



# Connecting for Life Strategy Implementation Monitoring Report

Q4 2024

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention



Connecting for Life



Connecting for Life



**Introduction and Overview This Period**



**Overview of Progress on Strategic Goals**



**Needs Attention and Off Track Actions**



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## Introduction and Overview This Period

This is the Q4 2024 implementation monitoring report for Connecting for Life. It will provide an overview of the work carried out by strategy lead agencies from October 2024 - December 2024

To date in this period, of the 67 actions in CFL, updates were received on 61. Of the 61 actions for which updates were received, 1 was logged as needing attention and 1 was logged as off-track. The majority of actions were considered to be on track. Further detail on the needs attention and off-track actions are provided at the end of this report.

**The NGO quarterly CFL implementation report (Q3 2024) has been completed and is available at [www.connectingforlifeireland.ie](http://www.connectingforlifeireland.ie)**

### Some highlights from this period include:

- The National Mental Health Promotion Plan has been completed and approved, with a launch by the Chief Medical Officer planned for 13 December 2024.
- The Commission's final Online Safety Code has been published, with rules to address online harms, including suicide and self-harm video content.
- All 10 Local Action Plans for Connecting for Life are currently being implemented. Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention have also commenced collaborative working with Public Health colleagues.
- “Preventing deaths by suicide in public places” toolkit finalised. Launch event confirmed for February 2025 in Dublin Castle. The HSE is working with Transport Infrastructure Ireland on a health impact assessment at a bridge of concern.
- New trainers were trained to deliver STORM within the HSE and at Oberstown Children Detention Campus. Two DSP employees have been trained to deliver ASIST. Let's Talk about Suicide eLearning has been completed by staff across Government Departments, including DRCD, DoH and DCEDIY IPAS accommodation centres.
- HSE Health and Wellbeing supported a National Showcase event held in November for the Traveller Wellbeing through Creativity initiative. Research team commissioned to explore the scalability and sustainability of the initiative. University of Galway have published a review of evidence community based mental health promotion initiatives for priority groups.



- The HEA have established a working group to review the Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework. HEA hosted a Knowledge Exchange event with NOSP. University of Galway launched a Research-based action plan for implementing Framework, funded by the HEA and NOSP.
- The Action Plan of the HSE Child and Youth Mental Health Office was presented to the HSE Board at end of November.
- The National DUMP scheme received funding under Budget 2025.
- NOSP together with other areas of the HSE supported the 2024 European Grief Conference where there was a dedicated stream to suicide bereavement. Additional funding has been provided under Budget 2025 for suicide bereavement.
- The CSO Liaison Group met in October. Key updates from members include exploration of the potential for data linkages with the CSO, including with the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland and the National Drug-Related Deaths Index. Feedback was provided by members on the latest CSO data release.

### **This period, updates were received from 20 partners.**

Coimisiún na Meán (CnM)  
 Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)  
 Department of Children, Disability, Integration, Equality and Youth (DCDIEY)  
 Department of Education and Skills (DES)  
 Department of Health (DoH)  
 Department of Justice (DoJ)  
 Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)  
 Department of Social Protection (DSP)  
 Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM) - Sports  
 Higher Education Authority (HEA)  
 HSE Acute Hospital Operations (HSE Acute Ops)  
 HSE Health and Wellbeing (HSE H&W)  
 HSE Mental Health Operations (HSE MH Ops)  
 HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (HSE NOSP)  
 HSE Primary Care (HSE PC)  
 Irish Prison Service (IPS)  
 Irish Probation Service (PS)  
 Local Government Management Authority (LGMA)  
 Press Council of Ireland (Press Council of Ireland)  
 TUSLA

