

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
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QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2022
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 14th NOVEMBER 2022**

Question

“Given that ‘Prevention of Suicide in Jersey: A Framework for Action 2015-2020’ aimed to improve mental health and wellbeing in vulnerable groups, to reduce stigma about suicidal feelings, to reduce the risk of suicide in high-risk individuals and to improve information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide, will the Minister advise –

- (a) to what extent these four objectives were met and what actions, if any, are outstanding;
- (b) when the next strategy will be completed and what its primary objectives will include; and
- (c) whether any central body of information and advice detailing voluntary organisations, sources of counselling and peer support (similar to the information pages provides on the MyStates section of the Government of Jersey intranet) is available or, if not, whether one will be made publicly available?”

Answer

- a) The delivery of the Prevention of Suicide strategy was coordinated via a multi-agency Suicide Prevention and monitoring group, which included representatives from health and community services and CYPES alongside key stakeholder partners. Although the work of the group was paused for much of the initial Covid pandemic (due to the need to redeploy and refocus resources), it has continued to meet and work against the objectives within the strategy.

By nature of the strategy and the objectives within it, much of the work will always be ongoing and the objectives will continue. However, there have been some key achievements against the agreed objectives during the period of the Strategy, which have included:

- The implementation of the Suicide Prevention and monitoring multi-agency group, with an identified lead who monitors and reports on trends and demographics annually and coordinates much of the training delivery and immediate response to a suspected suicide
- A review of the early intervention model used in schools and colleges, with the introduction of an early intervention practitioner attached to schools offering consultation, assessment and intervention and group work
- Work with the local media to promote sensitive reporting and portrayal of suicide, who follow national and international guidelines developed by the Samaritans and the Independent Press Standards Organisation
- The implementation of an adult mental health crisis response service, with planned and funded further development for Children & Young People in 2023
- A significant increased investment in primary mental health & counselling services, providing increased access and early intervention, supported by an increased availability of software applications for people experiencing distress or thoughts of self-harm.
- The promotion of online Zero Suicide alliance training for all islanders (with a take up of 1.400 people to date)
- The delivery of a number of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary training initiatives in relation to suicide, self-harm and the assessment & management of risk
- Community mental health service risk assessments and care models, to better identify and support the risk of suicide in high-risk individuals

- The strengthening of local responses following death by suicide, supported by a review and delivery of expert training in this area in 2021, which informed the current support available for those bereaved by suicide.

As part of the new Suicide Prevention Strategy development, we have begun an assessment of the outstanding areas of work that will require an on-going focus from the previous strategy. These have been identified as:

- Ongoing work to increase awareness and encourage people to seek help when needed
- Continuing to develop, deliver and evaluate multi-agency training initiatives, access to information and wider suicide prevention awareness initiatives (including uptake of the zero suicide online training) across the island
- Implementation of the Children & Young Peoples mental health crisis model ensuring 24/7 access to CAMHS provision
- Further work to develop a multi-agency vulnerable adult risk management process via the Safeguarding Partnership Board
- Continued development of our mental health models, assessment tools and intervention models based on international research and best practice
- Ongoing review and evaluation of our approach – including support available to those bereaved by suicide – with the inclusion of feedback and co-production from those at risk or affected by suicide.

b) The new Suicide Prevention Strategy is planned for completion by the end of 2023, and its primary objectives (beyond the generic prevention of suicide) will be determined as part of the development. The process of strategy development will include:

1. Establishing a working group and a steering group including those affected, survivors and families to deliver the project.
2. Reviewing and describing the up to date evidence on suicide prevention and suicide risk factors.
3. Reviewing the progress and outstanding actions against the objectives in the previous strategy
4. Obtaining and analysing data from a range of sources to produce a population needs assessment.
5. Engaging with stakeholders to understand their perspectives and analysing their insights.
6. Deciding on the key objectives, deliverables and measures that will form Jersey's suicide prevention strategy, including the identification of resources required to deliver this.
7. Ensuring clear arrangements are in place for the implementation and oversight of the new strategy

c) Yes, there is already a central body of information available to the public via the Mental Health page on gov.je which can be found <https://www.gov.je/Health/Mental/pages/index.aspx>

Suicide rates for the last 5 years

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
7	11	10	6	8