

From: Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

To: Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee – 10 July 2015

Decision No: 15/00055

Subject: The 2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Previous versions of the Suicide Prevention Strategy have been to this Cabinet Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** Kent and Medway wide

**Summary:**

Kent County Council is the lead partner within the Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Suicide Prevention Steering Group. The Group is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the current Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy which runs from 2010-2015.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014, this Committee agreed that officers should begin the process of updating the Suicide Prevention Strategy.

On 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015 this Committee agreed an earlier draft of the strategy should be tested by public consultation.

This paper provides a report on the consultation process and asks the Committee to recommend the adoption of the 2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee is asked to:

1. comment on and either endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health on the proposed decision to approve the adoption of the 2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The effect of someone committing suicide is devastating for families and friends of the individual concerned. The impact can be felt across the whole community. This report details the final draft of the Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Suicide Prevention Strategy 2015-2020 that has completed its engagement and consultation. The strategic priorities are:

- i. Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups
- ii. Tailor approaches to improve mental health and wellbeing in Kent and Medway
- iii. Reduce access to the means of suicide
- iv. Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
- v. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
- vi. Support research, data collection and monitoring.

These are detailed in the attached paper.

1.2 There were 182 coroner verdicts of suicide or death by undetermined causes<sup>1</sup> in Kent and Medway during 2013. As shown in Table 1, this is an increase from 145 in 2012 and the largest annual number for over a decade.

*Table 1: Annual number of deaths from suicide and undetermined causes, CCGs in Kent & Medway, both sexes, 2002-2013 registrations*

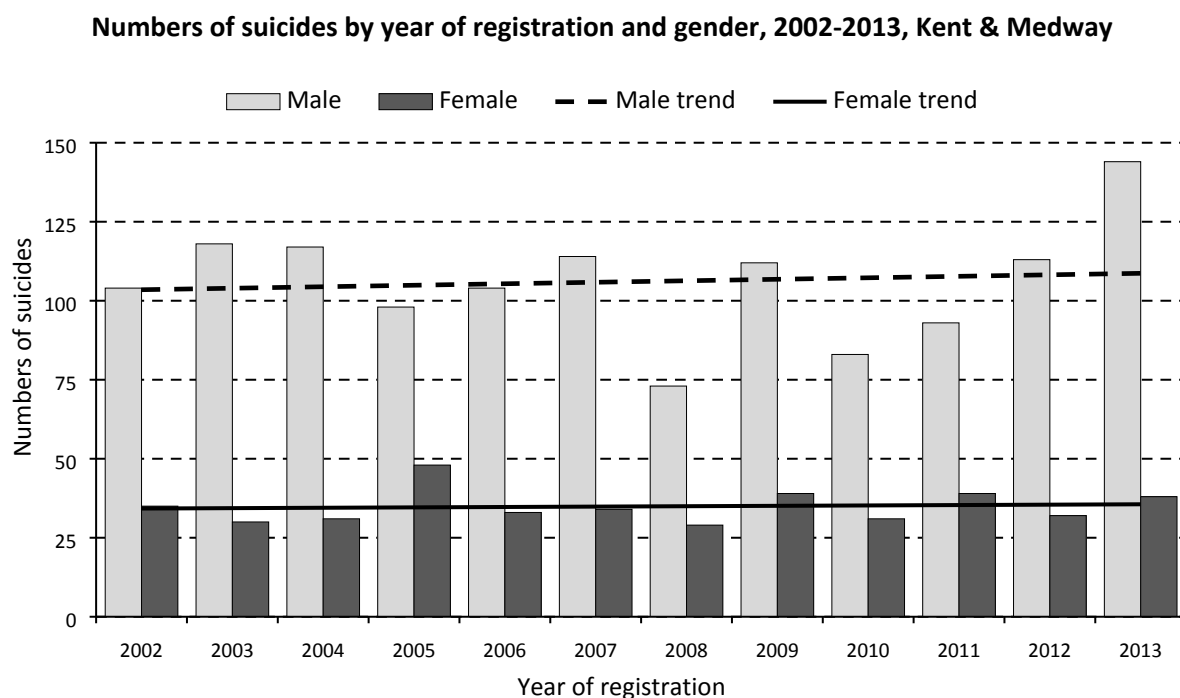
Area	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
NHS Ashford CCG	13	9	3	11	7	9	4	6	7	7	5	14
NHS Canterbury and Coastal CCG	12	16	16	16	16	17	10	20	13	14	15	21
NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG	22	28	27	16	18	22	8	21	15	23	23	28
NHS Medway CCG	23	12	20	21	23	22	14	19	14	13	20	31
NHS South Kent Coast CCG	17	26	20	27	13	20	12	19	18	25	22	18
NHS Swale CCG	4	7	16	8	12	5	8	11	9	3	8	13
NHS Thanet CCG	9	15	15	8	12	17	11	13	8	17	14	9
NHS West Kent CCG	39	35	31	39	36	36	35	42	30	30	38	48
<b>Kent &amp; Medway</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>182</b>

Source: PHMF, PCMD, KMPHO

1.3 Men aged between 30 and 60 is the group most likely to take their own life, and as Figure 1 shows, the majority of the recent increase has been due to suicides amongst men.

