

# **chooselife**

A national strategy and action plan  
to prevent suicide in Scotland

## **Background to Local Action Plan**

### **Renfrewshire**

**December 2004**

## Action Plan Team Profile

**Full Name (of Planning Group):** Choose Life Steering Group

**Remit:** Implementation of Local Choose Life Action Plan

**Chair:** Elaine McKenna / Stephen McLellan

**Name:** Elaine McKenna

**Designation:** Senior Resource Officer

**Organisation:** Renfrewshire Council, Social Work Department

**Name:** Stephen McLellan

**Designation:** Chief Executive

**Organisation:** Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health

<b>Number and dates of Meetings held 2003-2004:</b>	11 meetings, 2 events to mark Suicide Prevention Day and Mental Health Awareness Week. 19 Jan, 25 Feb, 29 Mar, April, 11 May, 16 June, 28 June development day, 26 Aug, 10 Sep, 6 Oct, 16 Nov. Argyll and Clyde Choose Life Network 28 Sep, 9 Nov.
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### Members

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Carol Copstick	Staff Tutor - PSD & Guidance	Education Department
Helen Bryce	Education Advisor	Education Department
Angela Moran	Clinical Nursing Manager	Paisley Community Mental Health Team
Elaine Corcoran	Clinical Nursing Manager	Child & Family Psychiatry
Sandra Stuart	Development Officer	ACUMEN - Users & Carers Network
	Liaison Officer	Strathclyde Police
Jan Henderson	Senior Health Promotion Officer	NHS Argyll & Clyde
Richard Leckorman	Adult Resource Worker	Choose Life - Renfrewshire
Lynne Gilmour	Young Persons Resource Officer	Choose Life - Renfrewshire
Maureen Kelly	Public Awareness & Training Worker	Choose Life - Renfrewshire
David Hart	Senior Officer	Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health
Loui Larkin	Education Officer	Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health

## **Local Information**

### **Choose Life and Community Planning**

Choose Life Renfrewshire reports to the Health and Social Care group which forms part of the structure and process for Community Planning.

Community planning is a structure and process whereby local stakeholders come together to agree and implement a joint vision to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of their community. Renfrewshire's community plan 'A Pattern for Partnership 2000 - 2010' provides an overarching framework within which plans, strategies and partnerships can be placed. One guiding principal and theme is social inclusion and Choose Life fits well within this framework.

Tackling social exclusion is a significant issue and is relevant to implementation of the National Programme for Mental Health and Wellbeing and Choose Life. Assessing barriers to inclusion recognises links associated with vulnerability to poverty, discrimination or disadvantage for reasons of gender, race or disability. Other barriers such as poor health, homelessness or substance misuse are also recognised.

Choose Life aims to address the needs of people who are particularly vulnerable to exclusion as well as the wider needs of the community . The action plan outlines objectives and priorities and the steps taken to take account of these issues.

### **Renfrewshire Profile**

Renfrewshire with a population of almost 178,000, is the fourth largest local authority area in the west of Scotland, extending west from Ralston on the south-western boundary of Glasgow, as far as Queenside Muir at Lochwinnoch. Although predominately urban in nature, with a major settlement in Paisley and smaller towns such as Renfrew, Johnstone, Elderslie and Erskine, there are also a number of small commuter villages such as Houston, Lochwinnoch and Bridge of Weir. Some population trends worth noting include estimates that

- The population of Renfrewshire is expected to stay fairly constant between now and 2010
- The older population will rise relative to the population as a whole
- The number of one person households will increase significantly
- The young adult population will reduce significantly and the working age population will continue to decrease
- At the time of the last census 1.52% of the population described themselves as being of minority ethnic origin
- Recent estimates suggest that approximately 40% of the Renfrewshire population may have needs relating to indicators of deprivation or disadvantage

## **Suicide and Undetermined Intent**

The significance of the local profile is relevant in attempting to identify trends and take into account a complex ranges of factors to address suicide risk. Suicide rates vary with age. The second most common cause of death in men under 45 and in women between the ages of 25 and 44. The highest rates of suicide have been found among older people particularly men over 85 - reference Mental Health Briefing - Mental Health Foundation. The incidence of mental health problems in the community and analysis of hospital admission rates suggest more women than men experience problems such as anxiety and depression. The link here may be that men might be reluctant to admit problems or express mental health problems in a different way and so do not gain access to sources of help. All forms of mental illness carry an increased risk of suicide.

