MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT & SUICIDE PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Scotland's Knowledge and Skills Framework for Mental Health Improvement, Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention

NHS Education for Scotland

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Background and purpose of the framework

Public mental health includes the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing across the whole population, and the prevention of mental ill health, self-harm or suicide. It is also about improving the quality and length of life for people who experience mental ill health and addressing the inequalities people can face.

Mental health and wellbeing are not single topics. Mental health is inseparable from physical health and related to all the wider aspects of public health and health inequalities. Self-harm or suicide do not only happen in association with poor mental health and wellbeing, so these are issues for us all.

Scotland's Public Health Priorities[1] sets out the priority '*A Scotland where we all have good mental wellbeing*'. Scotland's Mental Health Strategy[2] includes several commitments to improve mental health in areas related to this framework. Additionally, Scotland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan '*Every Life Matters*'[3] sets out specific actions to reduce suicide in Scotland. The Mental Health Strategy and Suicide Prevention Action Plan highlight the importance of developing knowledge and skills in mental health and suicide prevention across all public services and beyond.

This framework has been produced by NHS Education for Scotland and NHS Health Scotland to respond to these policy priorities.

1. https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities
2. https://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-strategy-2017-2027
3. https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-suicide-prevention-action-plan-life-matters

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How we developed this framework

We used a range of approaches including: evidence reviews; learning gathered from the evaluations previously undertaken over the decades concerning mental health improvement, self-harm and suicide prevention, and education and training in Scotland, and more widely; a review of several existing knowledge and skills and competency frameworks; and by consulting with a range of stakeholders and experts in these areas.

Who is this framework for

While targeted at the health, social care, voluntary and public services workforce, this framework is applicable much more broadly. It will have relevance to everyone, in any workplace, workforce or community who has the opportunity and ability to positively impact on their own and others' mental health and wellbeing, and contribute to supporting people experiencing mental distress, mental ill health, and preventing self-harm or suicide.

How the framework can be used

The framework provides guidance which can be adapted to suit local contexts and circumstances. The framework can be used at a personal, team, service provider and organisational level in several ways, and for a range of purposes. This will be achieved:

- **By individuals** (in conjunction with their appropriate generic and/or professional frameworks and guidance) to help them fully understand the values base, knowledge and skills expected of them to fulfil their responsibilities in mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm or suicide.

- **By individuals, alongside their teams, managers/supervisors** to identify and explore their strengths and gaps in knowledge and skills in relation to the role they are performing. It will allow individuals and teams to identify and act to address any development needs to deliver the aspirations set out in this framework.

- **By organisations** to identify any development needs to support delivery of the framework.

- **By education and training providers** to inform the content of the education and training they provide and shape the design and delivery of future focussed vocational and professional undergraduate and postgraduate education and training, and to enhance existing training programmes.

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The structure of the framework

Levels of Knowledge and Skills

Each level defines the knowledge and skills specific to the person's role in relation to mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm or suicide, underpinned by human rights and person-centred values. Rather than being hierarchical, the levels are concerned with peoples' roles and responsibilities in relation to mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm or suicide, which will vary greatly across organisations and sectors. Each level defines the knowledge and skills, specific to their role that people should have, rather than in relation to their seniority within the organisation or their profession.

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. It also encapsulates most of the wider public health workforce who need to be informed about mental health and wellbeing and be able to respond to someone who is experiencing mental distress, or mental ill health, and who might be at risk of self-harm or 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' mental health and wellbeing and contribute to supporting people experiencing mental ill health and preventing self-harm or suicide.

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

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The **'Enhanced Level'** outlines 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 outlined at this level become increasingly role and context specific.**

The **'Specialist Level'** outlines 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. **The knowledge and skills outlined at this level are role and context specific and should be interpreted in this way.**

The knowledge and skills outlined at each level are constructed in an *incremental way*, for example, staff that operate at the 'Enhanced Practice' level would also possess the values, knowledge and skills described at all preceding levels. Given the scope of the workforce across health and social care, this framework does not identify specific staff roles in relation to the framework domains and levels. Each individual staff member, and their employer, must take responsibility for ensuring that they correctly interpret and apply the content and aspirations of the framework to their role in relation to mental health improvement and preventing self-harm or suicide.

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Links to other Frameworks and Guidance

This framework links to, and has been informed by, several other frameworks and guidance detailed below:

NHS Education for Scotland – Transforming Psychological Trauma: A Skills and Knowledge Framework for the Scottish Workforce[4]

The framework is designed to be relevant to the broad Scottish workforce. This is because the scientific and research literature coupled with what has been heard from the experience of people who have lived through traumatic events, leads us to understand that 'Trauma is an issue for everyone'. Living through traumatic events is a common experience across society and across the lifespan. Living through traumatic experiences also has a broad range of possible negative impacts on physical health and mental health, as well as social outcomes such as education and justice. Many in the workforce will need to be 'trauma informed' and these principles will meet the needs of most people who have lived through traumatic experiences. This framework helps people: understand the role trauma and adversity plays in the lives of people who may self-harm or are at risk of suicide; understand self-harm and suicide through a trauma informed lens; and respond in a trauma informed way to those who have used self-harm or attempted suicide.

Health Education England (HEE) and the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Competence Frameworks[5]

The frameworks, which have a range of applications, overlap in terms of their content, but help to describe the work that is required within different populations and contexts, including: working with children and young people; working with adults and older people; working with the public; and information for service users and carers.

NHS Education for Scotland Perinatal Mental Health Curricular Framework[6]

The framework sets out the different levels of knowledge and skills required by members of the Scottish workforce who have contact with mothers and their babies, fathers and partners to enable them to have positive wellbeing and good mental health during the perinatal period.