<sup>1</sup> Undetermined cause is a category of coroner verdict that is counted along with suicide by the Office of National Statistics and is regarded as 'probable suicide'

Figure 1: Number of suicides by year of registration and gender 2002-2013, Kent & Medway



Source: PHMF, PCMD, KMPHO

1.4 The rate of suicide is a Public Health Outcomes Framework indicator.

- The national rate is 8.8 suicides per 100,000
- In Kent the rate is 9.2 suicides per 100,000<sup>2</sup>

1.5 Due to the premature nature of deaths by suicide there is a very high cost in terms of years of life lost (i.e. deaths under the age of 75). Between 2011-2013 there were approximately 4,000 years of life lost due to suicides in Kent and Medway.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Financial Implications

2.1 There is no direct budget attached to the Suicide Prevention Strategy, although it will be used to influence interventions both within Kent County Council and with partners.

## 3. Equalities implications

3.1 An Equalities impact assessment was undertaken as part of the Strategy and this is attached at the end of the Strategy document.

<sup>2</sup> Suicide rates per 100,000 between 2011-13 <http://www.phoutcomes.info/public-health-outcomes-framework#gid/1000044/pat/6/ati/102/page/0/par/E12000008/are/E10000016> (England, 2004)

<sup>3</sup> KMPHO, 2014 Suicide Update

## 4. Strategic Statement

4.1 Working in partnership to prevent suicides will support each one of KCC's Strategic Outcomes as contained in the Strategic Statement and directly relates to the following Supporting Outcomes:

- Children and Young People have better physical and mental health
- Physical and mental health is improved by supporting people to take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing
- People with mental health issues and dementia are assessed and treated earlier and are supported to live well.

4.2 This decision does not relate to a plan or strategy set out in the Council's Policy Framework (see Appendix 3 of the Constitution).

## 5. The Report

5.1 In January 2015, this Committee agreed that an earlier draft of the 2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy should be put out to public consultation. This paper provides a report on the consultation process and the final draft of the Strategy (and associated Action Plan) is attached for the Committee's consideration.

### 5.2 Report from public consultation

5.3 The consultation process on the draft 2015-2020 Suicide Prevention Strategy consisted of three main features:

5.4 *A stakeholder event focusing on the issue of self-harm (26<sup>th</sup> February 2015)*

5.5 Hosted by Medway PH, stakeholders discussed a wide variety of issues relating to self-harm. There was a presentation given by Medway Public Health and two organisations (KCA and VAWK) discussed how they were tackling the issue in different parts of Kent. The main points to come out of the discussion were:

- The need for early identification and intervention in relation to self-harm,
- Need for greater use of peer support,
- Need for continued education for parents and staff,
- Need to address the gap between school counselling and CAMHS,
- Need for more funding and a higher profile.

5.6 *A stakeholder event to develop the action plan relating to the draft Suicide Prevention Strategy (18<sup>th</sup> March 2015)*

5.7 Hosted by KCC Public Health, over 60 stakeholders (including service users, carers, charities, treatment providers and voluntary groups) discussed the priority groups which should be addressed by the Strategy and Action Plan, as well as prioritising some of the potential actions. Presentations were given by KCC Public Health, the Samaritans and KMPT. The main points to come out of the session were:

- There was overwhelming support for the draft priorities within the draft strategy.
- There was a high level of agreement that the key groups identified by the draft strategy are the right ones to focus on. However there was a strong feeling that the strategy shouldn't focus on particular groups to the detriment of population level measures.
- There was strong agreement that bereaved families and carers should be supported better, with suggestions as to how that could happen.

#### 5.8 *An online consultation*

5.9 The KCC Engagement Team hosted an online survey on the KCC website in relation to the draft strategy for approximately nine weeks. Although there were a disappointing number of responses it was decided by the Suicide Prevention Steering Group not to extend the consultation period because:

- There was very good stakeholder engagement at the two consultation events and as part of the steering group
- The responses that were received were very supportive of the strategic approach and the draft priorities
- The online consultation was advertised widely through the Mental Health Action Groups and Kent Healthwatch.

5.10 Although there was strong support for the strategic approach, a number of respondents to the online survey criticised the care that individuals were currently receiving, particularly those experiencing mental health crisis.

#### 5.11 *Updates to the Strategy and Action Plan following the public consultation*

5.12 The Strategy and Action Plan has been updated following the comments received from, and the discussion generated by, the public consultation.

5.13 Major impacts have included:

- Adding "People bereaved by suicide" and "People with new diagnosis of disability or terminal illness" to the list of people being at higher risk of poor mental health
- Including an action in the Action Plan to develop a campaign targeted at men to raise awareness of how to access mental health support. This campaign is likely to use sports organisations as a way to reach a male audience
- Adding an action to the Action Plan which commits Kent and Medway Public Health teams to share the outcomes of the Self-Harm consultation event with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Groups and review the self-harm pathway (with a particular emphasis on early intervention)
- Inviting a representative from Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SoBS) to join the Steering Group
- Public Health and KMPT committing to examine whether to adopt a "Zero-Suicide" ambition.

## 6. Conclusions

The development of the 2015-2020 Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan is now complete and is attached for the Committee's consideration

## 7. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):

The Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee is asked to:

1. comment on and either endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health on the proposed decision to approve the adoption of the 2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.

## 8. Background Documents:

None

## 9. Appendices:

*2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan*

## 10. Contact Details

Report Authors

Tim Woodhouse, Public Health Programme Manager  
[tim.woodhouse@kent.gov.uk](mailto:tim.woodhouse@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416857

Jess Mookherjee, Public Health Consultant  
[jessica.mookherjee@kent.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.mookherjee@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416493

Relevant Director

- Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health  
03000 416659  
[andrew.scott-clark@kent.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.scott-clark@kent.gov.uk)