There are a number of factors that influence the likelihood of suicide. These include:

- Illness - mental or physical illness, drug or alcohol misuse
- Personal factors eg social support
- Stressful life events eg loss of job, bereavement
- Wider cultural environment changes in economic climate
- Access the methods

The analysis of different risk factors can add to our understanding of suicide trends. The likelihood of a person taking his or her own life will depend upon a combination of risk and protective factors within their own environment. Nevertheless an analysis can also provide ideas about where to target suicide prevention.

The findings by the recent study undertaken by NHS Argyll & Clyde Information Services Department attempts to draw out more information about the above factors.

The NHS Argyll & Clyde Information Services Department produced baseline statistics in 2003 to assist in the preparation of the local action plan. These set out for Argyll & Clyde residents, by local authority area by gender and age band, over a number of years the numbers and rates of suicides and acute hospital discharges following attempted suicide.

It was recognised that the original baseline had limitations and, in particular:

- There was no linkage between people attempting suicide and actual suicides
- Did not include information on people using mental health services

The Information Services Department have undertaken a study in 2004 attempting to address the above gaps in information.

The detailed findings by gender and local authority area are available on request. The main findings can be summarised as follows:

In the majority of cases, attempted suicide was a "one off" event. Although there are variations between areas it appears that overall 53% of the Argyll and Clyde residents who committed suicide had not had a prior hospital admission. This supports the thrust of the Choose Life initiative being targeted to develop community capacity and community development.

The study was useful in establishing the referral criteria for the Renfrewshire Choose Life initiative targeting intervention for people who do not have contact with services.

The Public Awareness and Training element of the initiative is focused on capacity building and partnership work to reach a wide range of people.

# Linking with National Policy at Local Level

## Introduction

The Choose Life Initiative in Renfrewshire was developed in conjunction with key partners to deliver a dedicated service to address suicide and deliberate self harm. A key function of the initiative is to work in conjunction with a range of services, community, user and carer groups to promote awareness and positive action in Renfrewshire.

The opportunity to outline progress on implementation of Renfrewshires Action Plan will reflect progress achievements and highlight action for the next year.

Partnership has been crucial to the effective implementation of the initiative in Renfrewshire and will continue to be so in the future. The steering group, Choose Life Initiative in conjunction with the many contributions from people working in services or accessing services are to be commended for their openness and willingness to become involved.

It is hoped that the following report reflects a genuine commitment to embrace the aims of the national strategy by local action to engage with people throughout Renfrewshire.

The Action Plan for Renfrewshire 2003 set out actions over 3 years, the work plan for 2004 is as follows:

- Recruitment and Induction of Choose Life staff
- Launch initiative in Renfrewshire
- Establish interagency and joint work
- Mapping exercise to identify gaps
- Identify priority groups and referral process
- Establish evaluation and consultation with service users and carers
- Establish protocols
- Establish self help groups
- Establish and deliver training and awareness raising on suicide and deliberate self harm to a minimum of 100 individuals

The following report outlines progress in delivering the above actions and sets out action for 2005

## **Choose Life Renfrewshire**

The action plan for 2003 proposed the recruitment of three workers over 3 years to work on three discrete areas. The recruitment process was started in December 2004 with staff taking up posts between April - June 2004.

- Maureen Kelly - Public Awareness and Training Worker
- Lynne Gilmour - Young Persons Resource Worker
- Richard Leckerman - Adult Resource Worker

### **1. Establishing Choose Life in Renfrewshire**

The team met with the Steering Group at the end of June 2004 as part of an induction and development programme to clarify roles, remit and agree action over the next 6 months.

The team quickly made links with organisations locally and established a workload in line with their respective remit.

The Choose Life Steering Group role was primarily focused on overseeing local implementation.

The work can be summarised as follows:

- The Choose Life Team visited and gave a presentation to mainstream services including Area Teams, Older Adults team, Hospitals, Housing, Education, Drug Service, Courts, Prison, Paisley Partnership, Universities and Colleges, local voluntary and user organisations.
- Links were made with national organisations for example Breathing Space, Cruse, The Samaritans.
- Referral, assessment and recording systems have been established
- Resource library and directory of local services established.
- Development of literature about Choose Life including local contact information and CRISIS card.

Local contact information includes:

- Information on Training Workshops
- Information for Service Providers
- Information for Service Users
- Information on Workers Telephone Support Surgery
- Staff Support Network

Questionnaires for service providers and service users have been developed along with evaluation proformas for all aspects of intervention by the Choose Life Team.

The questionnaires and evaluation proformas have and will continue to provide helpful information for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the initiative as a whole.