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4. https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/psychology/multiprofessional-psychology/national-trauma-training-framework.aspx

5. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks/self

6. https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/10382/perinatal-mental-health-curricular-framework

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Healthcare Improvement Scotland – 'From Observation to Intervention: A proactive, responsive and personalised care and treatment framework for acutely unwell people in mental health care'[7]

This guidance is intended to support and challenge all mental health care practitioners to move away from the traditional practice of enhanced observation and work instead towards a framework of proactive, responsive, personalised care and treatment which puts the person firmly at its centre. The approach set out in the guidance is in line with emerging evidence on new areas of practice – such as trauma-informed care, and high and low intensity psychological therapies, that may be particularly effective for people with complex mental health issues, including people at risk of self-harm or suicide.

UCL, Psychological Interventions in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – competence framework for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)[8]

The framework describes the various activities which need to be brought together to carry out clinical work in the context of CAMHS. It is not intended to prescribe what a worker should do; it makes suggestions about best practice in the light of current knowledge of the effectiveness of approaches and interventions. The framework locates competences across six "domains", each of which represents a broad area of practice. This helps users to see how the various activities associated with work in this area fit together.

7. https://ihub.scot/project-toolkits/improving-observation-practice/from-observation-to-intervention

8. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks-11

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Framework Domains

The framework adopts a public health approach to mental health improvement and suicide prevention that develops workforce capacity to improve mental health, respond to self-harm and prevent suicide across the lifespan. Knowledge and skills outlined in this framework across the 4 levels of practice are organised under the inter-related domains illustrated in Figure 1.

The baseline knowledge and skills at the 'Informed' Level are not articulated under the domains, but these provide a structure for all other levels of the framework.

Thinking About You

As well as providing support to those that we engage with, it is important that we also take time to nurture our own mental health and wellbeing. Being aware of subtle differences in our responses to workloads and to daily life pressures means that we can seek help as appropriate, either through self-management techniques (for example mindfulness, online cognitive behavioural therapy and accessing NHS Inform resources) or through more formal routes such as employee assistance programmes and occupational health programmes.

Supervision and reflective sessions (formal and informal) are equally valuable for identifying where additional support may be required, especially where these encourage good, open conversations.

Unsafe and unhealthy work practices, being subject to bullying, not being valued or listened to and poor management can impact negatively on mental wellbeing. Good work is embodied within health, safety, wellbeing and people management policy, practice and procedures. Having a mentally healthy workplace is the best way to help people disclose any issues that may negatively impact on their mental health and wellbeing, and when they may require additional help and support, whether that is whilst they are at work or returning to work. You can support this by being a positive workplace role model.
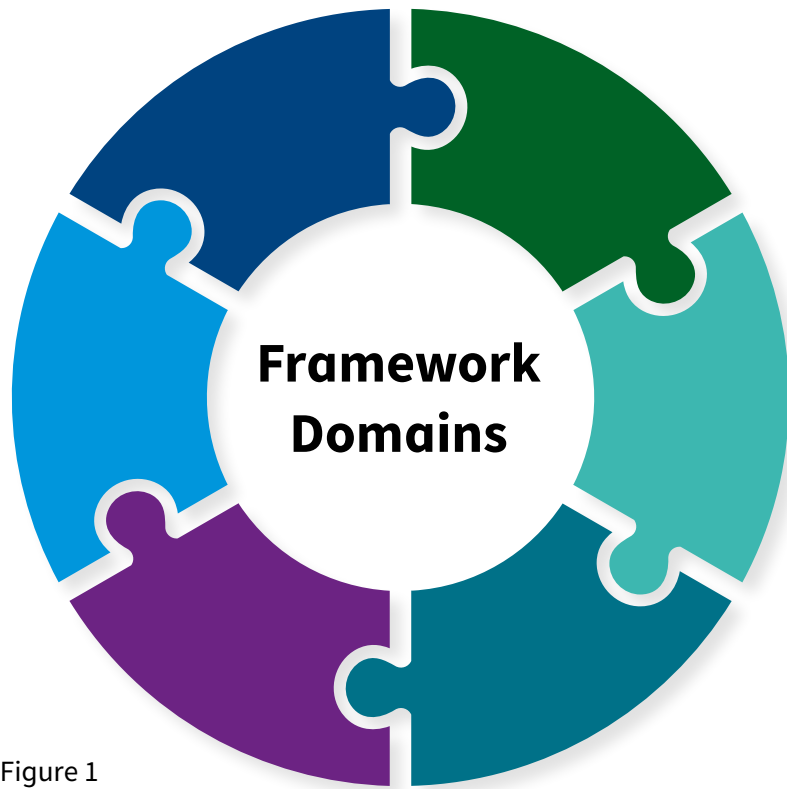
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Figure 1

1. Promote good mental health and wellbeing

2. Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination

3. Support people in distress or crisis

4. Promote resilience and recovery

5. Prevent self-harm or suicide

6. Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health

INFORMED LEVEL

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. It also encapsulates most of the wider public health workforce who need to be informed about mental health and wellbeing and be able to respond to someone who is experiencing mental distress, or mental ill health, and who might be at risk of self-harm or 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' mental health and wellbeing and contribute to supporting people experiencing mental ill health and preventing self-harm or suicide.