### **This period, updates were not received from 2 partners.**

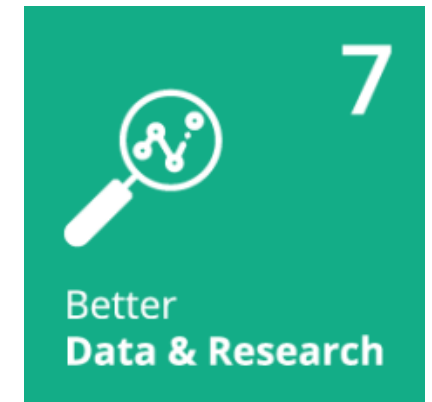
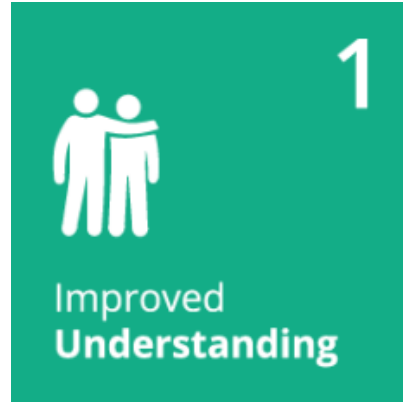
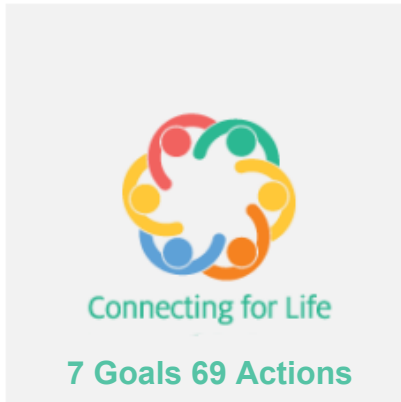
Department of Defence (DoD)  
 Health and Safety Authority (HSA)



Connecting for Life



2 Overview of Progress on Strategic Goals





## Goal 1: Better understanding of suicidal behaviour.

### 1.1 Improve population wide understanding of suicidal behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and associated protective and risk factors.

- NSRF/NOSP presentation using HI data at European Grief Conference. Meeting to commence analysis of predictive role of suicide bereavement & past suicidal behaviour on current feeling of loneliness. **(HSE NOSP)**
- National Mental Health Promotion Plan completed and approved. Launch expected in December 2024. **(DoH)**
- YMH Campaign promoted on Digital Audio, Video on Demand, Display, Search and Social Media in Q4 with Radio in Oct & Dec. Sponsored reads on podcasts targeting under 35 audience with a males skew. Additional sponsored reads on a few Christmas specials of the Tommy Hector and Laurita podcast in Dec. **(HSE MH Ops)**
- Ongoing ED & Safer Nightlife Programme collaboration. Dissemination and delivery of training and info re: Hidden Harm, including Train the Trainer programme. **(HSE PC)**
- The development of the new National Physical Activity Plan is ongoing and will be published later this year. **(DTCAGSM) - Sports**

### 1.2 Increase awareness of available suicide prevention and mental health services.

- Monitor My Mental Health Plan uptake and stats: Between 1 Jan – 26 November My Mental Health Plan had 89,917 page views, with 11,640 plan starts and 11,138 plan completions. Continue to progress build and design of SpunOut's online tool **(HSE MH Ops)**
- Positive mental health promoted to priority groups via our social media posts by sharing content on four pillars: anxiety, poor sleep, low mood & stress. Short, informative videos encouraging users to use our My Mental Health Plan shared. Key dates for Q4: WMH Day, Christmas, New Years Eve **(HSE MH Ops)**





### 1.3 Reduce stigmatising attitudes to mental health and suicidal behaviour at population level and within priority groups.

- World Mental Health Day took place in October, related activity aligned with HSE Mental Health Campaign. LTAS campaign completed in October. Inputting to SLA applications/meetings (Shine, First Fortnight, Samaritans, USI). First Fortnight Mental Health Arts Festival Programme launched. **(HSE NOSP)**

### 1.4 Engage and work collaboratively with the media in relation to media guidelines, tools and training programmes to improve the reporting of suicidal behaviour within broadcast, print and online media.

- The Commission's final Online Safety Code has been published, with rules to address online harms, including suicide and self-harm video content. The Commission has also published online safety guidance materials to accompany the Code. **(CnM)**
- No complaints have been received under Principle 3 of the Code of Programme Standards. The Code itself has since been updated and published in November 2024, following consultation, to reflect requirements of the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive. **(CnM)**
- Ongoing application of Principle 10 (Reporting of Suicide) of the Press Council's Code of Practice. The Office will continue to consider complaints received from members of the public and representative organizations about possible breaches of Principle 10 of the Code of Practice. **(Press Council of Ireland)**
- Support the delivery of the Mental Health Media Awards 2024 in December. **(HSE NOSP)**







## Goal 2: Supporting communities to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour.

### 2.1 Improve the continuation of community level responses to suicide through planned multi-agency approaches.

- All 10 Local Action Plans for Connecting for Life are currently being implemented. Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention have also commenced collaborative working with Public Health colleagues (**HSE MH Ops**)

### 2.2 Ensure that accurate information and guidance on effective suicide prevention are provided for community-based organisations (e.g. Family Resource Centres, Sporting Organisations).

