



Calderdale Suicide Prevention Network

February 2025 Meeting Notes

Thursday 6 February 2025, 2 – 4pm at Orange Box, HX1 1AF.

Total attendance: 16

Contact: engagement@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk

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Introducing the Network

Georgia from Healthy Minds welcomed Members and briefed the group on the confidentiality agreement and collective care.

She briefed Members on the story so far and the next direction for the Network:

- We launched the network last year and have since had 2 meetings in June and October (with the October meeting offering a parallel meeting online in addition to the in-person one). The network will meet at least four times a year.
- Our first meetings in June and October were more about knowledge-gathering: where we brought together our various experiences to find out what is important to our Members in tackling the issue of suicide locally.
- As we move into 2025, our strategy for the Network to make a difference will use three methods of affecting change:
 - **Influencing decision makers:** Through building our relationship with the Calderdale Suicide Prevention Strategic Group, as well as inviting decision makers to join us at our Network meetings so they can learn from us.
 - **Creating our own initiatives:** Self-organising around issues that matter to us, by delivering Member-led actions.
 - **Seizing opportunities for co-production:** When the opportunity arises, we can contribute our knowledge to specific pieces of Suicide Prevention work happening locally.

Network Updates

Custody release & Safespace action point update

Georgia updated the Network on an action point from our October meeting: Healthy Minds and the Police service to look at the possibility of referring people into Safespace after being released from custody. Georgia shared an update from a Safespace Service Manager:

“After speaking with the Liaison & Diversion team who do deal with those being discharged from custody, it was decided that there wasn't really a place for Safe Space to be involved in that as a direct referral channel.

“The L&D teams discharge process is very thorough, they have mental health teams that they work closely with when discharging individual's and simply put, an individual wouldn't be discharged if they were insinuating they were going to act on any suicidal ideation.

“But I suppose people can have the reassurance that the L&D teams process is very thorough, and an individual's mental health is carefully assessed before they are released from custody. It's been agreed that Safe Space can attend L&D's next team meeting to talk about Healthy Minds as an organisation so the L&D workers who do work with those being discharged are clued up on what support Healthy Minds can offer.”

Member Rep update

Georgia was pleased to share that one of our Members represented the Network at the Calderdale Suicide Prevention Strategic Group meeting on 11 November 2024. This was the first time that a Suicide Prevention Network Member had attended the Strategic Group.

The Member Rep kindly updated the group about their experience attending the Strategic Group. They gave an overview of the items discussed at the meeting, including how Strategic Group partners are contributing to the Strategy & Action Plan (not yet published publicly). Partners at the meeting shared how they are implementing suicide prevention action within local hospitals, in drug and alcohol strategy, policing, workforce training and resourcing for schools.

The Member Rep reflected that there was a lot of ongoing work being discussed by the Strategic Group, and as they had not attended before, they did not have the same longer-term context as the other partners and at times were unsure about how to feed into the conversations.

Georgia and Network Members thanked the Member Rep for attending and feeding back their experience. Georgia reflected that as this was the first time a Rep had attended, there was learning to take forward, e.g: we have now agreed to have a regular slot on the Strategic Group agenda for our Member Rep to share insights / updates from the Network.

Member Updates

Members were invited to share any relevant news with fellow Members, or just to introduce themselves to the group.

NSPA / The Samaritans

A Member shared that they are also a Member of the NSPA – the [National Suicide Prevention Alliance](#), and that they had received news that the host organisation, The Samaritans, would no longer be hosting the NSPA in order to concentrate on delivering their core priorities. The NSPA is now looking for a new host organisation.

The Member shared dismay at this news, as the NSPA does important work. Hopes are that the NSPA finds a new host organisation so that it may continue.

