

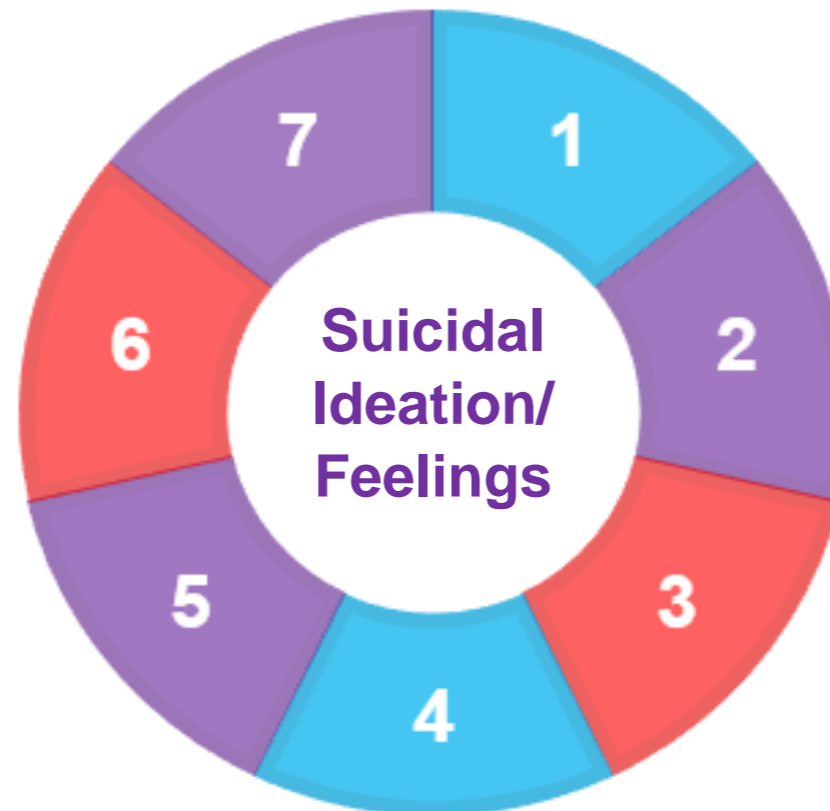
7 MINUTE BRIEFING

Suicidal Ideation/Feelings



KNOWSLEY
SAFEGUARDING
ADULTS BOARD

PREVENTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



1. About Suicidal Ideation/ Feelings

Suicide is when someone intentionally ends their own life. It is a very tragic response to difficult situations and feelings, perhaps most tragic because it is preventable.

Suicidal ideation/feelings are when a person has thoughts to end their life, because they feel overwhelmed by their problems and unable to see a way out. They may or may not have plans or intent to end their life. Suicidal thoughts can be complex, frightening, confusing and lonely.

Having suicidal thoughts does not mean that someone has a mental illness, but there is a connection between mental ill health and suicidal thoughts.

Research suggests asking people if they are having suicidal thoughts is more likely to protect them from suicide, as it encourages them to be

7. Further reading / training

Free online suicide prevention training will help give you the skills and confidence to talk to someone who may be considering suicide.

www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training

You can find out more about suicide prevention in Cheshire and Merseyside www.no-more.co.uk

[Guidance for managing risk v safeguarding in relation to Mental Health, Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation](#)

[National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health Annual Report 2023](#)

6. What help is available?

Urgent mental health crisis support is available 24/7. For people who no longer feel able to cope or be in control of their situation. Call the NHS mental health crisis line free on 0800 051 1508.

- A&E should only be used when there are serious physical injuries which require treatment within the hospital environment.
- Only call 999 if immediate, life-threatening assistance is required.

Non urgent help:

- Make an appointment to see GP.
- Free, confidential text messaging support – for anyone feeling overwhelmed/struggling to cope. Text the word “REACH” to 85258.
- **AMPARO** – free confidential support for anyone affected by suicide. Call 0330 088 9255 or visit www.amparo.org.uk/

2. What does data tell us?

Over 5,000 people a year die by suicide in England. Reasons for which are complex with many contributing factors.

- 3 out of 4 people who die by suicide are not in contact with mental health services at the time of their death
- 3 out of 4 suicides are by men, with middle-aged men having the highest rate
- Nearly half of people who died by suicide lived alone
- Following a stay in hospital as a mental health in-patient, the risk of suicide is higher very soon after returning home
- For every suicide, there can be up to 135 people impacted

5. What are we doing locally?

- Over the period 2020-2022, there were a total of 52 Knowsley resident suicide verdicts recorded (based on date of registration)
- Suicide prevention is everyone’s business and requires a multi-agency approach to address the risk factors which contribute towards suicide
- Cheshire & Merseyside Suicide Prevention Strategy for 2022-27 identified particular population groups at risk of suicide; middle-aged men, people who have self-harmed, those in contact with mental health services or the criminal justice system, people who are neurodiverse and individuals affected by suicide
- A real time surveillance system enables the identification of trends, connections and to take appropriate action

4. Warning signs

A change in someone’s personality and behaviour may be a sign that they are having suicidal thoughts. You may be the best judge of when someone you know is behaving differently. Changes can include:

- Becoming anxious
- Being confrontational
- Becoming quiet
- Mood swings
- Not wanting to be around people including families and professionals
- Saying negative things about themselves
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness

There are indicators that suggest someone is more likely to attempt suicide. These may include:

- Threatening to hurt or take their own life
- Actively looking for ways to take their own life (having a plan/method)
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide

3. Risk factors

Reasons why a person takes their own life are complex, with no one single cause or solution.

Significant risk factors linked to the wider determinants of health such as:

- Financial difficulties
- Being in debt
- Harmful gambling
- Being unemployed
- Living in poor quality housing
- Experiencing, witnessing or perpetrating domestic abuse
- Being addicted to substances
- Having a physical illness
- Being lonely or socially isolated
- Being exposed to harmful online content

However, the absence of risk does not mean the absence of any risk of suicide.