

# Developing Your Knowledge and Skills in Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide

The Knowledge and Skills Framework for Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide was produced by NHS Education for Scotland and Public Health Scotland to support staff across the public sector and beyond to develop the knowledge and skills needed to promote good mental health and wellbeing across the whole population and to prevent mental ill health, self-harm or suicide.

You can view the framework by clicking [HERE](#)

There are four levels of practice in the framework:

- Informed
- Skilled
- Enhanced
- Specialist

These levels are based on the nature and frequency of contact staff have with people who may be at risk of, or affected by, mental ill health, self-harm or suicide.



## Support

Sometimes people can find learning about mental health improvement, self-harm and suicide brings up difficult emotions. If you are in need of support help is available:

- Samaritans 116 1 23 (24/7)
- Breathing Space 0800 838587 (Mon-Thurs 6pm-2am; Fri 6pm—Sun 6am) Webchat available Mon-Fri 6pm-2am; Sat/Sun 4pm-midnight)
- Text SHOUT to 85258 (24/7)

## Local resources

You can download a written 'Be Suicide ALERT' staff briefing [HERE](#).

Other resources to support mental health improvement and to help prevent suicide are available at:

**NHS Borders Wellbeing Point:**

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint)

**Suicide Prevention Information Hub:**

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/suicideprevention](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/suicideprevention)

If you'd like to get in touch to discuss the needs of your team, or aren't sure which option would be most appropriate please contact: [health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk)





# Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide: **Informed Level**

## Who is the 'Informed Level' training for?

The 'Informed Level' provides the **essential knowledge and skills required by all staff working in health and social care** to contribute to mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm and suicide.

This level is also **applicable more broadly, and can have relevance to everyone, in any workplace, workforce or community** who has the opportunity and ability to positively impact on their own and others'.

There are a number of learning resources available at the 'Informed Level' designed to meet the needs of your role.

These currently include online self-directed learning modules and facilitated sessions via MS Teams and a written briefing for staff. The training options vary in length of time and in content so that you have a choice about which option is most appropriate.

## Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention—**Informed Level**



This digital training package has been developed by Public Health Scotland and is available as an online module and also adapted locally as a facilitated course.

The course will help you to understand mental health and how to look after your mental health, support you to have compassionate conversations with people who may be experiencing mental distress or who are at risk of suicide and to learn more about suicide prevention and keeping people safe.

### Course structure:

1. Self-directed e-learning module on the NHS 'TURAS' website (you will need to register for an account before you can access this) <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/33734>
2. 2x 90min sessions delivered via Borders Care Voice (MS Teams or in person)  
**Contact [training@borderscarevoice.org.uk](mailto:training@borderscarevoice.org.uk) to register**

## LivingWorks Start



This online course is a good introduction to learning suicide prevention skills, from the provider of the ASIST course. LivingWorks Start teaches you to recognise when someone is thinking about suicide and connect them to help and support. Using a four-step model to keep someone safe from suicide, you will have the chance to practice your skills with simulated conversations. Links to safety resources and support are available throughout.

**Course structure:** 60-90mins e-learning module by Living Works

### Key features:

- Open to anyone—useful introduction / refresher
- Online only so can be completed at any time
- Overview of TASC suicide prevention model
- Not recommend for people affected by suicide – please get in touch if you'd like to discuss further
- Support information sent to identified management contact / supervisor

**Licences are provided free. Contact [health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk) to register for a licence.**



# Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide: **Skilled Level**

## Who is the 'Skilled Level' training for?

The 'Skilled Level' describes the knowledge and skills required by **'non-specialist' front line staff** working in health, social care, wider public and other services.

These workers are **likely to have direct and/or substantial contact with people who may be at risk of mental ill health, self-harm or suicide**, meaning that they have an important contribution to make in mental health improvement, self-harm and suicide prevention.

## What learning options are available at the 'Skilled' level?

### A series of self-directed e-learning modules on the NHS 'TURAS' website

Each of the free e-learning modules (or 'learning bytes') focuses on a different topic but they are all connected; some themes run through them all and they link back to each other where required. They can be completed in any order. The learning bytes are designed to be used flexibly by individuals, teams, organisations and training providers to meet local learning and development needs and priorities. Please allow 3 - 4 hours to complete each module. See over for more details or access online: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/33738>

### Training sessions delivered face to face

Both Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) are certificated two day courses that must be delivered face to face and participants must attend both days in full. See over for more details.

**Be Suicide ALERT** training can be offered to existing teams to explore your approach to suicide prevention. Participants should first complete Learning Byte 3 overleaf. Get in touch to discuss your requirements.

## Skilled e-learning modules

### Promoting Mental Health and Tackling Inequalities [Learning Byte 1](#)

Includes understanding what mental health is, features of positive mental health determinants, risk factors and inequalities that can lead to mental ill health, what works to improve mental health and how you can apply this knowledge in your own workplace.

### Supporting people in Distress and Crisis [Learning Byte 2](#)

Includes understanding distress, crisis and related risk or protective factors, recognising when someone may be experiencing distress or crisis, providing a compassionate and helpful response, supporting self-help and problem-solving and knowing how and when to access more urgent support for someone.

## Skilled e-learning modules (continued)

### Supporting People at Risk of Suicide

#### Learning Byte 3

Includes the factors that might cause people to think about suicide, working with people to assess their risk of suicide, conversations that enable people to talk about their thoughts of suicide, when to seek emergency support and intervention for people at risk of suicide, practical and emotional approaches to supporting people at risk of suicide.