INFORMED LEVEL

What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
■ the definitions of mental health, wellbeing and mental ill health	■ assess and understand their own mental health and wellbeing.
■ how to understand their own mental health, what influences it, its impact on others and self, and how it can be improved	■ take responsibility for developing and nurturing their own wellbeing and seeking help as appropriate
■ what enables a mentally healthy workplace	■ contribute to enabling a mentally healthy working environment
■ how to access support in the workplace, and externally, for their own and others' mental health	■ reflect on issues relating to mental health, self-harm and suicide in terms of self, and the people they live with, work with and support, including family and friends
■ prevalence of mental ill health, self-harm and suicide in Scotland and how this effects children, young people, adults and older people	■ act as a positive role model in challenging and reducing stigma and inequalities
■ how a range of inequalities can impact on mental health and wellbeing	
■ that people experience mental distress in response to life events, and this is normal and usually transient	
■ how loneliness and isolation can negatively impact on mental health and wellbeing	
■ how stigma and discrimination impact on mental health inequalities	
■ the links between physical health wellbeing, social wellbeing and mental health	
■ how inequalities negatively impact on the life expectancy of people experiencing mental ill health	

INFORMED LEVEL

What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
■ that there is no health without mental health and the mind and body work as one system	■ respond to people experiencing mental or emotional distress by being non-judgmental, respectful and compassionate
■ the effects social media can have on mental health and wellbeing	■ start sensitive conversations, but be direct, talk openly about self-harm and suicide by asking people if they are thinking about self-harm or suicide
■ how to recognise signs that indicate someone is experiencing emotional or mental distress and how to respond	
■ that anyone can find themselves in circumstances, situations and have experiences that can lead them to consider self-harm	■ be a good listener and show they care – using skills that encourage open and collaborative discussion: open questioning, summarising, reflecting, clarifying, affirming and reacting
■ that self-harm can take many forms, including non-suicidal self-injury, and that people can self-harm in many ways	■ show an empathic understanding and appreciation of the difficulties that the person is experiencing, and recognise that feelings of distress are very real to them
■ that self-harm may be used by people as a coping strategy	
■ that anyone can find themselves in circumstances, situations and have experiences that can lead them to consider suicide	■ validate and accept the person's personal experience and perspective
■ that some groups of people have a higher risk than others of experiencing mental distress, mental ill health, and thoughts of self-harm and suicide	■ recognise their own limitations in supporting people experiencing mental ill health, or people who want to self-harm, or may be feeling suicidal
■ the impact of psychological trauma on mental health	■ adopt a trauma informed approach underpinned by the 5 principles of trauma Informed practice (safety, choice, collaboration, trust and empowerment)
■ myths and facts associated with self-harm, suicide and mental ill health	
■ the stigma and taboo associated with suicide, and how this can be influenced by personal, cultural, social beliefs and attitudes	

INFORMED LEVEL

What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
■ how to recognise when people may be at risk of self-harm, or may be feeling suicidal ■ how to ask about thoughts of self-harm and suicide ■ sources of national and local support people can access if feeling mentally distressed, at risk of self-harm, or feeling suicidal ■ how and where to signpost people to appropriate agencies, supports and resources ■ how and when to share information ■ how to access and get support for themselves, during and after dealing with complex, stressful and distressing situations	■ know when and where to refer people to if they are experiencing mental distress/ ill health, or are feeling they want to self-harm, or may be feeling suicidal ■ encourage and support people to get help and support ■ respond immediately to emergency situations and ensure people are signposted to the right support

SKILLED LEVEL

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 and self-harm and suicide prevention.

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote good mental health and wellbeing	▪ the definitions of mental health, wellbeing and mental ill health ▪ the nature and dimensions of mental health, wellbeing and mental ill health ▪ the determinants of mental health and wellbeing at an individual, community, population and structural level ▪ how positive mental health is an asset and a resource to society ▪ mental health and ill health from a life-course perspective ▪ what works to improve mental health and prevent mental ill health within their own area of work ▪ the importance of people having access to evidence–informed information, via a range of media, about mental health and how to improve their mental health	▪ integrate and align mental health improvement into daily practice and always consider mental health when supporting others ▪ promote the importance of mental wellbeing approaches ▪ communicate effectively with children, young people, adults and older people about mental health / ill health ▪ encourage and enable individuals, parents and families to talk about the main issues they are experiencing, and identify the things that are affecting their mental health, now and in the future, and how they can improve their mental health ▪ use appropriate tools and approaches that support people to build their skills and confidence in staying mentally healthy ▪ help people to develop and implement a personal or family action plan to improve their mental health ▪ enable people to access up to date appropriate information and advice when they need it and opportunities in their community to improve their mental wellbeing

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination	▪ the relationship between health equity and good mental health and wellbeing ▪ how some groups of people and populations are more at risk of mental ill health, and the barriers they may face in accessing help and support ▪ the adverse effects of stigma and discrimination in promoting positive mental health ▪ the harmful impact of stigma, discrimination and exclusion on people experiencing mental health issues ▪ that stereotypes and negativity surrounding mental ill health may mean that many people feel that they have no one to talk with ▪ how stigma is framed and reinforced by myths and language ▪ the potential for social media to have adverse or protective effects on mental health	▪ work with people, carers, families and colleagues to provide support that accepts each person for who they are regardless of age, disability, gender identity, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background ▪ consider social inequalities in their area of work and act to reduce them ▪ ensure that support and services are accessible to people who may face barriers in accessing help and support ▪ reduce and challenge discrimination and stigma against people experiencing mental health issues in their own area of practice ▪ demonstrate responsibility by challenging unhelpful language and myths ▪ raise awareness of the impact of social media on protective and adverse factors for mental health and wellbeing

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination *(continued)*	▪ how factors such as self-esteem, self-worth, self-identity and confidence impact mental health and wellbeing ▪ the impact of childhood experiences on adult mental health including the effects of trauma and adversity ▪ the principles underpinning the 'right to health' for all people with mental health issues	▪ recognise when a person is experiencing signs linked to poor self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, and explore with them ways they can be supported ▪ sensitively work with people in a way that recognises the potential impact of trauma and adversity on their mental health

