



National  
**Suicide Prevention**  
Alliance

**NSPA**  
Strategic framework  

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2016-2019



## Who we are

The National Suicide Prevention Alliance (NSPA) is a coalition of public, private and voluntary organisations in England.

Our mission is to get all parts of society working together to take action to reduce suicide and improve the support for those affected by suicide. The NSPA was established in 2013, having evolved from the 2012 Call to Action for Suicide Prevention, and we have a growing membership of organisations, each committed to taking action to help reduce suicide.



# Our challenge

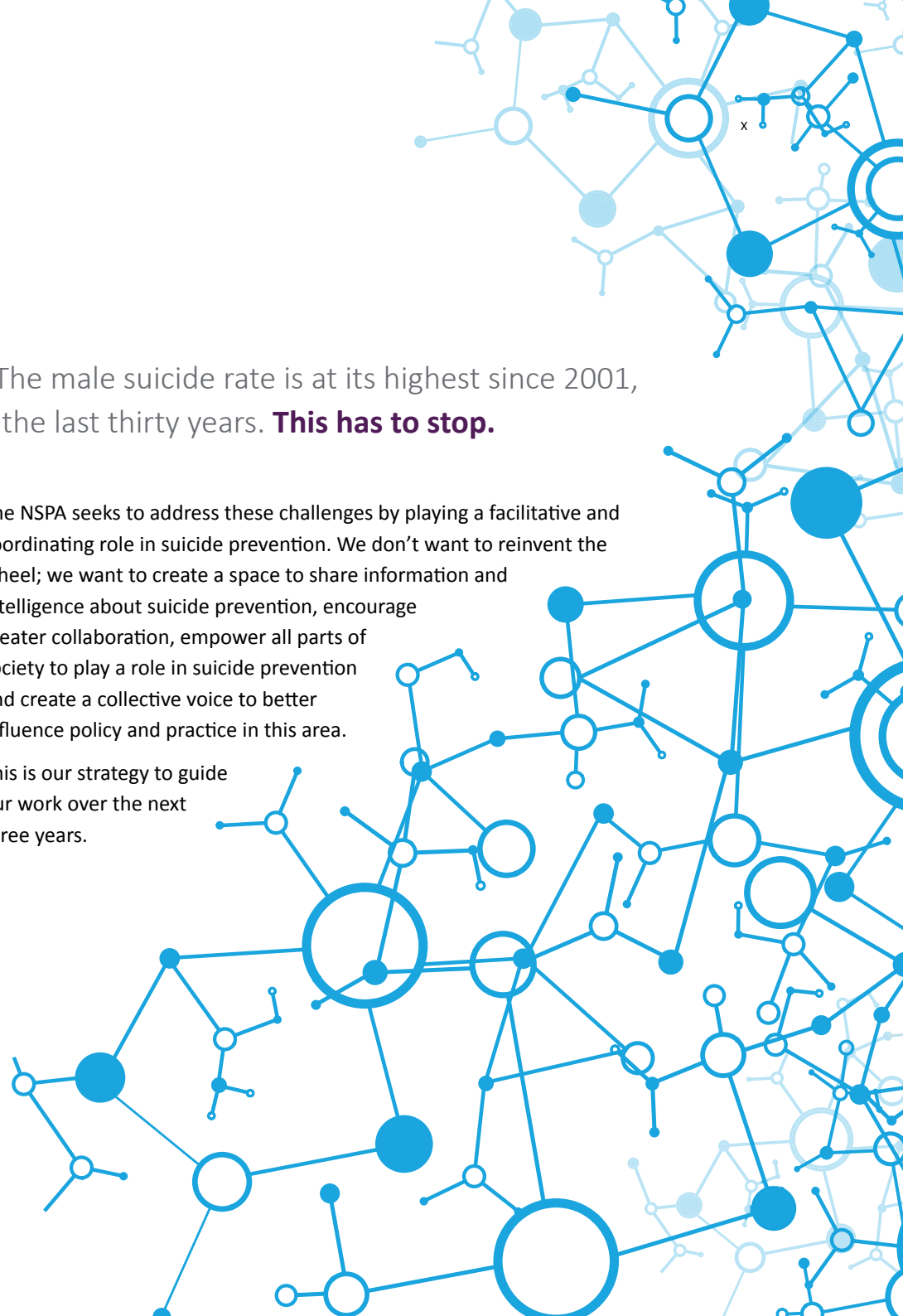
Each year, more than 6,000 people take their lives in the UK. The male suicide rate is at its highest since 2001, and more middle aged men are taking their own lives than in the last thirty years. **This has to stop.**