- Preventing deaths in public places toolkit finalised. Launch event confirmed for February 2025 in Dublin Castle. The HSE is working with Transport Infrastructure Ireland on a health impact assessment at a bridge of concern. (**HSE NOSP**)

### 2.3 Ensure the provision and delivery of training and education programmes on suicide prevention to community-based organisations.

- Training Figures for Q3, 2024: safeTALK - 813, ASIST- 480, USH - 183, USH Online - 30, One Day Bereavement Training - 50 , STORM -64, Let's Talk about Suicide - 2048 enrolments. STORM Train the Trainer event 8 new trainers (**HSE NOSP**)
- Balancing Stress - Online programme in post-production edits Social Prescribing - Realist evaluation underway.  
Act Belong Commit - Co development of training & ABC resources  
Education - Year 2 Emotional Wellbeing SPHE curriculum published; Adaptation of Minding your Wellbeing for Higher Ed ongoing. (**HSE H&W**)





## Goal 3: Targeted approaches for those vulnerable to suicide.

### 3.1 Improve the implementation of effective approaches to reducing suicidal behaviour among priority groups.

- Revision has now been completed and the Tusla National Suicide prevention guidance is ready for consideration by the Tusla national policy oversight committee and once approved will be a Tusla Guidance on the Tusla Hub. **(TUSLA)**
- Two DSP employees have been trained to deliver ASIST. Let's Talk about Suicide eLearning promoted to all staff. **(DSP)**
- OFG 2 delivered to agri-professionals and service providers nationwide. 20 farm safety, health and wellbeing projects completed. Green ribbon campaign completed. Health & Wellbeing Strategy launched. Panel discussion hosted for International Men's Day. Mental Wellbeing series from Jerry Kelly hosted. **(DAFM)**
- 8 staff completed LTAS training. Winter Wellbeing events hosted. Continue to promote health and wellbeing to disadvantaged individuals. Continue to develop public libraries. SICU will continue to incorporate suicide prevention into relevant programme policies where applicable and practicable. **(DRCD)**
- The development of the policy handbook is at an advanced stage. The handbook, entitled 'Policy Handbook: A 'real world' guide to policy development', will be published shortly. **(DoH)**
- HSE/Tusla protocol for joint working (2021) continues to be used in management of complex cases for young people. Implementation of StV recommendation 8 & 37, relating to inter-agency working in provision of support to children and young people who may be experiencing complex difficulties continues. **(HSE MH Ops)**
- The design of the "Let's Talk about Suicide" module for ED reception and nursing staff continues to be developed. The design of this module needs to be relevant to patient presenting scenarios in the ED and therefore requires careful design and validation. **(HSE Acute Ops)**





- The "Deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol" between the HSE and An Garda Síochána has still not been signed by the Garda Senior Leadership Team. The delay is starting to impact local data sharing arrangements, which have been paused **(HSE NOSP)**
- The system of policy and agency protocols with DECDIY are in place in Tusla, when concerns arise regarding children in state care. **(TUSLA)**
- The Inclusion Mental Health Team remains focused on assisting the homeless population with severe and complex mental health needs, including those with co-occurring substance use issues. There are 1,048 individuals currently in the HF tenancy with total 68 tenancies created at the end of Q3. **(HSE PC)**
- Umbrella review of the social determinants of suicide completed by the NSRF. Manuscript has been submitted to 'Epidemiological Reviews' and is currently under review. **(HSE NOSP)**
- NOSP agreement to explore the development of bespoke suicide prevention training programme for trainee GP's, in partnership with the ICGP. Minding Your Wellbeing being tailored to reflect needs of third level students. Suicide Prevention Module piloted in UCD and UCC with over 200 undergraduates. **(HSE NOSP)**
- National Showcase event held in November 13th for the Traveller Wellbeing through Creativity initiative. Research team commissioned to explore the scalability and sustainability of the initiative. UoG published review of evidence community based mental health promotion initiatives for priority groups. **(HSE H&W)**

### 3.2 Support, in relation to suicide prevention, the Substance Misuse Strategy to address the high rate of alcohol and drug misuse.