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress or crisis	▪ what mental distress is, and that it can be experienced and presented in many ways ▪ that distress is a normal emotional response to poor physical and mental health, or social issues such as relationships, or financial issues ▪ the stressors and vulnerability factors that can lead to people being more at risk of experiencing mental distress or mental ill health ▪ protective factors that prevent distress and can help people who are feeling distressed ▪ how to communicate with, and support someone experiencing distress or mental ill health ▪ that self-harm is not always and indicator of suicide and that people often self-harm as a coping strategy ▪ when episodes of self-harm may indicate people are at risk of suicide ▪ the factors and behaviours that might indicate that a person is at risk of or suicide, including indictors that people need more enhanced support and intervention	▪ reflect on their own attitudes, values and practice in relation to responding to people in distress ▪ accept distressing emotions and situations, both in themselves and others ▪ communicate in a way that encourages the person to speak openly and freely, and feel that they are being respected, heard and understood ▪ use non-judgemental approaches to help people explore their troubling feelings and experiences including, brief and compassionate responses using skills in: engagement, empathy, sympathy and sensitivity ▪ establish the nature and extent of a person's distressing situation including the potential for harm or suicide

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress or crisis *(continued)*	▪ what local and national mental health services can further support people, and how to help people to seek support ▪ the meaning of crisis intervention, and the range of community support and services that people can access before, during and after experiencing a crisis ▪ how to enable urgent and emergency access to crisis care ▪ the importance of their own self-care and wellbeing when supporting people experiencing distress ▪ local child and adult protection procedures	▪ connect with local resources to support people experiencing distress in the community ▪ provide immediate support to people in distress or crisis using problem solving and solution focussed skills ▪ develop a forward plan for a brief period of continuous support or intervention ▪ refer people who are in distress or crisis for more enhanced support and intervention ▪ when and how to implement child and adult protection procedures

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide	■ local organisational policies and procedures in relation to self-harm and suicide, including crisis care protocols and know how to contribute to their implementation ■ the various complex forms that suicidal ideation can involve and present ■ that self-harm can be used by people as a coping strategy to relieve the build-up of pressure from distressing thoughts and feelings, and how it might give temporary relief from emotional pain ■ how social media can influence and promote thoughts of self-harm or suicide ■ how children and young people can be particularly influenced by social media in relation to self-harm or suicide ■ the relationship between alcohol and substance misuse and mental ill health, self-harm and suicide ■ the stages of screening and delivering an alcohol brief intervention	■ assess the risk of self-harm or suicide and in the context of wider risk factors including the person's history of previous attempts, and other risk factors such as hopelessness and alcohol use ■ provide supportive interpersonal interventions that enable people to explore their feelings of suicide and tell their story ■ respond to people who self-harm in a non-judgemental and supportive way ■ sensitively explore if people have any concerns about social media in relation to their mental health, or thoughts of self-harm or suicide ■ recognise indicators and open conversations about suicide including asking people directly about suicide ■ deliver alcohol brief interventions as appropriate to role

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide *(continued)*	■ ways of preventing suicide, including knowing about risk factors that can contribute to suicide, and how to reduce them ■ how to connect with people considering suicide and understand their circumstances, situations and feelings ■ the importance of direct and open communication and conversations with people about suicide ■ The resilience and safety aids available to people in terms of their personal situations, strengths and supports ■ when immediate urgent steps and interventions are necessary to activate an emergency response to keep everyone safe	■ increase safety for people with thoughts of self-harm or suicide ■ work with people to build and review safety plans to reduce risk and the potential for harm ■ implement immediate safety plans, including monitoring the person and activating an emergency response

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote resilience and recovery	• the concepts of resilience and recovery in relation to mental distress and mental ill health • that people with experience of mental ill health are 'experts by experience' with unique knowledge and insights to contribute • the importance of asset and strengths-based approaches at an individual and community level • the role of independent advocacy in promoting resilience and recovery • the central role of hope in recovery and how to express and enable this • the benefits of enjoyable and meaningful activities • the importance of good quality relationships, social supports and a sense of belonging in promoting mental health and wellbeing across the lifespan • the value of self-help, peer support and the wider community resources available to support individuals, their families and the wider community	• actively and meaningfully involve people in all aspects of their support • support people to draw on their unique knowledge and experience to aid their recovery journey • maximise people's involvement in making decisions and choices. • work with people, and their families, in a way that promotes their strengths and abilities, rather than focusing only on problems and deficits • Use hope appropriately and with sensitivity • signpost people to community and national supports that promote recovery and resilience • enable people to engage with their social, community and local service supports • promote the role of advocacy in supporting a person's recovery and help people access advocacy • enable people to seek ways to protect against the effects of internalising the negative views of others • recognise when people are experiencing negative impacts on their recovery linked to stigma and discrimination

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health	▪ that physical health needs for people with mental ill health are often overlooked putting people at risk of physical health inequalities ▪ what 'diagnostic overshadowing' means and the implications for their area of practice ▪ the links between physical and mental health, and that mental and physical health should be treated equally, including understanding the issue of 'parity of esteem' ▪ the impact of loneliness, isolation, alienation on physical and mental health and quality of life ▪ the role of self-efficacy, self-esteem and control in supporting physical health improvement ▪ how wider inequities can impact of people's mental and physical health including poverty, living conditions, employment and opportunities ▪ the difference in life expectancy for people experiencing mental ill health ▪ that people with mental ill health may be more at risk of engaging in lifestyle behaviours that could compromise their physical health, and understand the reasons for this	▪ integrate mental health improvement into their own area of work ▪ address mental and physical health holistically ▪ support people to engage in valued and meaningful social activities ▪ help people to access services to improve poverty, living conditions and promote employment and other opportunities. ▪ support people to identify and implement health behaviour changes to improve their physical and mental health

