

Collaborative Efforts to Target Men for Suicide Prevention: A Case Study

Introduction:

This case study examines a collaborative initiative undertaken by Harmless' Tomorrow Project to target men for suicide prevention in a local area with a high rate of male suicides. Through social auditing and collaboration with a local GP practice, the project aimed to identify individuals exposed to suicide and exhibiting "red flag" behaviours, ensuring they received appropriate support and intervention.

Context and Social Audit:

Recognizing the high rate of suicides among males in the local area, Harmless' Tomorrow Project conducted extensive social auditing to gain insights into the specific challenges and needs of the community. This involved attending events, engaging in conversations with community members, observing online discussions and social media discourse. The social audit provided valuable information on the narrative at the local level, informing the subsequent collaborative efforts.

Collaboration with the GP Practice:

Armed with the insights gathered from social auditing, Harmless' Tomorrow Project approached a local GP practice to address their concerns regarding a range of males who exhibited worrisome behaviours. After thorough ethical and practical discussions, a collaborative agreement was established between the project and the GP practice.

Information Sharing and Collaborative Intervention:

To facilitate information sharing without compromising individuals' medical records, it was agreed that a factual note would be made on the individuals' cover sheet, stating "known to have experienced loss by suicide." This allowed the GP practice to be alerted to the potential risk factors and engage in further conversations about the individuals' mental health and emotional needs.

Outcome Evaluation:

Over the course of the next six months, the GPs used the information provided by the Tomorrow Project as a prompt to inquire further into the reported individuals' experiences. The findings were remarkable, as 90% of those reported to the GP practice led to conversations about mental health and emotional well-being, even if the individuals initially sought treatment for physical ailments.

Key Learnings:

1. **The Value of Information Sharing:** This initiative demonstrated the significance of collaborating and combining information to profile individuals at risk. Sharing information between organizations enabled a proactive response and ensured that individuals in need received the support they required.
2. **Asserting the Offer of Help and Discourse:** By initiating conversations about mental health and suicidality, even in non-mental health settings, the collaborative effort empowered individuals to open up about their concerns. This approach facilitated early intervention and referral to appropriate services.
3. **Empowering GPs through Collaboration:** Collaborating with GPs in suicide prevention efforts allowed for a broader reach and facilitated discussions about mental health during routine medical visits. This initiative helped identify individuals at risk and ensured they were referred to suitable services.

Conclusion:

The collaborative work between Harmless' Tomorrow Project and the local GP practice in targeting men for suicide prevention demonstrated the effectiveness of information sharing and community-level intelligence. By leveraging social auditing, the project identified individuals exposed to suicide and engaged in collaborative interventions that prompted conversations about mental health. This case study emphasizes the value of collaboration and offers insights for future suicide prevention endeavours.

End statement:

Harmless' Tomorrow Project continues to work across the UK to support suicide prevention initiatives. If you would like to learn more about our work or explore pilot projects in your locality, please feel free to get in touch.

We work across the U.K. to support suicide prevention endeavours so if you'd like to know more or work on a pilot of work for your locality, please do get in touch.