Part B includes additional information about children and young people who may be at risk of suicide.

### Supporting people at Risk of Self-Harm

#### Learning Byte 4

Includes the different reasons why people self-harm, understanding self-harm as communication of distress, some common misconceptions surrounding self-harm, impact of thoughts, feelings and emotions on self-harm, adopting a sensitive, compassionate and non-judgemental approach when talking about self-harm, risk and protective factors associated with self-harm, ways you can positively respond to and talk about self-harm.

### Supporting Recovery and Quality of Life for People Living with Mental Ill-Health

#### Learning Byte 5

Includes understanding the concept of recovery and how to work in a way that promotes this, supporting people to engage with wider community resources that promote social and peer support, meaningful purpose and positive relationships, understanding the physical health problems and barriers to treatment and lifestyle change that can be experienced by people living with mental ill health, recognising the impact of stigma and discrimination on mental health recovery, and promoting inclusion, health and quality of life.

## Face to face training programmes

### Scottish Mental Health First Aid Training

This 2-day training course does not train people to be mental health workers.

It offers basic general information about mental ill-health. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helps to remove stigma and fear and to give confidence in approaching a person in distress.

It also helps mental health first aiders to assist those with mental ill-health and mental illness, to enable them to get help and to help themselves, and to support them in recovery. Certificated by Public Health Scotland.

Contact [training@borderscarevoice.org.uk](mailto:training@borderscarevoice.org.uk) for course dates and information.



### Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

ASIST is a 2 day intensive, interactive and practice dominated course, aimed at enabling people to spot the risk of suicide and provide immediate help to someone at risk of suicide. In the same way that skills are needed for physical first aid, ASIST develops the skills necessary for suicide first aid.

ASIST is delivered a number of times throughout the year in the Scottish Borders.

Contact [health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk) to be added to the waiting list and to be the first to hear about opportunities to be trained in ASIST.



# Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide: **Enhanced Level**

The 'Enhanced Level' focuses on the knowledge and skills required by staff working in health and social care, and wider public services, **who have regular and intense contact** with people experiencing mental distress, mental ill health, and may be at risk of self-harm or suicide, and **whose job role means they can provide direct interventions**.

The knowledge and skills required at this level become increasingly role and context specific which means education to support practitioners is too. The knowledge and skills framework can help you to identify any learning or development needs within the context of your role/environment.

NES have developed Enhanced Level Masterclasses which have been recorded and are available online here [here](#). The topics covered include:

- The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health (Scottish Context)
- Understanding the Transition from Suicidal Thoughts to Suicidal Acts and the Role of Safety Planning



# Mental Health Improvement and Prevention of Self-Harm and Suicide: **Specialist Level**

The 'Specialist Level' focuses on the knowledge and skills required for staff, who because of their role and/or practice setting, **play a specialist role in mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm or suicide**, and includes specialist mental health/public health professionals.

Knowledge and skills at this level are role and context specific which means education to support practitioners is too. The knowledge and skills framework can help you to identify any learning or development needs within the context of your role/environment.

Find out more [here](#)

# Further learning options

## Public Mental Health

Mental disorder and poor wellbeing is common and can affect everyone. However, effective interventions can treat mental disorder, prevent associated impacts, prevent mental disorder from arising and promote mental wellbeing.

Unfortunately not enough people have access or exposure to the appropriate support and interventions. This session highlights how this 'implementation gap' may be overcome, across our whole population.

You may be eligible to claim CPD points for completing this session, subject to approval from your peer group. CPD points are generally provided on a basis of one point per hour of learning. <https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/632895>

## Informed level module - Promoting children and young people's mental health and preventing self harm

This module comprises three children and young people animations and check your learning quizzes. They are designed to support the knowledge and skills of those in health, social care and the wider public sectors who need to be informed about mental health, self-harm and suicide prevention in relation to children and young people.

In particular, they will help workers to understand the factors that influence mental health and resilience in children and young people; engage proactively with children and young people about mental health, self-harm and suicide; and recognise when to seek help to support those in their care. **To access click [HERE](#)**

## Manager resource

This presentation is for managers, team leads and people in similar roles. It is designed to help you to be better able to support the mental health of employees and to encourage good practice in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

**To access click [HERE](#)**

## Trauma Informed Training Programme

We all have a role to play in understanding and responding to people affected by psychological trauma. This website provides information on the training and education resources developed by the National Trauma Training Programme to support the skills and knowledge of the whole Scottish workforce. **More information is available here:** <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/>

## Bitesize Information Videos

These sessions are created by Health in Mind and funded by the Scottish Borders Joint Health Improvement Team programme, 'United to Prevent Suicide'. They cover the following topics:

- How breathing can help
- Understanding sleep and some ways to improve it
- Food, drink and mood - what's the link?
- An introduction to coping skills
- Conversations about mental health
- Mindful stretching

Health in Mind also offer a Mental Health Awareness information video. All the videos above can be accessed here, along with other Health in Mind self-study courses: [https://www.health-in-mind.org.uk/services/bitesize\\_videos/d256/](https://www.health-in-mind.org.uk/services/bitesize_videos/d256/)

## Resources to support organisations

The United To Prevent Suicide website has information to support organisations to take action around mental health improvement and suicide prevention: <https://unitedtopreventsuicide.org.uk/organisations/>