SKILLED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health *(continued)*	■ the physical health problems that people with mental ill health may be at more risk of, including cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, obesity and diabetes ■ the impact of medications prescribed for mental ill health that can negatively affect people's physical health ■ barriers that people with mental ill health may face in accessing screening and interventions for physical health problems	■ as appropriate to role – support people to access routine screening to identify and prevent physical health problems, and receive treatment for any existing problems ■ adopt a Right to Health approach for those in their care

ENHANCED LEVEL

The **'Enhanced Level'** outlines 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 outlined at this level become increasingly role and context specific.**

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote good mental health and wellbeing	■ national and local policy and strategic priorities for mental health improvement ■ the importance of pre-pregnancy / perinatal and early years development to lifetime mental health ■ how neurodevelopment difficulties can impact on mental health and increase the risk of developing mental ill health ■ how the effects of chronic and life limiting illnesses can impact on mental health and increase the risk of developing mental ill health ■ the nature and qualities of positive mental health promoting environments across the lifespan ■ the nature and dimensions of gender-based violence, and its impact on mental health ■ how people including the LGBT and ethnic minorities communities may face particular issues that impact on their mental health and wellbeing ■ factors that influence mental health and wellbeing in older adults, including risk and protective factors ■ the negative impact of loneliness and social isolation on mental health and the value of connectedness on mental wellbeing	■ translate priorities and strategy into their practice ■ support early detection of mental ill health across the lifespan ■ apply an understanding of life course approaches to mental health improvement in their specific sphere of practice ■ apply an understanding of how particular health issues and experiences can impact on mental health and the risk of mental ill health in their specific sphere of practice ■ work with people, families and communities to promote mentally healthy promoting environments across the lifespan ■ work collaboratively with relevant local agencies to support mentally healthy promoting activities at a community level ■ promote the value of, and apply knowledge and skills in anticipatory care, prevention and early interventions for at risk groups

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote good mental health and wellbeing *(continued)*	■ the range of national and local agencies who contribute to mental health improvement ■ how to identify the existing resources and strengths within a community and the expertise within the voluntary and wider community sectors	■ provide support for change, development and capacity building in the community, based on asset approaches ■ as appropriate to role, provide consultation, education, support and advice to other staff across a range of primary and secondary care services

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination	■ the role that inequalities play at an individual, community and population level to increase the risk of mental ill health, self-harm or suicide ■ the individual, physical, social and economic determinants that impact on mental ill health, self-harm or suicide from a risk and protective perspective ■ the role of social exclusion, isolation and lack of access to services and support on mental ill health, self-harm or suicide ■ the impact that stigma and discrimination can have on people including isolation, and negative impacts on self-worth, self-esteem and self-identity ■ that stigma exists at a several levels including public, societal, systems, structures and individual levels ■ how self-stigma may impact people's ability to access support and services ■ how stigma can be multi-factorial, and people may experience multiple stigmas in relation to mental health, and wider equality issues	■ apply knowledge of equality and diversity issues to address inequalities and support equality of access to support and services ■ support people in a way that is sensitive to the fact that they may have experienced stigma and discrimination ■ develop practice to recognise and reduce stigma and discrimination and continually improve practice and services to ensure inclusion and equity of access

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination *(continued)*	■ how to improve health outcomes for individuals, families and communities to address inequalities and support people's access to occupational, vocational and leisure opportunities ■ the core principles and responsibilities they have in applying the Human Rights and Equality Acts to their practice, including the PANEL principles	■ support people to access advice and services to enhance their opportunities to engage in occupational, vocational and leisure opportunities ■ apply a human rights approach to their practice by adopting the PANEL principles

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress or crisis	■ the range of evidence informed and person-centred approaches to risk assessment and management to ensure safety ■ how to assess and manage risk when people are presenting in mental distress and crisis ■ the role and limitations of using risk assessment scores as an accurate predication of risk ■ the importance of relationships, partnership working, and meaningful involvement of the person, their families and friends in assessing risk of harm and managing crisis.	■ apply strengths based and outcome focussed approaches to working with people ■ work alongside people in a way that values, respects and explores the uniqueness and meaning of their lived experiences of mental distress/ill health ■ develop a trusting partnership working relationship from the outset, which enables people to make choices and share decision making about their care ■ use appreciative enquiry approaches to support people to explore their situation ■ carry out a collaborative assessment and develop a person-centred plan to manage distress, which includes the views and concerns of family, friends and carers involved ■ determine appropriate care and support interventions based on people's assessed needs and strengths ■ use enhanced interpersonal skills, in a way that engenders trust and reduces distress, to relate to, and support people, who may be highly distressed

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress or crisis (continued)	■ the principles and practice of positive risk taking and risk enablement ■ the principles and practice and different methods involved in developing safety and security plans ■ how to support people who have self-harmed, or attempted suicide and those more widely affected ■ how to promote recovery and work with people to develop plans to prevent crisis and relapse	■ undertake risk assessments and risk enablement plans in partnership with the person requiring support, maximising the positive opportunities to involve their families and friends ■ apply knowledge of the health and social factors that can cause crisis and support prevention ■ work with the person in distress to develop a safety and security plan to meet their needs and maximise their strengths, maximising the positive opportunities to involve their families and friends ■ regularly review risk assessment and safety plans attending to dynamic risk factors and what is currently happening for the person ■ implement processes and therapeutic interventions to prevent, recognise and respond early to crisis to minimize stress, distress or harm ■ use knowledge and skills in early intervention, crisis resolution and prevention to inform service developments