- Continue to deliver SAOR training, and rollout a Train the Trainer programme. Facilitate access to SAOR SBI as part of the SAFER alcohol initiative. **(HSE PC)**

### 3.3 Enhance the supports for young people with mental health problems or vulnerable to suicide.

- Pilot phase 1 completed in seven schools of the inspectorate framework for the evaluation of wellbeing in schools. Pilot Phase 2 began in September in an additional seven schools. Full roll out of framework will commence in 2025 **(DES)**





- New Neart programme has been announced to all schools to support post primary student support teams with roll out of the service from Jan 2025 **(DES)**
- Implementation ongoing. Working group established to develop Terms of Reference for Framework Review. HEA hosted a Knowledge Exchange event in collaboration with NOSP. University of Galway launched a Research-based action plan for implementing Framework, which was funded by the HEA and NOSP. **(HEA)**
- 27 schools attended Cineáltas showcase event. Bí Cineálta anti-bullying procedures Information seminars provided.  
TPL on Bí Cineálta commenced. Schools provided with a lesson plan for anti-bullying week.  
Report of expert group on student participation + implementation plan 2024-2026 published 10 Oct **(DES)**
- Oide's 2 day in-person professional learning events (PLE) will begin in December. This provides 58 events nationwide including 4 through the medium of Irish. Schools have been notified about these events by Oide. In this communication school were asked to prioritise teachers of LCA Social Education. **(DES)**
- 10 WTEs approved (to support provision of psychological care for young people around substance use issues) and received Primary Notification numbers, recruitment of posts ongoing, with a number of posts now in place. **(HSE PC)**
- The Action Plan of the HSE Child and Youth Mental Health Office presented to the HSE Board at end of November. **(HSE MH Ops)**





## Goal 4: Improved access, consistency and integration of services.

### 4.1 Improve psychosocial and psychiatric assessment and care pathways for people vulnerable to suicidal behaviour.

- Progressing with publication of research & stakeholder engagement, building on consultation / liaison model and shared physical healthcare (StV recs 17 & 19). Phase 2 of Evaluation commenced. CHO1 Solace Café operational. CHO3 progressing CRT & Solace café. Finalising SLA for CHO5 *(HSE MH Ops)*
- Continued working with CHOs on recruitment, and with Irish Prison Service on pilot service. CHO 4 adult team operational, limited capacity due to recruitment issues. Development of in person training ongoing. Continued to support peer researchers and to develop implementation plan. *(HSE MH Ops)*
- None provided. *(PS)*
- Development of SOP's has been somewhat delayed and it is planned to realign these commitments into 2025 work plan to enhance and standardise the cross agency approach in all IPS Institutions. *(IPS)*
- Final edits being made to the guidance document for suicide and self-harm, awareness, assessment and response in the health services. *(HSE MH Ops)*
- Commenced site visits to EDs with no mental health assessment rooms. Initial testing on SCAN data form in CASTOR with 2 SCAN sites completed. Hosted one day in person conference in Oct (60 clinicians). Recruitment progressed. Engagement with sites commenced. *(HSE MH Ops)*

### 4.2 Improve access to effective therapeutic interventions (e.g. counselling, DBT, CBT) for people vulnerable to suicide.

- Consultation and engagement with stakeholders on the Principles Paper continued where possible, and the overall plan for consultation and engagement will be finalised.

The SilverCloud Oversight Group continued to meet on a regular basis. *(HSE MH Ops)*





- Ongoing service delivery of accessible, uniform, evidence based psychological interventions, including counselling, for mental health problems at both primary and secondary care levels. **(HSE PC)**

#### 4.3 Improve the uniformity, effectiveness and timeliness of support services to families and communities bereaved by suicide.

- MediPack distribution continued. Safe Harbour phase two commenced. Grief training for Pieta therapists taking place on Nov 28th. NSRF's Identifying the needs of children and young adults bereaved by suicide report due w/c Dec 2nd. ROSP Framework Working Group met on Oct 16th. **(HSE MH Ops)**
- NOSP together with other areas of the HSE supported the 2024 European Grief Conference where there was a dedicated stream to suicide bereavement. Additional funding has been provided in estimates 2025 for suicide bereavement. **(HSE NOSP)**





## Goal 5: Safe and high quality services.

### 5.1 Develop and implement national standards and guidelines for statutory and non-statutory organisations contributing to suicide prevention.