Despite the bad news, the issue has at least been an opportunity to raise awareness of the NSPA with our Suicide Prevention Network Members. It was pointed out that you can become an individual Member of the NSPA and access news and [webinars](#). Find out more at the NSPA website: <https://nspa.org.uk/>

Mental Health First Aid

A network Member shared that they had recently attended a free online Mental Health First Aid course, which they found really useful for giving them more skills for supporting others. They reflected on how they found the tools they learned most useful for their personal life and relationships with friends and families as well as workplace relationships, and that the learning experience also helped them support themselves.

The Member didn't have a link to share with the group, but Georgia has found a couple links to courses that people could check out:

<https://www.wefindanylearner.com/mental-health-first-aid-level-2/>

<https://freecoursesinenglandonline.co.uk/mental-health-first-aid/>

We will keep an eye out for training opportunities such as MHFA to share with the Network.

Suicide in the Construction Industry

Member speech & discussion

Network Member Paul S shared an emotive speech about the issue of suicide in the construction industry. Read his full speech here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eAyaJhECLb6_priYEBmv9pDV2laujRjXLaOG_2H2i7M/edit?usp=sharing

He spoke about his personal relationship to the issue, as well as framing the problem with statistics from thelostcity.org to demonstrate the scale of the issue.

Paul then spoke about what is behind the higher rates of suicide in this industry, covering factors including workforce culture, physical strain, financial stress, high risk environments, inequality and links to drug and alcohol issues.

He concluded by sharing how impassioned he is about doing something to help, proposing to take action locally by working with construction companies and Calderdale College to integrate better awareness and suicide prevention resources into construction workplaces and education settings.

The group then responded to the speech, with brief discussions around:

- How a Member had heard about how workers / owners of small businesses can suffer huge financial stress when tools are stolen.
- A Member reflected how it made them think differently about the issue of suicide when people are in employment – that it isn't always the case that having a job (and therefore hopefully a sense of purpose) will be enough of a protective factor against suicide.
- The group liked the idea of working with Calderdale College from a prevention perspective – helping to raise awareness, educate and resource people before someone enters the industry.
- The next steps were agreed to get together any Network Members interested in being involved, and put together some communication to engage target organisations in an initial conversation around how we can help support them with suicide prevention resources.

Action points

- ✎ Georgia took down names of Members interested in being involved in this work, to start an email thread to follow up on our ideas outside of the Network meeting.
- ✎ Paul S & Georgia to take a deeper look at the Building Mental Health framework & toolbox resources: <https://www.buildingmentalhealth.net/>
- ✎ Paul S to start drafting a list of local companies to contact.

Group discussion: Calderdale's Action Plan

Introducing Calderdale's Action Plan

Georgia explained to the group that there is a Calderdale Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan for 2025 – 2027 that has been developed by strategic partners. The plan has been approved by the Health & Wellbeing Board, and is now in its final stages of completion – this means that the majority of the content will not change but there may be tweaks and additions before it is published publicly.

Georgia shared the action plan graphic and 'plan on a page' which sets out the key priorities, objectives and measures of the plan. See the 'plan on a page' extract here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqVJWwpXQelcD8zMqpbQOwHWSMjseiUn/view?usp=sharing>

The priorities in the draft Action Plan are:

Prevention:

1. Raise awareness of suicide prevention.
2. Take early action to prevent crisis.

Intervention

1. Effectively respond to crisis.
2. Improve safety at high-risk locations.

Postvention

1. Support people affected by suicide.
2. Learn from incidents.

Calderdale Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025-2027 Graphic



The group was then asked to consider how our Network could contribute to the Strategy & Action Plan.

Georgia explained that there are some specific issues relating to priorities in the Action Plan that have already been identified as possible things the Network could be involved in:

- **Re-designing the crisis cards** – The ‘crisis cards’ are fold-out pocket cards which have information for local mental health services and crisis lines. Previously they have been designed and printed by the Council, and there is an opportunity for the Network to be involved in a re-design.
- **Public perceptions of North Bridge** – there is a historical perception of the bridge being associated with suicide due to deaths at this location. We know that locations with this kind of reputation can become higher risk because of the reputation it holds. How can the Network help to change this?
- **Spaces for memorialisation** – could there be better opportunities for memorialising those who have died as well as reflecting on how we can prevent further deaths? E.g. [Light Up for Hope event](#) at Dean Clough as an example.
- **Skills & training** – a topic that has come up in a lot of our discussions: previously we have discussed the need to promote more help-offering behaviour and empowering people with the skills to do this in our communities. How might we do this?