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress or crisis (continued)	■ how to work within and across agencies to co-ordinate responses ■ the range of human rights-based legislation that can be applied to protect the safety and human rights of people in receipt of support and intervention ■ how to apply appropriate legislation and guidance when issues of child and adult support and protection are areas of concern ■ how to assess capacity and the principles and practice of supported decision making ■ how to respect diversity and promote equality when people are experiencing distress and crisis	■ work with others to manage risk and contribute to risk enablement ■ apply legal frameworks and professional standards to protect the human rights of people in receipt of support and intervention ■ apply appropriate legislation and guidance when issues of child and adult support and protection are areas of concern ■ apply appropriate legislation and procedures when assessing individual capacity to consent ■ apply appropriate legislation and procedures if a person lacks the capacity to consent, while always maximising their involvement in decision making, and the positive opportunities to involve their families and friends ■ practice in a way that respects the ways in which people differ, and how this can influence: the way they experience life; the way that they present to services and which interventions might be most helpful for them

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide	■ how national strategic priorities for self-harm and suicide prevention are being translated into local implementation plans, and the implications for their role ■ how to carry out a mental health assessment, and when appropriate to role, a mental state examination ■ how to undertake a comprehensive assessment of risk, which includes the person's needs, strengths and assets ■ how to carry out person and family-centred assessments, that explore predisposing, precipitating, maintaining and protective factors for the prevention of self-harm or suicide ■ how to agree levels of information sharing and seeking with family members, supportive adults, parents or carers, following local protocols ■ how to assess a person's wider circumstances (inc. family, social networks, living environment, economic/employment issues)	■ translate priorities and strategy into their specific spheres of practice ■ work in partnership with people, and their families where involved, to develop an intervention and safety plan ■ apply knowledge of health and social factors that can lead to self-harm or suicide ■ positively and proactively work with people who are at risk of self-harm or suicide, applying evidence informed models of suicide prevention, intervention and harm reduction to reduce risk, and maximising the positive opportunities to involve their families and friends ■ work in partnership with people and agencies to carry out a comprehensive assessment of risk, needs and strengths in the context of the person's wider circumstances

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide *(continued)*	▪ how to appreciate the lived experience of people and their families and how to facilitate their participation, consent and choice about treatment and care ▪ when it is indicated that people may need admission to hospital, or other specialist support ▪ the requirements of formal assessment of capacity under the terms of legislation ▪ the principles and practice of safeguarding legislation including the Human Rights Act, the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act, the Adults with Incapacity Act (Scotland), the Adult Support and Protection Act (Scotland), the Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act and The United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child ▪ the range of psychological interventions that may be indicated when a person may be at risk of self-harm or suicide ▪ the range of pharmacological interventions that may be indicated when a person may be at risk of self-harm or suicide ▪ how to manage safe and person-centred transitions across services and between agencies	▪ work with people in a way that respects their lived experiences and supports their choice and ability to control what happens to them ▪ apply human rights principles to inform decisions about the support, care and forward treatment people may need ▪ enable people to access, or deliver evidence informed psychological intervention or therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) ▪ co-ordinate people's transitions across services and supports

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide *(continued)*	■ how to promote and deliver therapeutic interventions to people admitted to hospital based on evidence and rights based best practice ■ how hospital admission, and associated restrictive practices such as observation, other deprivations of liberty, and restraint can lead to trauma and re-traumatisation	**If a person is admitted to hospital:** ■ provide person-centred rather than purely protocol driven care ■ align the purpose of admission to hospital and their needs, with person-centred care planning, including increasing access to a range of therapeutic interventions ■ create physical environments which are fit for purpose, therapeutic and as far as possible hazard free ■ use preventative early therapeutic interventions in response to signs of mental health deterioration ■ deliver a wide range of interpersonal, rights based and person-centred therapeutic interventions, and work with people to promote their safety ■ practice in a way, that while maximising people's safety, maintains people's human rights, and uses the least restrictive approaches available, with a focus on positive intervention, particularly during periods of continuous support or intervention ■ practice in a way that is highly sensitive to the fact that admission to hospital may be traumatic, and may lead to experiences of trauma and re-traumatisation

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Prevent self-harm or suicide *(continued)*	**If a suicide happens:** ■ how to undertake critical incident and suicide reviews to enhance learning, improvement and reduce risk ■ how to provide support to families, communities and staff following a death by suicide ■ how bereavement following death by suicide is different from other bereavements, and commonly involves increased shock, trauma and guilt ■ the stigma and isolation often felt by friends, families and communities following a death by suicide	**If a suicide happens:** ■ support families, and other important individuals, to understand and navigate the systems of investigation and review ■ signpost to, or if appropriate to role, provide counselling to those bereaved by suicide ■ participate in critical incident and suicide reviews ■ apply learning identified from critical incident and suicide reviews

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote resilience and recovery	■ The protective and vulnerability factors which promote and compromise mental health resilience and recovery across the life span ■ the factors that enable the development of resilience in children and young people ■ early age strategies and interventions that support and promote good mental health and wellbeing for all ■ the importance to children and young people of supportive relationships with parents, carers, and trusted adults ■ what social prescribing/community referral is and how this can promote recovery ■ what factors protect or interfere with mental health resilience in older adults including active and purposeful living, and social and community connections ■ the importance of the person's perspective on their mental ill health, in terms of their openness, attitude and acceptance	■ work with families, carers and trusted adults in a way that builds mental health literacy and improves resilience in children and young people ■ engage with people in a way that uses personal qualities, experiences and interpersonal skills to develop and maintain therapeutic, recovery focused relationships ■ adopt strengths and asset-based approaches to understand the lived experience of people with mental ill health ■ facilitate people's links to locally based community resources which help to promote recovery ■ facilitate people's access to community referral and social prescribing initiatives ■ practise in a way which promotes self-determination and the value of people's expertise in the management of their own mental health

