

# Suicide Prevention: A Council Perspective

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# What are councils doing?

- Councils *are* taking suicide prevention seriously
- Councils *are* prioritising suicide prevention – 95% of councils now have a strategy in place or will have one in the near future
- Councils *are* investing in this despite a 40% cut to their budgets and a 10% cut to public health budgets over the next 4 years

# Why are councils prioritising suicide prevention?

- Because they see the value in it at a local level – not because Government is requiring them to – part of devolution work in West Midlands
  - Because their local councillors think it's important – 90 local elected mental health champions
  - Because their local residents think its important
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# What is the value in councils taking the lead?

- It's better to have 95% volunteers, doing this because they think it is important, than 100% being forced to tick a box.
  - It's based on what works locally. Government doesn't know what works best for a community in Liverpool?
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# What are the barriers to local delivery?

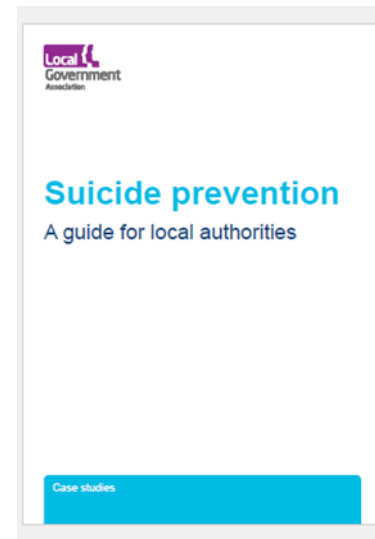
- Funding pressure a big issue – on prevention and mental health support
  - The role of local government on mental health not being taken seriously by Government - £1 billion by 2020 in the NHS to address mental health
  - There needs to be a similar investment in local government
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# What are the opportunities

- Our partners and other agencies – you can help us
  - Health and Wellbeing Boards bring together local commissioners and decision makers
  - Working more with the NHS in a whole-systems way
  - Building on the Crisis Care Concordat model and working across councils, the police, transport, business and health.
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# What is the LGA doing?

- LGA case study report into good practice by councils on suicide prevention – due for launch soon!
- Held session at Public Health Conference
- Part of work on Mental Health and Wellness



# What is the LGA doing?

- Suicide prevention is part of the LGA's call for a whole-system review into mental health, that takes into account all sectors – local government, welfare, education, the armed forces, homelessness, the voluntary sector, the charitable sector – and the NHS.
  - Watch this space for more to be announced over the Summer
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# We need fewer guides and more vision

- Councils have a lot of experience in writing strategies, setting up partnerships, working with local community groups
  - BUT what does a place that takes mental wellness and suicide prevention seriously look like and feel like? What's it like to live there? How are services run differently? What's changed?
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# What more can be done to reduce the number of deaths by suicide?

- We need to collaborate together
- We need to tackle media perception



- We need to talk *and* we need to understand
  - We need to make sure suicide prevention isn't a stand-alone issue – it is part of mental and physical wellness
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