- Q3 2024 NGO CfL report published on CfL website. Monthly networking calls with NGO partners continue to be hosted. The SLA process 2025 is in progress and SLA meetings with all 22 partners are scheduled. **(HSE NOSP)**
- The guidance unit is continuing to promote a whole school approach to whole school guidance through the review and improvement of existing policy documents, and creation of additional policy resources in line with identified need. A number of comprehensive resources are under draft. **(DES)**
- The Catalogue of Wellbeing Resources is now searchable online for primary <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2b57f-wellbeing-resources-for-primary-schools/> and post-primary <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/eeeea1-wellbeing-resources-for-post-primary-schools/>. TPL Directory updated for 24/25 **(DES)**
- CfL newsletter ongoing - 2 newsletters delivered to 1915 subscribers  
2209 followers now on LinkedIn  
**(HSE NOSP)**

### 5.2 Improve the response to suicidal behaviour within health and social care services, with an initial focus on incidents within mental health services.

- Final edits being made to the guidance document for suicide and self-harm, awareness, assessment and response in the health services. **(HSE MH Ops)**
- The reporting system is in place and data collection continues to be implemented. NRP continues to review each incident, complete reports and track recommendations. **(TUSLA)**

### 5.3 Reduce and prevent suicidal behaviour in the criminal justice system.

- SADA report for 2020/21 was published in 2024. **(IPS)**





## 5.4 Ensure best practice among health and social care practitioners through (a) the implementation of clinical guidelines on self-harm and (b) the delivery of accredited education programmes on suicide prevention.

- SafeTALK continues to be delivered to DSP staff where requested. 50 staff members attended the training during Q3 2024. This brings the total number of staff that completed the course in 2024 to 134. **(DSP)**
- Tusla will continue to work with NOSP to ensure that staff has access to a comprehensive training programme. **(TUSLA)**
- SafeTALK continues to be delivered to DSP on demand. In 2024 a total of 154 completed the training. **(DSP)**
- DAFM has successfully launched the EDI Strategy. **(DAFM)**
- NOSP Training continues to be promoted to teachers and relevant educational stakeholders **(DES)**
- Storm Skills Training facilitator-Interview process completed and position offered. STORM training to be delivered. 4 Bridging courses to be offered next year. 227 IPAS accommodation centers and 214 staff completed NOSP training. HSE posters received and promoted in all centers. **(DCDIEY)**
- SafeTALK training took place in October 2024 with 19 DoH staff attended. Training was extended to other Civil Service Departments. DCEDIY and DFIN participated in the training. A total of 24 staff across all four Departments attended. **(DoH)**
- Q4: There was not any suicide awareness training provided to Probation staff in Q4 2024. **(PS)**
- Content being reviewed and developed in line with IPS CPD requirements. this cross cuts with updated training for the introduction of new seclusion and management of self-harm risk. **(IPS)**







- That status provided for Q3 remains relevant for Q4 i.e. Training needs are reviewed by Local Authorities as required. The Let's Talk about Suicide Training is a welcome resource to be utilised. **(LGMA)**
- Continuing to engage directly with professional regulatory bodies in an effort to advance suicide prevention education, although survey has not been conducted as yet. **(DoH)**





## Goal 6: Reduce access to means.

### 6.1 Reduce access to frequently used drugs in intentional drug overdose.

- National DUMP scheme received funding under Budget 2025. Negotiations continue regarding the form that the DUMP campaign may take. **(DoH)**
- WG communications undertaken to finalise mystery shopper proposal. Ethics application submitted for mystery shopper proposal. Final report of pre-post survey findings underway, to be disseminated to the group in advance of next WG meeting on 23rd Jan 2025. **(DoH)**

### 6.2 Reduce access to highly lethal methods used in suicidal behaviour.

- The launch of the Toolkit addressing Deaths in Public Places in February 2026 will be the culmination of the work of the Advisory Group brought together by the NOSP to address this action. **(LGMA)**
- Once approved the updated Ligature Risk Reduction Policy and Audit Tool Policy will be published and circulated through HOS, DONs and ECDs. Training for staff will be updated accordingly. **(HSE MH Ops)**



