

Paul McDonald  
Executive Director  
of External Affairs

National Suicide Prevention  
Conference 2021

SAMARITANS



# This morning ...

- **Revising National Suicide Prevention Strategies in Response to Covid-19** Nadine Dorries MP, Minister of State (Minister for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health), Department of Health and Social Care
- **Reducing Suicides & Increasing Awareness through the Power of Education** Dan Howard, Operations Director – Learning for Work, NCFE and Sherry Adams, CEO, We Mind & Kelly Matters
- **Case Study: Improving Paramedic Training for Mental Health Call-Outs** Carly Lynch, Mental Health Lead, London Ambulance Service
- **Case Study: Speak Their Name: Supporting Families Bereaved by Suicide** Adele Owen QPM, Greater Manchester Suicide Prevention Programme Manager, Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership



# This afternoon ...

- **Panel Discussion: Developing Suicide Prevention Strategies for Marginalised Groups** Natalie Creary, Director, Black Thrive, Mo Wiltshire, Director of Education and Youth, Stonewall and Helen Jones, CEO, Mind Out
- **Intervention Strategies to Treat Self-Harm and Prevent Escalation** Keith Waters, Director of Centre for Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Research, Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- **Case Study: Improving Mental Health Training and Support for Schools** Louise Dibsdall, Senior Public Health Strategist, London Borough of Havering
- **Case Study: Reducing Access to Means as part of a Suicide Prevention Strategy**, Nicola Glassbrook, Public Health Specialist, Devon County Council



# Samaritans' service at a glance

We respond to around  
**10,000**  
calls for help  
every day\*

We have  
**201**  
branches

There are more than  
**20,000**  
Samaritans  
volunteers



**Samaritans branches**  
(map not showing Festival branch  
or Correspondence branch)



It is  
**free to**  
call us on  
**116 123**

People who use  
Samaritans' helpline report  
**a significant**  
reduction in distress\*\*

We are open  
**24** **365**  
hours a day days a year

Our volunteers spend over  
**1 million**  
hours a year responding  
to calls for help\*

\* A 'call for help' is any contact made to Samaritans for support, whether by phone, text, email, face to face in branch, in prisons or through our outreach work. This figure is based on the 2020 calendar year. A 'caller' is anyone who has accessed our service, whether by phone or by any other means.

\*\* Markham, T., Forshaw, A. and Sutcliffe, R. (2020). Samaritans Caller Outcomes Study. Birmingham: MEL Research Ltd.



# ES1 Suicide and Covid-19

- The Covid-19 pandemic is having profound social, psychological and economic impacts.
- Ours and other research suggest slight increases in suicidal thought across the population during the pandemic (Fancourt et al., 2020; O'Connor et al., 2020).
- A rise in suicide is not inevitable though.
- Real Time Surveillance data found no evidence that suicide rates in England increased between April and August 2020.
- Covid-19 has exacerbated mental health inequalities.



## Slide 5

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### ES1

PAUL: You might want to take other things from our evidence resource to use here. There's quite a lot of research now as you can imagine, so it depends what you want to focus on really:

<https://home.samaritans.org/marketing-brand-and-communications/research-influencing-policy/evidence-resources/covid-19-what-research-telli>

Elizabeth Scowcroft, 09/04/2021

# Our helpline & the pandemic

- We provided emotional support more than 2.3 million times in the year since social distancing restrictions began.
- This is 920,000 hours supporting those who are struggling to cope during the pandemic.
- Over a fifth of the calls for help to Samaritans have referenced coronavirus, although our volunteers suggest the pandemic has affected all callers in some way.
- Our research shows that the pandemic and the lockdown have particularly impacted three groups of people at an already high risk of suicide: middle aged men, young people and people with pre-existing mental health conditions.



## Slide 6

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**ES2**

Paul: The covid report is being drafted over the next couple of weeks, so lets check back and see what other top line statements we can include here once we know what that says.

Elizabeth Scowcroft, 09/04/2021

# Sharing information, good practice and resources

- Cross-sector alliance with over 1000 local and national members
- Share information, good practice and resources, including resources hub on our website which includes policy, guidance, information sheets, case studies, data, research, videos....
- Since lockdown, held **over 50 online discussions** for members and others working in suicide prevention on a range of topics and well as sector specific sessions for charities, NHS, public health
- Nearly 1100 registrations for the online discussions so far, and they continue to run
- [www.nspa.org.uk](http://www.nspa.org.uk)

The collage displays various resources from the National Suicide Prevention Alliance website. On the left, there's a document titled 'Local suicide prevention planning' with a red and white circular graphic. Next to it is an 'Information Sheet: Working with Coroners' from Public Health England. Below that is a 'Case Study: Adopt a Block' also from Public Health England. In the center, a video player shows 'Steve's personal view on suicide prevention' with a man speaking and the subtitle 'I'll be there for you. This for me is community. Bring it back to that. Community.' On the right, a 'Resources' hub is shown with a search bar and categories: 'Policy and strategy', 'Data and analysis' (featuring a 70% statistic), 'Providing individual support', 'At risk populations', and 'Toolkits and guides'. A central infographic titled 'Suicide Prevention' shows various risk factors and support elements.



# Just a few of NSPA's members....



# SAMARITANS

Call day or night on

**116 123**

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[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Write

Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS

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