

News release

Partnership aims to support those bereaved by suicide in Lancashire and South Cumbria

A website has been launched following calls from local people in Lancashire and South Cumbria to be able to easily access help and support for those bereaved by a death by suicide. Acting as a directory of services, resources and information, users are able to filter results by their local area as well as accessing national support.

The initiative has been co-produced with local people who have been bereaved by suicide after many found they were having to trawl websites, make numerous phone calls or were unable to find relevant support services in their area. The formal processes following a suspected suicide are different from other deaths and can take a long time; guidance around the practical and emotional elements of this process are often not provided initially or are missing from generic bereavement resources, literature and support groups. Added to this, the stigma associated with a death by suicide can also prevent those bereaved from accessing support networks and services.

A focus group of local people with lived experience of suicide was formed to understand what would have been helpful to them in the immediate aftermath of a death, as well as ongoing, long-term support. Together with the Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria suicide prevention team, the group designed how the site looked as well as guiding the layout and content.

A member of the focus group said: “There may be support out there but you don’t have the energy or head space to search for it; it needs to be easy to find and easy to give to other family and friends who might need it.”

This initiative forms part of the ongoing work taking place across Lancashire and South Cumbria to prevent suicide and is supported by national funding received as part of the government’s commitment to reduce suicides by 10% by 2021.

The website also offers a directory of services and resources for suicide prevention, designed to be accessed by anyone who is worried about someone or by the individual themselves that feel they are at risk.

Vicki Wagstaff, Quality Improvement Lead for Mental Health at Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria said: “People who have been bereaved by suicide

are at a greater risk of dying by suicide themselves. Ensuring support is easily accessible, appropriate and in one place is crucial to our work in prevention. We are encouraging people to share the details of the website with friends and colleagues and on social media to make as many people as possible aware of the help and support available.”

Services who are in contact with those bereaved by suicide such as police, hospitals, GPs, the fire service and schools will receive information about the website so they are able to share this with anybody in need.

The directory will be maintained and updated as services become available and develop.

You can visit the website here: www.healthierlsc.co.uk/suicide

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Notes to editors:

This press release is issued by Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria, the shadow integrated care system for Lancashire and South Cumbria.

- Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria covers a region made up of five local areas (Central Lancashire, West Lancashire, Pennine Lancashire, Fylde Coast, and Morecambe Bay). These areas provide a way for organisations and groups involved in health and care to join up locally.
- The integrated care system is clinically led by Dr. Amanda Doyle with support from senior clinicians and managers from every part of Lancashire and South Cumbria
- An easy to understand document is available at www.healthierlsc.co.uk which outlines the challenges faced in health and care and how organisations are working together to tackle them.

For further information about this press release please contact: 0113 825 323. Out of hours media contact (weekends and after 5pm weekdays): 0773 038 1690. Email england.northmedia@nhs.net