

Stigma Statistics.

Pilot Case Study

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

October 2020

Summary

Suicide rates are of epidemic proportions globally – close to 800 000 people die by suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds¹. In 2019 there were 5,961 deaths by suicide in England and Wales². It is estimated 135 people are impacted per death³, which totals 770,000 people bereaved by suicide. Furthermore, it is estimated 10% of suicides are by those who are bereaved by suicide.

The evidence is that providing timely support for the bereaved after a suicide (within 72 hours to 7 days) will stop the ripple effect and result in saving lives.

“The statistics are clear; those who have been bereaved by suicide are a vulnerable group and by supporting them well, we have an opportunity to prevent further suicides.”

- Sumita Bhola, Lifecraft

In addition, 28% of deaths by suicide are known to mental health services before their death.

This provides two real target areas for saving lives; those who are bereaved by suicide and those high-risk individuals who are known to mental health services. Modern technology presents a new opportunity to support these two groups more rapidly, more effectively and more efficiently; potentially saving lives.

Real Time Suicide Surveillance Platform

Stigma Statistics, a London based social venture, has developed a Suicide Tracking, Analysis & Reporting (STAR) platform to enable suicide prevention and facilitate real time suicide surveillance. The platform allows for the collation, sharing, analysis and reporting on suicide data.

Stigma Statistics held a three month pilot in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough to test the operational aspects of the platform with the services in the local suicide prevention group (‘Group’). The Group included Cambridgeshire County Council,

¹ http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/

² ONS Suicides in England and Wales Dataset, release 1st September 2020

³ Cerel, J. et al. How many people are exposed to suicide? Not six. Suicide Life. Threat.Behav. (2018).

Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Coroners, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and South Lincolnshire Mind, Change Grow Live and Lifecraft.

Upon the completion of the pilot, all service users within the Group reported the Stigma Statistics STAR platform led to better outcomes in their service or will lead to better outcomes in the future, ultimately, saving lives.

“The system has greatly improved our understanding of suspected suicides, with good involvement and engagement from our stakeholders.”

- Helen Whyman - Cambridgeshire County Council

“The Stigma real-time suicide surveillance platform is an innovative and important tool that allows for early identification of deaths due to a suspected suicidal action. As the platform is being used across organisations, it has increased joint intelligence on such cases and has the potential to quickly identify themes and trends, in order to inform suicide prevention strategies and approaches. The platform is very straightforward to use and the questions that have been developed to explore patient care are helpful in informing our learning from deaths by suicide and in planning future service developments.”

- Dave Seabright - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

“This platform has allowed me to gain access to information about people who need support very quickly after they have lost someone to suicide. I can contact those affected within a very short space of time from the tragedy occurring. Those left behind are so thankful for the support they receive, it can be a real lifeline to them at such a devastating time in their lives. By talking to the next of kin, I can also identify other people who have been deeply affected and are struggling and reach out to them for support too.

What I have found incredibly useful is how this platform brings people together who really care and want to make a difference in this field. I am now closely connected to the police service, the coroner's service, mental health teams and general practitioners. This network of people working collaboratively is where real impact can

be made. Prior to using the platform, I felt I was just one individual doing my bit, but now I feel part of a tangible community that are proactively trying to tackle suicide.”

- Sumita Bhola, Lifecraft

Process flow



Data Collection

The STAR process starts by collating information from the Police sudden death notification. The platform currently has a minimum requirement for nine data input fields of basic demographics. These fields are listed below:

Notification Date	Referral Method	Gender
Region	Date of Birth	Nationality
Incident Status	Date of Death	Marital Status

There are an additional 142 fields for all services to input information (151 in total). These range from basic demographics, to history and contact with the various services to risk factors and linked cases. The additional optional fields allow for

building up a more in-depth picture of the deceased and enable lessons learnt. The list of data inputs can be shared upon request.

Reporting

The data collected in the pilot was not sufficient to draw scientific conclusions. Furthermore, the Coroner has not yet concluded on these cases. The pilot case data indicates 48% of the deceased were known to Mental Health services and similarly, only 48% of Next of Kin gave their consent for bereavement support when first asked.

The platform currently has 45 standard reports and more in development. The list of data inputs can be shared upon request.

Onboarding

The STAR platform has been designed as a plug and play solution. There is no IT resource requirement from the Local Authority or the Group, other than Information Governance. As such, the web-based platform can be available for onboarding as soon as Data Sharing Agreements have been signed and Information Governance approval has been given.

Pilot Success & Next Steps

The pilot in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough has illustrated the value of the Stigma Statistics STAR platform to the Local Authority and the Group. Platform onboarding is quick and easy, with Information Governance being handled through Stigma Statistics nationally accepted templates.

The pilot highlighted three areas that are critical for the success of a Real Time Suicide Surveillance platform. These areas are:

1. Coroner Approval

To enable suspected suicide information to be shared with the Group, the senior coroner designates the Group as interested persons under section 47 of the Coroners & Justice Act 2009.

2. Information Governance

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requires the appropriate Information Governance documentation and approvals. Stigma Statistics has developed appropriate Information Governance templates for use by the Local Authority with the Group.

3. Next of Kin consent for Bereavement Support

Fundamental to be able to provide bereavement support, next of kin consent. This is usually obtained by the Police Officer attending the sudden death and is detailed on the sudden death notification. Stigma Statistics STAR functionality also allows for secondary referrals.

“The STAR platform is a great example of how data can be used to make health and care services both more effective and more efficient through a single intervention.”

- George Agathangelou, Director of Health and Care Economics, EY

Please contact Matthew Steans - matthew@stigmastats.co.uk to discuss how the STAR platform could be used in your local authority area or suicide prevention group to enable suicide prevention and save lives.