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote resilience and recovery *(continued)*	■ how to promote and develop recovery focussed practice in way that fosters people's self-determination and self-management ■ how to work with people in a personal outcome focussed way ■ how to evaluate the factors that may help or hinder recovery and critically reflect on own practice in relation to these ■ evidence informed self-help approaches and self-management tools	■ maximise self-help and self-management using a range of approaches and tools that facilitate wellness and recovery ■ support people to plan their recovery journeys using person centred and personal outcomes focussed approaches ■ promote the establishment of positive, hope-promoting relationships with people and negotiate the parameters within each relationship

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health	■ the range of health enhancing, and behaviour change approaches that can support people to improve their physical health ■ how to ensure and enable people's equity of access to universal physical health screening programmes and primary and secondary health care ■ the importance of good work in relation to self-purpose, self-value and health ■ the range of social care options that may improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health, including access to self-directed support ■ the important role and contribution that family members/ informal carers play in improving the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health ■ the rights of carers as set out in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016	As appropriate to role: ■ Support people experiencing mental ill health to make and maintain informed choices about improving their health and wellbeing as part of their recovery, including: • health behaviour and physical health improvement • ensuring and supporting access and engagement with universal preventative health screening programmes • ensuring access to welfare support e.g. financial management, benefits uptake, employment, and housing support • supporting and ensuring access to social care, including self-directed support ■ support families and carers to attend to their own physical and mental health ■ recognise and support access to interventions that respond to indicators of physical and psychological ill health among families, and carers and ensure their rights are met

ENHANCED LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health *(continued)*	■ the adverse impact that psychotropic medications and poly-pharmacy may have on people's physical health, including adverse drug reactions ■ the need for trauma informed approaches where medical procedures are required	■ provide physical health interventions including assessment, monitoring and delivery of specific physical health care and treatments appropriate to people's needs, and the worker's scope of practice and service context ■ assess and respond to the needs of people with more complex mental ill health and co-morbid physical health needs, initiating support from primary and secondary health care services, including pharmacy if a medication review/reconciliation is indicated. ■ identify indicators of physical ill health and proactively respond to signs of deteriorating physical health ■ support people during medical procedures and understand how their trauma history might make the experience more difficult for them

SPECIALIST LEVEL

The **'Specialist Level'** outlines 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. **The knowledge and skills outlined at this level are role and context specific and should be interpreted in this way.**

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote good mental health and wellbeing	■ integrate and influence mental health as a priority within policy and strategy both locally and nationally ■ how to assess and articulate the mental health needs and assets of specific populations, and any inequities experienced by populations, communities and groups ■ the evidence informed strategies, delivered at a population level, to address the determinants of mental health and ill health ■ how to create organisations that nurture and sustain the mental health of employees	■ act to mitigate any negative impacts of wider policy on mental health and wellbeing ■ promote the value of mental health and wellbeing and the reduction of inequalities across settings and agencies ■ set strategic direction and vision for mental health improvement and communicate it effectively to improve population and community health and wellbeing ■ translate findings about mental health and ill health, and community needs and assets, into appropriate recommendations for action, policy decisions and service commissioning/delivery/provision ■ advocate for public mental health and address mental ill health, as central to reducing inequalities and creating thriving communities and economies ■ promote and enable 'mentally healthy' workplaces

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Tackle mental health inequalities, stigma and discrimination	■ the wider environmental influences on health including the availability of good quality housing, green space, employment, education and access to social and cultural opportunities ■ the key areas where there is strong evidence for action such as poverty, unemployment, childhood adversity, low income, social isolation, and problem debt ■ the complex social processes associated with stigma and the impact this has on people experiencing mental ill health and their friends and families ■ how evidence informed, and theoretical models can enhance understanding of the causes and consequences of stigma at all levels ■ the evidence for the strengths and limitations of approaches to reduce stigma including: national campaigns; targeted educational approaches; activism and protesting; and social movement approaches to improve mental health literacy; and the promotion of peer support	■ use data to analyse and understand the prevalence of stigma and discrimination as appropriate to their role and work context ■ work with others to reduce stigma that occurs at different levels including self, public, institutional and service levels, as appropriate to their role and work context ■ maximise community links to enhance vocational and employment opportunities for people ■ lead, or contribute to, national and local approaches to: campaigning; providing general education; targeted educational approaches; and mental health literacy approaches – aimed at specific populations and groups of people who experience stigma and discrimination ■ work across agencies to promote and develop the availability of peer support as a positive way to address stigma and discrimination, including ensuring people's access to independent advocacy ■ support the development and promotion of the user voice in highlighting stigmatising and discriminatory practice and solution-based action ■ directly involve and engage people with lived experience influence service improvement and redesign

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress and crisis and prevent self-harm and suicide	■ the range of psychological theories and models which are relevant to understanding distress and crisis intervention ■ the theory and practice underpinning evidence informed psychosocial and psychological intervention for people experiencing mental distress, mental ill health, and crisis situations ■ how to provide simultaneous and co-ordinated multi-agency intervention when a person has a co-occurring mental health and substance misuse difficulties ■ how to carry out a comprehensive, person-centred assessment and develop a management plan for people at risk of suicide ■ how to carry out a mental state assessment and examination and to assess a person's functioning across contexts ■ the evidence from research about opportunities and limitations in accurately predicting risk and preventing self-harm or suicide ■ how to enable people's access to, or initiate delivery of psychological interventions or therapies ■ the risk factors associated with transition periods across services, supports and agencies for children, young people, adults and older adults	■ enable other workers to develop distress brief intervention knowledge and skills by providing consultation, training and supervision as appropriate ■ promote systems that enable a structured, proactive and early response to the person's situation through anticipatory care, early recognition, communication and action planning ■ lead and impact evaluate service developments that increase people's access to evidence informed, and person-centred psychological therapies and interventions ■ lead the development and evaluation of approaches to risk management and enablement and evaluate the impact on human rights and recovery focused practice ■ demonstrate leadership in advanced decision making in complex situations ■ lead the development of systems and processes that support positive transitions for people

