

Cross Party Group on Suicide Prevention

Tuesday 2nd July 2019

12.20pm – 1.20pm

The Pierhead, Seminar Rooms 1 & 2

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lynne Neagle AM opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Lynne acknowledged that some of what may be discussed at the meeting may be upsetting for some and advised attendees to step out and have a break if needed and reach out for support following the meeting if they need to. Lynne welcomed Dai Lloyd AM to the meeting.

2. Operation of the group

Sarah Stone explained the formal process for establishing the group which includes electing a Chair, secretariat and establishing the aims of the group. The group also needs to confirm its membership and requires representation from at least three political parties. All attendees were confirmed as members of the group.

Lynne Neagle AM was elected as Chair of the group following a vote. Samaritans Cymru were elected as secretariat following a vote. Lynne added that the dates for further meetings will be circulated and advised that one of these meetings will need to be an AGM.

3. Setting out the aims of the group

A copy of the recommendations from the Everybody's Business report and the Welsh Government response to the report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Lynne thanked Dai Lloyd AM for the Everybody's Business report. Lynne explained that she is keen for this group to be used to drive change and it was noted that the Cross-Party Group on Suicide Prevention in Westminster has been very effective. Jayne Bryant AM joined the meeting.

Lynne opened up discussion to members about the aims of the group. David Melding AM joined the meeting.

Members suggested the following aims for the group:

- Identifying the contextual nature of suicide, including the impact of societal factors such as socioeconomic disadvantage
- Identifying post-vention and collaborative approaches to the support provided to those bereaved by suicide
- That the group should be aware of its role as a cross party group and look at the most effective examples of such groups making a positive contribution. There should be a programme of work and a focus. The group is a way of informing all parties of the issue and could produce reports on areas of concern as well as provide scrutiny of progress on government commitments.

4. Cross-party group work programme

Lynne asked whether there were any other areas members would like the group to focus on.

Members suggested focussing on the following areas of work the group should focus on:

- The effect suicide has on schools, colleges and workplaces and improving support for those who have witnessed a suicide or found someone who has taken their own life.

- The stigma surrounding suicide
- Improvements in sharing of information and best practice
- The link between substance misuse and suicide
- An adequate and coordinated first response to those in distress (Including GPs and A&E)
- Social media, including cyberbullying, and the impact the online environment can have on bereaved families
- The adverse effects of alienation and social isolation on individuals and their role in increasing suicide risk
- Men and young people as high-risk groups
- Lack of support for those bereaved by suicide
- Improving prevention surrounding 'cluster' or 'copycat' suicides
- Training for GP's on how to respond to people in distress and how to signpost
- Scrutiny of what action is being taken on recommendations set out in Everybody's Business report
- The opportunities of the new curriculum
- The link between poverty and suicide
- Improved patient care for those in crisis.
- Detox programmes and regulating the associated safety needs
- Rural communities and farmers as a high-risk group
- Improving a preventative approach through limiting access to means, involving the engineering industry
- The implications of an ageing population on suicide risk

Dai Lloyd AM explained that the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee will be following up on the Everybody's Business report and reviews will continue six months after the reports publication and then every year. David Melding AM commented that Cross-Party Groups which work well are those which use mechanisms of the Assembly for example by seeking debates and raising questions. The possibility and opportunities of working on a draft bill was also discussed.

Lynne Neagle AM thanked everyone for their comments and it was agreed that suicide bereavement and how to improve services for those bereaved by suicide will be the focus of the next meeting.

It was confirmed that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 22nd October 2019.

Attendees:

Ana Laing, Samaritans
Andrea Gray, Public Health Wales
Bleddyn Jones, South Wales Fire & Rescue
Caryl Stock, The Amber Project
Clair Harvey
Dai Davies, Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Dai Lloyd AM
David Melding AM
David Richards, Gwent Police
David Williams, Farming Community Network
Paul Owen, Department of Work and Pensions
Dr Miranda Barber, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
Dr Nicole Burchett, Mental Health Foundation
Eddie Steinson, Welsh NHS Confederation
Emma Gooding, Samaritans Cymru
Emma Kneebone, 2 Wish Upon A Star
Gareth Davies, Tir Dewi
Gethin Matthews-Jones, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Hannah Coyle, Network Rail
Janette Bourne, Cruse Bereavement Care Cymru
Jayne Bell, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
Jayne Bryant AM
Jen Dafin Davies, Psychologists for Social Change
Kate Heneghan, Papyrus
Laura Frayne, Samaritans Cymru
Laura Tranter, ACE Support Hub
Lynne Neagle AM.
Margaret Jones, Samaritans
Nicola Abraham, Jacob Abraham Foundation
Professor Ann John, Swansea University
Professor Keith Lloyd, Swansea University
Rebecca Frohwein, Hafal
Rebecca Jackson, Suicide Bereavement UK
Rob Palmizi, Citizens Advice Cymru
Rob Williams, National Association of Headteachers
Ruth Coombs, Equality and Human Rights Commission
Sarah Stone, Samaritans Cymru
Simon Jones, Mind Cymru
Tom Dyer, Tenovus Cancer Care