### **2. Launch September 10th 2004 World Suicide Prevention Day**

#### **Paisley Town Hall**

The Choose Life Team organised this event to mark World Suicide Prevention Day and promote awareness of the Choose Life Initiative locally. The event was targeted at statutory, voluntary and community organisations in Renfrewshire.

Positive use of the media resulted in more inquiries being made to the Choose Life Team, examples of activity includes:

- QFM interviewed and broadcast through out the day
- David Haynan patron of Choose Life spoke at the launch

- Reporting of event in Paisley Daily Express and Glasgow Herald
- Theatre Nemo performed a short drama on suicide and self harm
- Market Place stands from for example - See Me, Breathing Space, Mental Health Organisations, ACUMEN, User and Carer Network. The launch generated interest in Choose Life Renfrewshire particularly in relation to the training offered by the team.
- Further promotion of Choose Life Renfrewshire has been achieved through the Renfrewshire Council Community Magazine - circulation of 165,000. Paisley Partnership - circulation 35,000. Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health newsletter.

### **3. Mental Health Awareness Week October 2004**

Choose Life in conjunction with Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health had a pivotal role in co-ordinating and organising activities during the week at various locations throughout Renfrewshire. Paisley Town Hall, Charleston Centre, Shopping Precincts for example in Paisley and Braehead.

### **4. Referrals to Choose Life Renfrewshire**

53% of people who completed suicide in 2002-03 had no contact with services.

#### **4.1 Referral Criteria**

People who have no contact with services are given priority. For people whom mainstream services have proved ineffectual will also receive priority.

Where people have existing support information and advice will be given to those providing support. Consideration of both the needs of an individual and the professional or carer involved will be taken into account.

Referrals are accepted by telephone from any source including self referral. A person will be seen within seven days of referral.

The nature and duration of individual work aims to

**be** - needs led  
 - promote choice  
 - peripatetic  
 - holistic

**promote** - suicide awareness  
 - information and advice  
 - identify underlying causes

**Provide** - risk assessment  
 - harm reduction  
 - coping strategies  
 - emotional support

**intervention** - short term up to 8 weeks  
 - dependent on need  
 - sign post on to local services  
 - specific to their needs

#### **Referrals for September - November 2004**

30 referrals have been received during this period 8 males and 22 females.

12 referrals under 18 years of age and 18 referrals over age 18.

#### **4.2 Telephone Surgery**

A Choose Life Resource Worker is available on a Thursday afternoon at the office to provide telephone information advice and support to anyone working with or caring for someone who is thinking about suicide, has attempted suicide or is self harming.

Since November 2004 there have been 22 such inquiries.

### **4.3 Staff Support Network**

A support group is facilitated by the Choose Life resource workers for practitioners in Renfrewshire. The group has met twice with 13 practitioners attending from a range of organisations.

The group focuses on the support needs of practitioners offering opportunities to share experiences and obtain information and advice. Inputs on specialised subjects for example; vicarious traumatization have been undertaken. Invitations for guest speakers on a variety of topics are planned in 2005.

## **5. Training**

The Choose Life Team have developed a training programme to generate public awareness and build capacity and confidence of practitioners, in mainstream, voluntary and community organisations, to address issues of suicide and self harm more effectively in their day to day work.

The training offered is as follows:

### **5.1 Self Harm Awareness and Understanding Workshop**

A half day workshop targeted towards the general public. The aim is to break down stigma and barriers between an individual surviving by self harming behaviour and those people who live or work with the individual.

### **5.2 Self Harm Awareness and Skills Workshop**

A one day workshop using case studies and role play to enhance confidence and understanding of the needs of an individual.

### **5.3 Suicide Awareness and Skills Workshop**

A one day workshop to communicate that suicide does not affect "other people". The aim is to inform participants and increase confidence in order to better meet the needs of those who present as "feeling suicidal".

### **5.4 ASIST Training**

ASIST is a two day intensive course designed to help care givers recognise risk and learn how to intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. It is hoped that the Choose Life Team will attend the Training for Trainers Course 2005 in order to role out this training throughout Renfrewshire.

The Choose Life Team have a training schedule from September 2004 to March 2005 which is included as an appendix. Reflecting demand for training from a wide range of representatives from mainstream, voluntary and community organisations. Demand for training is likely to increase requiring the Choose Life Team in conjunction with the Steering Group to increase capacity of trainers in the area to meet demand.

### **5.5 Other Spin Off**

1. NHS Argyll & Clyde Mental Health Awareness Training. The Choose Life Public Awareness and Training Worker is delivering joint training with Health Promotion.
2. Choose Life Renfrewshire have been invited to submit a training proposal for NHS 24.