Suicide is not just a tragedy for the person who loses their life. It also shatters the lives of those left behind – families, friends, colleagues and communities. For every life lost to suicide, it is estimated that at least six people are deeply affected, but there is not a simple formula for reducing suicide. The risk factors are wide ranging and complex. Suicidal feelings and behaviour usually result from multiple issues in someone's life and can be related to many different factors including demographics, social issues, settings or times of crisis. We will only save more lives if all parts of society work together to tackle the problem. **Suicide prevention is everyone's business.**

We welcome the increasing focus of attention that the issue of suicide and more broadly, mental well-being, is receiving from government and the wider public. We believe that raising awareness of suicide and getting more people talking about their well-being and mental health is crucial if we are to change society's attitudes and effectively reduce the number of suicides. There is a growing body of good practice and evidence-based services and support, as well as new initiatives and innovations emerging in this area. However the availability of services and support can be inconsistent and more still needs to be done to share learning, expertise and resources.

The NSPA seeks to address these challenges by playing a facilitative and coordinating role in suicide prevention. We don't want to reinvent the wheel; we want to create a space to share information and intelligence about suicide prevention, encourage greater collaboration, empower all parts of society to play a role in suicide prevention and create a collective voice to better influence policy and practice in this area.

This is our strategy to guide our work over the next three years.



## Our Vision

That fewer people die by suicide.

## Our Mission

To get all parts of society working together to take action to reduce suicide and improve the support for those affected by suicide.



## What is the NSPA?

The NSPA is a cross-sector, England-wide alliance of organisations that share our vision that fewer people die by suicide.

We want to get all parts of society working together to take action to reduce suicide and improve the support for those affected by suicide.

### We aim to achieve this by:

1. **Reducing stigma:** We want all parts of society talking about suicide and taking action to maintain good mental health, so that it is as normal as talking about and maintaining physical health.
2. **Encouraging help-seeking:** We want more people who are experiencing emotional distress to seek help before they become suicidal.
3. **Providing the appropriate support:** We want to ensure that when people in emotional distress seek help, they receive appropriate support from the people or organisations they approach and that they are offered appropriate options.
4. **Reducing access to means:** We want it to be harder for people experiencing severe emotional distress to have access to the means to take their own life.
5. **Reducing the impact of suicide:** We want to ensure that people affected by suicide get the support they need to cope with the impact on their life.
6. **Improving data & evidence:** We want there to be better official data about suicide in England and more evidence about effective suicide prevention. Those working in suicide prevention should find it easier to obtain this data and evidence.
7. **Working together:** We want organisations with an interest in suicide prevention collaborating with each other to make a bigger difference.

# How we work

The NSPA is uniquely placed as the only national suicide prevention alliance that works across all sectors.

To achieve our aims we operate by:

**Deliver commitment & influence:** We identify public, private and voluntary organisations that can make a difference and we invite them to join us and take action

**Mobilise action:** We identify the most important issues to work on and we facilitate projects to address them

**Build an active network:** We facilitate collaborations between organisations who can achieve more by working together

**Share best practice:** We share information about what organisations are doing to prevent suicide, support those affected by suicide and promote good practice in these areas

**Raise awareness & build knowledge:** We work to improve the quality and accessibility of data about suicide and help improve the evidence base about what works in suicide prevention and bereavement support. We share this intelligence with organisations that can make a difference

**Improve support:** We share information about support available for people in distress and those bereaved or affected by suicide, to increase options and raise awareness of what's out there.



# Our priorities 2016-2019

We work with our members to achieve the following outcomes:

## 1 Reducing stigma:

**We want all parts of society talking about suicide and taking action to maintain good mental health, so that it is as normal as talking about and maintaining physical health.**

Good emotional wellbeing and mental health should be at the heart of our society and we believe this needs to be more widely recognised. Building resilience and the skills to maintain emotional well-being should begin from a young age and continue throughout our lives. We will work to influence both policy makers and decision takers to ensure recognition of the importance of emotional well-being and mental health. We will also take specific action including working with coroners around changing the standard of proof for reaching suicide conclusions. We will support our members to be key advocates for talking about suicide, the promotion of good mental health and to remove barriers to talking about suicide.

