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The impact on and support needs of NHS staff following a colleague’s suicide

Participant Information Leaflet – Interview

**Why are we doing this study?**

* We aim to identify the impact and support needs of NHS staff who are affected by the suicide of a colleague.
* We will then develop guidance about how the NHS and other relevant workplaces can support staff after a suicide.
* Your participation is voluntary and all information about you will remain confidential.
* If you decide to take part, please email the study researchers to let them know you are interested and they will send you a participant questionnaire and consent form.

**Things you need to know**

* This study is being conducted by researchers at the Universities of Surrey, Keele and Manchester as well as the Samaritans, alongside NHS staff impacted by suicide
* Everyone involved in this study will keep your data safe and secure. We will also follow all privacy rules in line with GDPR. At the end of the study, we will save some of the data for **10** years. After that, it will be deleted. This is in case we need to check it or for publication. All information about you will be anonymised.

**Why do we think this is important?**

Suicide is known to significantly affect the physical, emotional and psychological health and wellbeing of the bereaved, and to increase their risk of suicide. However, no research has explored how the suicide of a colleague affects NHS staff, or how NHS organisations respond to such deaths and support the staff, teams and others affected in the workplace.

Past research shows that if people affected by suicide receive support early on, it can help to cope with loss and reduce the risk of further distress, mental health problems and their risk of suicide. It is, therefore, important that NHS staff receive the best support at the right time.

The findings from this study will inform guidance for NHS employers and managers on how they can best support those affected following a staff suicide.

**Why am I being asked to take part?**

You have been invited to consider participating in this study because the suicide of a member of staff working in your organisation has occurred. If you have been affected by the suicide or/and have been involved in supporting affected NHS staff, we would be most grateful if you would agree to take part in the study. Participating in an interview with an empathic listener may help you to process what has happened.

**What is involved?**

A single interview with a researcher. This can be done by telephone, video call or in-person (at a place of your preference, depending on COVID-19 restrictions). If you are interested in taking part in this study, please email the study researcher to let her know you are interested.

If you are suitable for the study, we will confirm this.

At this point, you will be able to ask the researcher any questions you might have about the study or how your data would be used. You are under no obligation to participate and can withdraw from the study up to one week after the interview without giving a reason.

If you consent to participate in an interview, this will be digitally audio-recorded (with your permission).

Following the interview, we will also ask if you wish to give your consent to take part in a stakeholder workshop at the end of this study. This is optional. The workshop will help shape the content of the postvention guidance to be delivered across the NHS. We will send you more information about the workshop nearer the time so you can decide to take part at that point.

We will keep all information about you safe and secure. Your personal details and any identifying information will be removed from transcripts derived from the interview recordings and your name will not appear in any written reports of the research.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Taking part could help improve the support offered to NHS staff affected by the suicide of a colleague in the future. Your experiences will also inform guidance that will be widely employed across the NHS.

**What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?**

Taking part in the study will take approximately one hour of your time. We are offering £40 reimbursement for your time. You can also choose to donate this money to charity if you would prefer.

Given the focus of the research, some of the topics discussed in the interview may be upsetting or cause you distress. Please be assured the interview will be conducted by experienced researchers in a sympathetic and supportive way. You do not have to answer any questions you find difficult or uncomfortable.

There is a therapist associated with the study, to whom we will signpost you if needed. Participants can also make an appointment with the therapist within two weeks of the interview for a de-brief. They can access two free appointments if needed.

The University has in force a Public Liability Policy and/or Clinical Trials policy which provides cover for claims for ‘negligent harm’; the activities here are included within that coverage.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. Please feel free to contact us if you would like more information, or to ask us any questions. The contact details of the researcher can be found at the end of this information leaflet.

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign two consent forms (one for our records, one for yours) at the time of a face-to-face interview. We will ask you to sign and send the consent form to the research team before any telephone or virtual platform interviews.

If you agree to take part in the study, you can stop being a part of it at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have, unless you withdraw within one week of the interview, prior to anonymisation.

**Limits to confidentiality**

The experience of a colleague’s suicide can affect people in different ways. If you communicate any intent to harm yourself, a member of the research team may need to contact your next of kin, GP or study team specialists as part of our duty of care. A safety plan and suicide risk assessment will be undertaken at the end of the interview with the study researcher, and we will signpost you to the most appropriate support, as required. All participants will be able to speak to a trained therapist after the interview if they wish. The researcher will also contact you three days after your interview to check in with you. This is also an opportunity to talk to the researcher about anything important or raise anything which you did not discuss in the interview.

**Will I receive any payment for taking part?**

We will offer reimbursement of £40 to cover your time.

**What will happen to information collected about me during the study?**

We will need to collect some information from you for this research project. This includes your initials, name and contact details. We will use this information to do the research.

Study team members who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead. We will keep all information about you safe and secure.

Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the anonymised data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that means no-one will be able to work out that you took part in the study.