## **5.6 Evaluation of Training Undertaken September - November 2004**

5 training sessions have been delivered, 61 people attended these sessions. 50 respondents felt the content was set at the right level with most wanting more sessions or more time in respect of the half day sessions.

The responses to the training offered has been encouraging and ongoing evaluation will inform the development of future training. 10 sessions are planned for 112 people and provisional arrangements are currently being negotiated for a further 145 people to participate by the end of March 2005.

## **6. Development of Suicide and Self Harm Policies**

In the course of undertaking day to day activity and delivering training the need to develop local policies and procedures within a range of organisations has emerged. The Choose Life Team have been asked to assist in the development of policies and procedures.

This area of work will also be relevant for the Steering Group in order to achieve consistency in the development of local policies and procedures throughout Renfrewshire.

## **7. Interagency Work and Protocols**

The Choose Life Team are actively working with a range of agencies, including the Royal Alexandra Hospital Accident & Emergency Department, activity can be summarised as follows:

### **7.1 Accident & Emergency**

- 'Choose Life' questionnaire (developed with A&E and 'Choose Life')
- Crisis cards - developed by 'Choose Life')
- Handing out 'Choose Life' users leaflets (created by 'Choose Life')
- Weekly visits to collect questionnaires maintain contact and remain visible
- Tailored workshops around self harm awareness & understanding - developed by 'Choose Life' Team.

### **7.2 Court**

- 'Choose Life' questionnaire distributed
- 'Choose Life' crisis cards given to people
- 'Choose Life' user leaflets available
- Tailored training from staff around self harm and suicide awareness and understanding

### **7.3 Strathclyde Police**

- 'Choose Life' crisis cards given to clients in vulnerable situations
- 'Choose Life' leaflets given to clients self harming or suicidal
- 'Choose Life' tailored training to officers on parole and on duty

- 'After a suicide' SAMH booklet given to family/workers at scene of suicide
- Linking up with Strathclyde Police on all Renfrewshire Events
- Tailored training for Police Officers on self harm and suicide awareness

#### **7.4 Procurator Fiscal**

- The Principal of the Procurator Fiscals Office approved distribution of a Suicide SAMH booklet with 'Choose Life' Renfrewshire (those affected by suicide support leaflet)

#### **7.5 Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Office**

Director's approval of distribution of After a Suicide booklet to families registering relative's death and crisis cards

#### **7.6 Education**

- Principal Guidance Teachers referring clients to service, using leaflets and crisis cards
- Guidance Teachers seeking support for themselves and clients
- School Nurses capacity building attending training and using 'Choose Life' resources
- Home-Link Staff using 'Choose Life' training, support and resources
- Health & Education linking up with 'Choose Life' for health promotion events in schools

The above are examples of the nature of joint work since the official launch of Choose Life in Renfrewshire in September 2004 further links have been established with the social work department in a variety of settings:

- Area Teams
- Child Care and Adult Services
- Throughcare
- Specialist Teams
- Links have been established with voluntary Organisations and Community Action Groups.

### **8. Evaluation and Consultation**

People utilising the Choose Life Initiative are given an evaluation form to be completed anonymously and returned in a stamped address envelope.

All attendees of workshops and training are given an evaluation form to be completed.

Focus groups will be held in March 2005 comprising of both service users and representatives of partnership agencies to discuss how we can improve and build upon the service for the following year.

## **9. Promotion of Self Help and Support Groups**

The Choose Life Team have established links with existing self help and support groups in Renfrewshire.

This contact has resulted in the following proposals to develop new support groups in January 2005. The new groups will be undertaken in partnership with local user and carer organisations

- Parents and Carers Group: Choose Life and Renfrewshire Carers Project
- Bereaved Through Suicide: Self Help Group with support from Choose Life and Cruse
- Linking in with existing youth drop-in facilities and community groups

The Choose Life Team are exploring the recruitment of sessional and volunteer staff to allow for further development of group work activity.

## **10. Future Plans**

### **10.1 Public Awareness**

- An open day for the public is planned in Spring 2005
- A CD has been compiled and funding sought to distribute
- Choose Life Team will join QFM in a summer roadshow
- Ongoing positive use of media to raise awareness of Choose Life
- Ongoing publication of information

### **10.2 Adult Resource Worker and Young Persons Resource Worker**

The Adult and Young Persons Resource Workers have developed a workload incorporating individual work. The workers receive clinical support respectively from the primary care liaison service and the CAMHS service.