## 2 Encouraging help-seeking:

**We want more people who are experiencing emotional distress to seek help before they become suicidal.**

Anyone in distress should feel confident to turn to someone for support. We want to encourage people to seek help before they reach crisis point, particularly in those groups which are at highest risk of suicide.

We will work with our members to bring together and support a cross-sector partnership aimed at:

- encouraging men (in the first instance) to seek support in times of need;
- reach those around them that can encourage them to do so;
- promote good practice and information about services that effectively meet the needs of and provide suitable support for men.

## 3 Providing the appropriate support:

**We want to ensure that when people in emotional distress seek help, they receive appropriate support from the people or organisations they approach and that they are offered appropriate options.**

We don't believe it is enough just to encourage people to seek support. We need to ensure that people know what services exist and that these are available and responsive for the people that need them. We will develop a hub of knowledge, providing a one-stop shop for people to find the support options that are available for them nationally, regionally and locally. We will prioritise local areas where deprivation and suicide rates are highest. We will also provide guidance for organisations that aren't focused on suicide prevention, to support them to recognise and respond to people at risk.

## 4 Reducing access to means:

**We want it to be harder for people experiencing severe emotional distress to have access to the means to take their own life.**

We know that reducing access to specific means of suicide is an effective way of preventing suicides. We also know that the media can play an important role in preventing the proliferation of emerging methods through responsible reporting. We will continue to work with government and key stakeholders to support the good work that already goes on in this area, including tackling emerging methods of suicide and promoting guidance on preventing access to means, such as suicides in public places. We will actively encourage stakeholders in key industries, to become members of the NSPA and take action.

## Our enablers

To enable us to achieve our priorities, we will:

- Further develop our income generation strategy with a focus on building a broader range of funding streams including statutory income, membership contributions and contracts.
- Develop our membership offer to attract new members from across all parts of society and keep existing members engaged and active.
- Continue to develop and expand our communications, including our website.
- Develop and implement a strategic engagement plan to optimise our influence and reach by ensuring we are engaging with the right stakeholders.

## Taking forward our strategic priorities

We will take forward the priorities set out in this strategic framework through a detailed work plan which will be reviewed annually.

### 5 Reducing the impact of suicide:

**We want to ensure that people affected by suicide get the support they need to cope with the impact on their life.**

A suicide can impact a wide range of people; not just the friends and family of the person who has taken their life, but also neighbours, colleagues and those who may have witnessed the death. Everyone affected should know what support is available to them and be provided with options that best suit their needs. We will work with the Suicide Bereavement Support Partnership to improve availability of information for those affected by suicide and increase support, including s working on a framework that can be implemented in every local area.

### 6 Improving data & evidence:

**We want there to be better official data about suicide in England and more evidence about effective suicide prevention. Those working in suicide prevention should find it easier to obtain this data and evidence.**

Good quality, timely data is essential to help identify potential clusters and enable the development of response to national trends. Through our members, we will work with key stakeholders, including the Mental Health Intelligence Network to influence the data that is available locally and nationally, and provide a hub of information about suicide and suicide prevention on our website. We will work to influence the use of this information to ensure good local suicide prevention plans are in place in every area of England.

### 7 Working together:

**We want organisations with an interest in suicide prevention collaborating with each other to make a bigger difference.**

We believe membership is about collaborating and taking action to achieve our aims. We will support our members to share good practice, carry out joint projects, learn from others' experiences and pool resources. We will also hold a series of events aimed at current and potential members to encourage all of society to take action to prevent suicide.

The National Suicide Prevention Alliance is a cross-sector, England-wide coalition committed to reducing the number of suicides in England, and improving support to those bereaved or affected by suicide.

For further information on becoming a member or supporter of the NSPA go to [www.nspa.org.uk](http://www.nspa.org.uk). Alternatively please contact the Membership & Communications Officer on [info@nspa.org.uk](mailto:info@nspa.org.uk) or 020 8394 8275

Supported by



Office: NSPA, The Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AF **T** 020 8394 8275 **F** 020 8394 8301 [www.nspa.org.uk](http://www.nspa.org.uk)