We will treat all information you give us confidentially (excluding, as above, when there is a risk to your safety). We will not mention your name in any publications about the study and will ensure that no individual can be identified in the study results. Only the study researchers will have access to your name and contact details. We will delete your contact details at the end of the study and use a unique identity code on the transcript of your recording.

We will keep the data for **10** years after the study ends, for publication purposes. Anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

**What if there is a problem?**

If you have concerns about the study or there is anything you would like to ask about the study, please get in touch with us. Our contact details are at the end of this information leaflet. If you would prefer to speak to the Chief Investigator, please contact Dr Ruth Riley on Ruth.Riley@Surrey.ac.uk

Please contact INVOLVE (tel: 02380 595628) for general information about research.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

If you wish, we can send you a summary of the results. We will also keep our website up to date with news of the programme. We will present the results of the study at conferences and publish them in academic and clinical journals.

**Who is organising and funding the study?**

This study is organised by a group of Universities (Surrey, Keele and Manchester), Samaritans and NHS organisations and is sponsored by the University of Surrey.

The study is funded by the Department of Health’s National Institute for Health Research, Health Service and Delivery Research (Ref 129341).

The study has been reviewed by the Health Research Authority (IRAS 291050). This is to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. This study was also approved by the University of Birmingham’s Research Ethics Committee (ERN\_20-1566). (Note that this study was originally conceived at the University of Birmingham, but has now moved to Surrey. This is why ethics approval came from Birmingham University.)

**Do I need to do anything if I don’t want to take part in the study?**

No, you do not need to do anything if you do not want to take part in the study. If you do not want to take part, you don’t have to, it’s up to you.

**What are my choices about how my information is used?**

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways for the research to be reliable and accurate. This means that we won’t be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible. Your personal data will be processed in accordance with the University of Surrey’s Standard Operating Procedures and in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can find out more about how we use your information at:

* [www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/)
* the leaflet available from: [**www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch**](http://www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch)
* by asking one of the research team

**How to contact us:**

If you have any questions about the study, would like more information or would like to take part, please contact:

Hilary Causer

School of Health Sciences

University of Surrey

Kate Granger Building,

30 Priestly Rd,

Surrey Research Park

Guildford,

GU2 7YH

h.causer@surrey.ac.uk

**Thank you for taking the time to consider taking part in this study**

**Useful information**

If you wish to speak to someone following any issues raised in this interview, we have a trained therapist available. Géraldine Dufour holds Senior Registered Accredited Member status with BACP. She has worked with many people with suicidal thoughts and chaired the BACP Universities and Colleges conference on working with suicide, and the University of Cambridge working group on developing a suicide prevention strategy. You are entitled to two free one-hour sessions and you can contact Géraldine at [contact@geraldinedufour.com](mailto:contact@geraldinedufour.com) .

For further sessions or if you wish to speak to someone else, please read the following information.

**NHS Staff Support**

The NHS have introduced a confidential staff support line **(Tel:** **0800 069 6222)**, which is operated by [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/) and free to access from 7:00am until 11:00pm, seven days a week. Trained advisers can help with signposting and confidential listening. Alternatively, you can text **FRONTLINE** to 85258 for support 24/7 via text.

**Bereavement support line**

The NHS also have a confidential bereavement support line which is operated by [Hospice UK](https://www.hospiceuk.org/) and free to access from 8:00am until 8:00pm, seven days a week. A team of fully qualified and trained bereavement specialists are available to support you with bereavement and wellbeing issues relating to loss experienced through your work. You will be offered up to three sessions with the same counsellor and onward support from our staff mental health services if you need.

**Nurses**

If you are a nurse and would like to speak to someone, please contact the RCN on 0345 772 6100. You can call between 8.30am and 8.30pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Alternatively, please contact your organisation’s occupational health service, who can also help.

Alternatively, contact the Laura Hyde Foundation, which provides mental health awareness and support specifically for medical and emergency services personnel: <https://laurahydefoundation.org/contact-us>

**Paramedics**

If you are a paramedic and would like to speak to someone, please contact the Ambulance Staff Charity on Freephone 0800 1032 999.

Alternatively, contact the Laura Hyde Foundation, which provides mental health awareness and support specifically for medical and emergency services personnel: <https://laurahydefoundation.org/contact-us>

**Doctors**

If you are a doctor and would like to speak to someone, please contact the NHS Practitioner Health on 0300 0303 300. This is a free, confidential service for doctors working in England and living with a mental health, addiction or physical health problem affecting their work. They also have a 24/7 crisis text service: text PHP to 85258. Alternatively, contact the 24-hour BMA Counselling service on: 0330 123 1245. This line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**General**

You may also wish to contact the Samaritans free on 116 123 for emotional support. Alternatively, please contact your GP, or we can provide you with the contact details of specialists on the study team who will be willing to speak to you and advise you.

**Addictions**

If you would like to talk to someone about an addiction problem, you can contact the following helplines:

Frank: drugs helpline on 0300 123 6600

Drinkline: a free helpline on 0300 123 1110 (weekdays 9am – 8pm, weekends 1am – 4pm).

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