The workers are also delivering training and providing support to other practitioners reflecting diversity in the range of activity they undertake covering individual work , group work and community development.

A crucial aim for 2005 will be to increase capacity to meet increasing demands for training.

- Pursuing sessional and volunteer support and exploring additional funding will be priorities in 2005.

### **10.3 Training**

The requests for training have significantly increased as Choose Life has become established. The challenge for 2005 will be meeting demands. The appendix outlines activity undertaken demonstrating that the initiative will exceed the initial targets set for 3 years by June 2005.

The potential to expand training through ASIST will add value to the potential of Choose Life in Renfrewshire and provide an integrated approach to the training sessions developed by the Choose Life Team and rolling out ASIST in Renfrewshire.

#### **10.4 In Kind Support**

Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health have funded the creation of an enhanced post within the Choose Life Team. A Senior post to provide management responsibility for day to day decisions and clarity of line management roles. The demands and pace of work has necessitated a pragmatic response recognising the early impact the initiative has made in 6 months. Steering Group members and organisations that the Choose Life Team liaise with on a daily basis provide support by offering time, advice and information, supervision, access to facilities e.g. venues for training.

#### **10.5 Summary**

The Choose Life Initiative has met the elements of the work plan identified earlier in this report and is well placed to meet the work plan for 2005-06.

The challenge for 2005-06 will be for the team to remain focused in view of the level of demands on time and the flexibility built into the workplan to engage with a wide range of people and organisations.

With successful implementation of the Choose Life Initiative the Steering Group will also become more action based. This has come about due to the enthusiasm and commitment of the Choose Life Team who have very quickly established a service in Renfrewshire.

## **Workplan for 2005-06**

### **Year 2005-06**

- Explore sustainable funding with partner agencies
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of interventions
- Review case load
- Develop self-help groups for young people, adults and for carers/families
- Continue and develop one-to-one consultations within limitations of post
- Establish and deliver training and awareness raising on suicide and deliberate self harm to a minimum of 200 individuals in group/work settings
- External evaluation of project

### **Choose Life Steering Group**

- Review and expand membership of the group
- Influence relevant planning processes Community Planning and Joint Futures to incorporate Choose Life
- Explore potential to lever in funding to implement further elements of Choose Life Strategy
- Explore in conjunction with the Choose Life Team how to address gaps identified in work undertaken by the team
- Support development of local guidance and protocols based on the needs identified by the Choose Life Team
- Continue to develop the training strategy embarked on in 2004
- Combine to oversee monitor and support Choose Life in Renfrewshire
- Ensure user/carer and community interests are reflected in implementation of Choose Life

## Appendix 1

### Renfrewshire's 'Choose Life' Self Harm Intervention & Suicide Prevention Service

Training Workshop Statistics  
September 2004 to March 2005

<b>Date of Training</b>	<b>Type of Training</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>No. Of delegates</b>	<b>Facilitators</b>	<b>Venue</b>
22.09.04	Half Day S.H	RAMH	14	MK/RL/LG	RAMH HQ
01.10.01	"	Renfrewshire Carers	12	MK/LG	Renfrewshire Carers Training Room
20.10.04	"	Richmond Fellowship	7	MK/RL	Richmond Fellowship
18.11.04	"	Johnstone Health Centre	15	MK/RL	Johnstone Health Centre
01.12.04	"	Threads (Barnardos)	15	MK/LG	Threads Training Room
12.11.04	"	Family Matters	12	MK/LG	RAMH HQ Board Room
09.03.05	1Day S.H	Renfrewshire Council Housing Advice	15	MK/LG	Paisley Town Hall
16.03.04	1 Day Suicide	"	15	MK/RL	"
02.02.04	Half day S.H	Renfrewshire Council Education	15	MK/LG	Schools

Date of Training	Type of Training	Organisation	No. Of delegates	Facilitators	Venue
Await confirmation <b>NB</b> Organisations are on stand-by, as they know we are in a period of Training development. Positive evaluations from Half Day Workshops, has generated eagerness towards, One Day Training's	1 Day	Richmond Fellowship Threads Renfrew. Carers Women's Aid Court Services Paisley University (Await term timetable) RCA Project & others	7 15 12 12+ 10 40+ 15 100+		
Ongoing	S.H Awareness Tailored Training Workshops	RAH - A&E Staff	30	RL/LG	A&E Unit
NHS24 Role out: 2005 'C.L' has been invited to submit Training Proposal	S.H Awareness Tailored Training Workshop	NHS24 Staff	500+  The cost of training	RL/MK/LG	NHS24