Discussion points

Members discussed a variety of ideas of ways that the Network could contribute to the action plan, including:

Perceptions of North Bridge

- A Member shared experiences of attending North Bridge and negative experiences interacting with police officers while at the bridge. They shared how it feels like these experiences are not being understood by the police. Jenniefer (Public Health – Calderdale Council) mentioned that the police are partners at the Suicide Prevention Strategic Group, and are keen to learn from people's experience. An action point was created to find out from partners at the police what channels exist for them to hear and learn from people's experiences.
- A Member shared how they have heard young people call North Bridge the 'suicide bridge', showing how deeply embedded this perception of the location is within local culture.
- Ideas for changing the perception of the bridge, such as changing the name, or creating artwork for the bridge made by people who have been bereaved by suicide were discussed.
- Jenniefer shared how highly sensitive the topic of the bridge is, as it is important not to inadvertently increase the bridge's negative reputation as this could cause an increase in attendance at the bridge.
- A Member expressed how they thought that it was important to try things, not just leave things as they are, and perhaps the approach to changing perceptions of the bridge could be bolder, trying something out and testing the response.
- A Member mentioned that there are different methods of suicide, and so it was important that North Bridge does not become our only focus point.

Memorialisations & hope

- Following on from discussions about North Bridge, there were suggestions for ideas of possible memorial events or artworks, and whether these could/should be done at locations such as North Bridge. The Light Up For Hope event on World Suicide Prevention Day, organised by Healthy Minds was mentioned, and how this created a powerful opportunity both to memorialise as well as offer messages of hope.
- A Member expressed how important it was to not only reMember those who have died but also share the voice of people who have survived attempts, with messages of hope that can have a positive impact on others. They emphasised

the message of 'life after an attempt' and how this should be part of what we do at the Network.

- A Member shared a website they had come across: 4mentalhealth.com, which includes the campaign 'Dear Distressed':

<https://www.4mentalhealth.com/deardistressed>

This campaign uses powerful and heartfelt letters written by people with lived experience of suicidal thoughts to: a) share a message of hope with people experiencing suicidal thoughts, and b) share the message that any of us can find ourselves thinking life isn't worth living, highlighting the importance of self-care and support. Members expressed they found this a powerful campaign, and a source of inspiration to draw from for our own initiatives at the Network.

Lived experience education in schools

- A Member asked about a point on the Action Plan about schools, suggesting that they felt there is opportunity for educating young people about mental health from a lived experience approach. Jonny (Healthy Minds CO) explained this is something that the Time Out project is already doing, which is part of the Open Minds Partnership – made up of different organisations providing children and young people's mental health provision.

Postvention

- Within the 'postvention' section of the Action Plan: e.g. 'stepping stones' – a Member reflected how there is still such a big gap when it comes to longer-term follow up support, not just when someone has attempted suicide, but also when people are discharged from a mental health ward there is very little support given following this, in the Member's experience.

Action points

- ✎ Jennifer to follow up with partners at the police to ask what is in place (or could be put in place) to create better opportunity for people to share their experiences of police intervention at high risk locations.
- ✎ Georgia, Paul S and network Members to follow up on a plan for speaking to local companies and Calderdale College about suicide prevention initiatives. Take a more in-depth look at the 'building mental health' toolkit.
- ✎ The Network to take forward our ideas for initiatives (e.g. memorials, campaigns) for further development at our next meeting, where people can choose which idea they would prefer to be involved in.

Next meeting

The next network meeting date & location is yet to be confirmed.