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Support people in distress and crisis and prevent self-harm and suicide *(continued)*	■ the traumatic effect of suicide on those affected, including families, friends, communities and workers involved ■ how to use local and national suicide and self-harm data to inform the development and implementation of cross-agency responses and strategies ■ how to lead team and service developments in the support and delivery of therapeutic interventions for people during crisis and acute periods of mental ill health ■ how to able to respond and learn from incidents and data from a national, local and organisational level to inform local plans for the prevention of suicide and postvention plans ■ how to ensure support and pastoral care is available to staff, families and communities following a death by suicide and use learning to inform future preventive and postvention approaches	■ work with agencies to support the production of postvention strategies, policies and supports ■ analyse and interpret national and local data to inform local plans for the prevention of suicide and postvention plans ■ develop service responses to provide therapeutic interventions for people during crisis and acute periods of mental distress ■ develop postvention approaches to support staff, families, wider groups and communities impacted by suicide ■ foster and maintain an organisational culture that is both compassionate and supportive, while seeking to learn lessons, and critically review incidents or the systems failures that could have contributed to a death by suicide

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Promote resilience and recovery	■ how to evaluate the factors that may help or hinder resilience and recovery at an individual, team, service and community level ■ the relationship between enabling self-direction and the potential impact of the power imbalance between workers and service users, particularly in situations involving compulsory powers. ■ the barriers to implementing self-direction within statutory services and how these might be overcome ■ how to evaluate service-led approaches to risk and risk management and the impact they can have on recovery focussed practice	■ influence and develop team/service approaches to enable the promotion of peoples' self-determination and expertise in the management of their own mental health ■ lead and evaluate team/service developments that maximise self-help using a range of approaches and tools that facilitate recovery ■ evaluate the factors in teams and services that may help or hinder recovery and develop plans for practice development and improvement ■ promote the benefits of, and enable informal and formal peer support opportunities ■ plan, develop and implement community engagement approaches to build safer communities, through enabling people to be resilient and support others

SPECIALIST LEVEL

Domain	What people need to know (knowledge)	What people can do (skills)
Improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health	■ how to enable and apply the theory and practice of health promotion and health behaviour change approaches to improve the quality and length of life for people living with mental ill health ■ how to use local data to analyse the physical health needs of people with mental health problems to facilitate enhancements and improvements ■ how to ensure that service users are involved in designing accessible primary and secondary health care ■ the different levels of intervention needed to ensure parity of esteem at an individual and systems level	■ use data to advise strategic partners to determine priorities and outcomes to achieve improvements in quality and cost-effectiveness of treatments for mental illness and associated co-morbidities ■ facilitate the delivery of health promotion and health behaviour change programmes to improve the quality and length of life for people with mental health problems ■ meaningfully involve service users in the design and development of accessible primary and secondary health care ■ develop and coordinate pathways to ensure accessible and appropriate services, supports and interventions to promote parity of esteem at an individual and systems level

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

Faculty of Public /
Mental Health Foundation:
Better Mental Health for All

Glasgow University
Suicidal Behaviour Research Lab

Health Care Improvement Scotland
**From Observation to Intervention
– a proactive, responsive and
personalised care and treatment
framework for acutely unwell people
in mental health care**

Health Education England
**Mental Health Awareness training
for the health workforce**

Health Education England
We need to talk about suicide

Healthy Working Lives

Mental health at work

NHS Education for Scotland
Autism Training Framework

NHS Education for Scotland
Perinatal Curricular Framework

NHS Education for Scotland
**Knowledge Network
2019 Literature/Evidence Review:
the impact of training in suicide
prevention or mental health
awareness (for those who provide
services to the public), in terms
of the impact on the recipients'
knowledge and behaviours about
suicide or reducing suicide-related
outcomes for the public**
Available on request from NES

NHS Education for Scotland
**Knowledge Network
2019 Literature/Evidence Review:
The effectiveness of psychological
interventions or therapies for suicide
prevention**
Available on request from NES

NHS Education for Scotland
**Transforming Psychological Trauma:
A knowledge and skills framework
for the Scottish workforce**

NHS Education for Scotland
**'Opening Doors'
Trauma Informed Practice
for the Workforce**

NHS Health Scotland
Good Mental Health for All

RESOURCES

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
It's okay to ask – a series of short films aimed to encourage young people to ask for help if they are thinking about suicide

NHS Health Scotland
The Art of Conversation: a guide to talking, listening and reducing stigma surrounding suicide

Public Health England
Various resources to: support national and local organisations to improve the public's mental health, and improve the lives of people with mental health problems

Public Health England
Public Mental Health leadership and workforce development framework: 'Confidence, competence and commitment

Public Health England
Health Matters: Reducing health inequalities in mental health

Scottish Government
Alcohol Framework

Scottish Government
Public Health Priorities for Scotland

Scottish Government
Mental Health Strategy: The Scottish Government's approach to mental health from 2017–2027

Scottish Government
Scotland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan: Every Life Matters

Skills for Care
Skills for Health and Health Education England: Mental Health Core Skills Education and Training Framework

UCL
Psychological Interventions in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – competence framework for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)

UCL & Health Education England
Self Harm and Suicide Prevention Competence Frameworks

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank and acknowledge the valuable contribution of the following people involved in developing this framework, including those people who acted as critical readers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Samantha McEwan
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Mental Health Improvement & Suicide Prevention Framework

This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages. Please contact us on **0131 656 3200** or email **altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk**.

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