## Goal 7: Better data and research.

### 7.1 Evaluate the effectiveness and costeffectiveness of Connecting for Life.

- Fieldwork underway (interviews progressing, surveys distributed to ROSPs & stakeholders (n=600)) draft Interim Report submitted to NOSP for review and signoff. Suicide Observatory Evaluation submission for ethical approval (Melbourne University) & suicide data audit underway. **(HSE NOSP)**

### 7.2 Improve access to timely and high quality data on suicide and self-harm.

- Systems are ongoing. Tusla continues to operate its procedures for notifying concerns and incidents of self harm by children in care settings. **(TUSLA)**
- Final report for the feasibility study for new National Probable Suicide Register circulated to the steering group members for review and feedback. The guidance document relating to probable suicide amongst community mental health service users finalised. **(HSE MH Ops)**
- IPH/HSR/NOSP Gambling and suicide paper being review - Addictive Behaviour. Final edits on women's paper - for submission to Deaths Studies. Working group established to examine suicide & deprivation (NOSP/NSRF). Presentation at European Grief Conference on ISPDS maternal suicide **(HSE NOSP)**

### 7.3 Review (and, if necessary, revise) current recording procedures for death by suicide.

- The CSO Liaison Group met in October. Key updates from members include exploration of the potential for data linkages with the CSO, including with the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland and the National Drug-Related Deaths Index. Feedback was provided by members on the latest CSO data release. **(DoJ)**

### 7.4 Develop a national research and evaluation plan that supports innovation and is aimed at early identification of suicide risk, assessment, intervention and prevention.

- HEA continues to support the work of the NSRF. However, while the HEA will continue to support the NSRF in principle, funding will not be available for this in 2025. **(HEA)**



- CfL ExAG, Data & Information Advisory Group & Evaluation Stakeholder meetings held. Suicide Observatory Evaluation Advisory Group met twice. IPH hosted and closed briefing session with multiple stakeholders - NOSP co-presented on Gambling and suicide in Ireland. **(HSE NOSP)**
- 5th iteration of the NUIG safety planning initiative underway (facilitated by psychiatry/psychology & occupational therapy) - 20 participants completed & 2 partial completers. **(HSE NOSP)**





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## At a Glance: Needs Attention

### Goal 3

#### 3.1.2 Develop and implement a range of agency and inter-agency operational protocols (including protocols for sharing information and protocols in respect of young people) to assist organisations to work collaboratively in relation to suicide prevention and the management of critical incidents.

- The design of the "Lets Talk about Suicide" module for ED reception and nursing staff continues to be developed. The design of this module needs to be relevant to patient presenting scenarios in the ED and therefore requires careful design and validation. (*HSE Acute Ops*)

#### **Issue(s):** *Timeline*

There have been a number of attempts to partner with relevant stakeholders on this action that have taken longer than expected to formalise. This has now been complete but it has impacted the action timeline.





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## At a Glance: Off Track

### Goal 3

#### 3.1.2 Develop and implement a range of agency and inter-agency operational protocols (including protocols for sharing information and protocols in respect of young people) to assist organisations to work collaboratively in relation to suicide prevention and the management of critical incidents.

- The "Deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol" between the HSE and An Garda Síochána has still not been signed by the Garda Senior Leadership Team. The delay is starting to impact local data sharing arrangements, which have been paused (**HSE NOSP**)

**Issue(s):** *Timeline:* The "Deaths by suspected suicide data sharing protocol" between the HSE and An Garda Síochána has still not been signed by the Garda Senior Leadership Team.

The delay is starting to impact local data sharing arrangements, which have been paused. This means that the HSE does not have reliable data on probable suicides which would support a public health approach to suicide prevention.

### Goal 4

#### 4.1.3 Ensure that those in the criminal justice system have continued access to appropriate information and treatment in prisons and while under Probation services in the community. The Irish Prison Service and the HSE National Forensic Mental Health Service will complete an agreed memorandum of understanding on improved links through the NFMHS Prison Inreach Service and the Probation Service will engage with the HSE on maintaining and developing access to community psychiatric services.

- Development of SOP's has been somewhat delayed and it is planned to realign these commitments into 2025 work plan to enhance and standardise the cross agency approach in all IPS Institutions. (**IPS**)

**Issue(s):** *Capacity*

Restrictions on changes in service provision model have hindered SOP development. These issues are by and large resolved and this work can now recommence.





HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention

November 2024



Connecting for Life