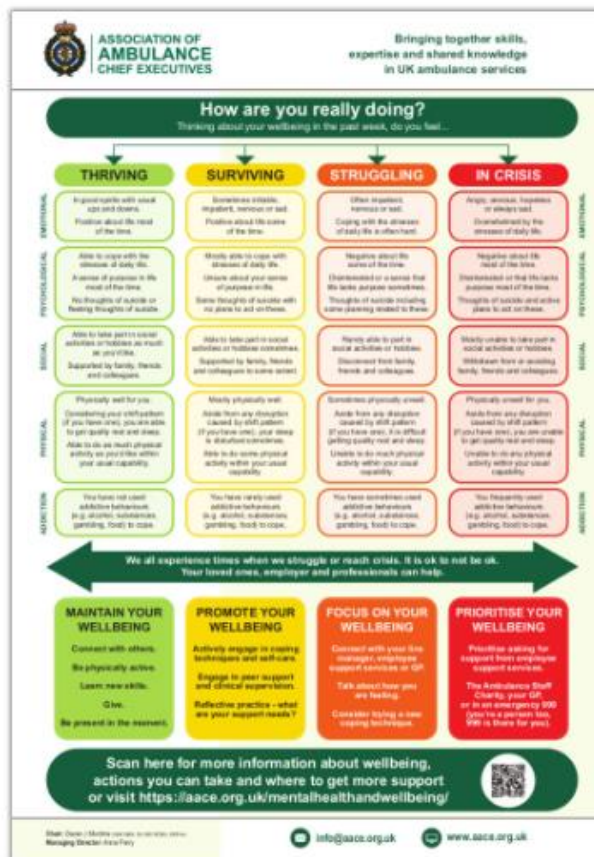


Family support handbook

Information on mental health, bereavement and wellbeing for the loved ones of ambulance staff

<https://aace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/TASC-Family-Support-Handbook-Final.pdf>

<https://aace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/AACE-Mental-Health-Continuum-10.2023-F.pdf>





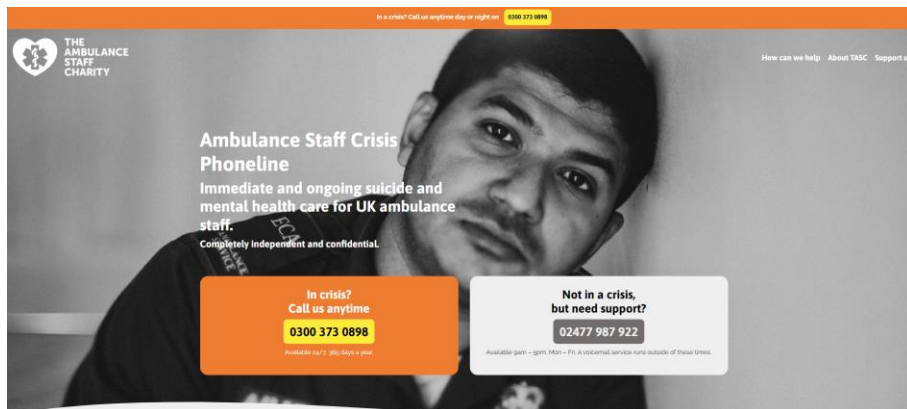
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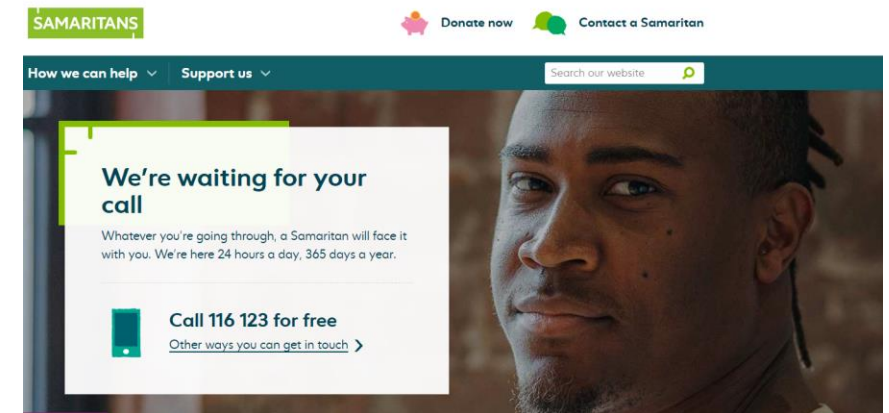
Postvention guidance for the Ambulance Service

An evidence based postvention guidance toolkit aimed at ensuring excellent support after a suicide within the paramedic community, to help prevent further deaths.

[Read the Postvention Guidance here.](#)



[The Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber - tasc](#)



[Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy | Here to listen](#)



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Chat Links

theolliefoundation.org

[5 steps to mental wellbeing - NHS](#)

[Prescription Safe Plan - The OLLIE Foundation](#)

[Grassroots Suicide Prevention | Educating, Connecting, Campaigning](#)

[The Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber - tasc](#)



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Thank you

[Suicide Prevention in Ambulance Services - aace.org.uk](http://aace.org.uk)