

Creating Hope

Scottish Borders

Information for Staff and volunteers



Scottish Borders
Health and Social Care
PARTNERSHIP

INFORMATION FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Your group or organisation has signed up to the Creating Hope Scottish Borders Awards Scheme and are demonstrating they are committed to being a mentally healthy and suicide safer community.

Detailed below is more information about the awards scheme and what is expected from you and your organisation or group.

The Creating Hope Scottish Borders Scheme aims

- Engage local groups and organisations in promoting good mental health
- Nurture positive environments within communities and create hope
- Enable our local communities to have a clear understanding of suicide and its prevention, and be able to respond in helpful and informed ways when support is needed
- Connect people to the information and support they need to be mentally healthy and suicide safer
- Recognise, support and promote mentally healthy and suicide safer communities that are caring, compassionate and inclusive

The awards

There are two awards in the scheme:

- **The Creating Hope Award**
- **The Creating Hope Champions Award**

You can make a big difference

By being part of the scheme you will be raising awareness of mental health and suicide prevention and demonstrating that you are caring, compassionate and inclusive. This can help people to feel more comfortable and safe. Seeing the posters displayed in your locations will communicate that your community is supportive of mental health and can help to start conversations, challenge stigma and normalise talking about mental ill health and suicidal thoughts.

By being prepared to support the conditions for good mental health and to connect people to support if they are struggling, your group or organisation will be demonstrating that it is caring, compassionate and inclusive – which may just make a big difference to someone's life, it may even save a life.

What is expected for ALL staff and volunteers

- Be aware of what is meant by good mental health practices (see next page)
- Be aware of the '**Ask for Hope**' part of the scheme, you may be approached by someone who is in distress and needs support and they may use this code or phrase to ask for help
- If someone asks for help, use compassionate responses such as the Samaritans SHUSH listening tips and the principles of Time, Space, Compassion to help make anyone asking for help feel supported
- Be aware of the signposting document
- Opportunity to become an Advocate or Champion, see p.4 for more information

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Award

This is the foundation level award that includes:

- Demonstrating commitment to **good mental health practices** in your setting
- Have the **signposting to support** information available
- Designated '**Advocates**' for promoting good mental health
- Put in place Informed Level **training** for the Advocates
- Be a '**supportive space**' – respond with compassion and signpost to support

Role of Mental Health and Wellbeing Advocates

To be an Advocate you must:

- Complete the Informed level training and provide a copy of the completion certificate to the scheme organisers
- Watch the relevant Trauma Informed Practice video
- Be familiar with ways to support good mental health and wellbeing - see 'Ways to Be Well' leaflet in the information pack
- Be familiar with support procedures and signposting leaflet
- Have a way of identifying yourself as an Advocate (e.g. by wearing a Creating Hope pin badge)
- Feel comfortable asking people if they are ok and signposting them to further support

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Champions Award

This is the enhanced level award that includes all of the foundation level criteria **PLUS:**

- Designated **Suicide Prevention Champions**
- Have a **'safe space'** where Champions are able to have supportive conversations
- Champions to complete further **training**

Role of Suicide Prevention Champions

To be a Suicide Prevention Champion you must:

- Complete the two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- Complete the relevant Trauma Informed e-learning module
- Provide copies of the training completion certificates to the scheme organisers
- Be familiar with how to respond using the principles of Time, Space and Compassion
- Have a way of identifying yourself as a Champion (e.g. by wearing a United To Prevent Suicide pin badge)
- Feel confident talking about suicidal thoughts and know how to connect people to the right support

Good mental health practices

We expect groups and organisations to put in place and be able to demonstrate that they are committed to the following practices that promote good mental health. Please familiarise yourself with these:

- 1. Be open and honest and treat people with kindness, compassion and understanding**
- 2. Promote respectful, trusting and non-judgemental relationships**
- 3. Promote inclusive, approachable, welcoming and friendly environments**
- 4. Be aware of ways to protect and promote good mental health and wellbeing – ‘Ways to Be Well’**
- 5. Be aware of the causes of poor mental health such as poverty, trauma and isolation**
- 6. Challenge stigma by being willing to talk sensitively about mental health, mental ill health, self-harm and suicide**
- 7. Challenge inequality, prejudice, discriminatory language and behaviour**
- 8. Have zero tolerance of bullying, threats, violence and abusive behaviour**
- 9. Be suicide ALERT**
- 10. Be aware of where to get further help and support**



Ways to be well

We are asking groups and organisations to be aware of ways to protect and promote good mental health and wellbeing – we call these ‘Ways to Be Well’. There is separate leaflet for the Ways to Be Well – they are summarised here:

- **Eat Well** – food affects our brains and mood as well as our bodies
- **Connect with Nature** – spend time outdoors and bring nature into your everyday life
- **Be Active** – exercising regularly can make you feel more confident, happier, less stressed and sleep better
- **Sleep Well** – follow a good night time routine, sleeping well is vital for good mental health
- **Be Creative** – creative activities and being involved in culture can help you to stay well and feel better
- **Enjoy and Learn** – learning new things can help you to be more satisfied and fulfilled
- **Be Mindful** – being mindful can help you to de-stress. Give yourself some ‘me time’
- **Be Kind** – giving and receiving from others helps to build a support network
- **Be Connected** – connect with other people in a way that is good for your wellbeing
- **Limit Alcohol** – cut down your drinking to within the low risk guidelines
- **Stop Smoking** – find healthier ways to cope with stress
- **Manage Money Worries** – get help for financial difficulties, money problems are a common trigger for mental health problems

Time, Space and Compassion

Time Space Compassion is an approach which can be used by anyone. Placing these principles at the heart of what we do can improve outcomes for those in crisis.



Time



Space



Compassion

So what does Time, Space, Compassion mean when supporting someone?

Time

Take the time to hear and listen to people. Take time and pay attention to connecting people to support. Your time is valuable – the time you spend paying attention to someone who needs help may be more valuable than you think.

Space

Your group or organisation is offering a supportive and safe space. The places where people seek support need to be friendly, welcoming, accessible and inclusive. You are asked to help people to feel safe and to help them keep safe – within your setting. In some cases this could be in person, on the phone or online.

Compassion

It's important to treat people with kindness, compassion and understanding – and demonstrate respect and sensitivity as well as offering to connect the person to support. Be clear about what people can expect from you and remember to maintain the boundaries you both need to stay safe. Take care of yourself, self-compassion is important too!

Provide a compassionate response

The Samaritans have produced guidance to follow when listening to somebody who is opening up to you. Use the SHUSH listening tips to become a better listener:



Show you care

Focus on the other person, make eye contact, put away your phone.



Have patience

It may take time and several attempts before a person is ready to open up.



Use open questions

That need more than a yes/no answer, and follow up eg 'Tell me more'.



Say it back

To check you've understood, but don't interrupt or offer a solution.



Have courage

Don't be put off by a negative response and, most importantly, don't feel you have to fill a silence.

Be Suicide ALERT

If you're worried someone is suicidal, it's okay to ask them directly. Research shows that this helps - because it gives them permission to tell you how they feel, and shows that they are not a burden. For more information about being Suicide ALERT:

ASK if you think someone may be thinking about suicide.

You can use direct language, and the question won't put the idea into someone's head, if they aren't already thinking about it. People who have thoughts about suicide say that they felt a huge sense of relief, just at someone asking them the question "Are you thinking about suicide?"

LISTEN carefully to what the person is saying.

You don't need to try to make it better, tell them how important they are, or how much they have to live for. Just allowing someone to talk, and acknowledging their feelings will let them know that you care.

ENCOURAGE them to talk further.

Family, friends, their GP, a counsellor, telephone support services or someone else they trust are all potential sources of support. There are contact details for various organisations on the opposite page, or on the United to Prevent Suicide Lifelines card.

RIGHT NOW contact emergency services or a crisis line if you think someone has immediate suicide plans. *Don't leave someone alone if they have a plan and the means to carry it out.*

TALK to someone.

Supporting someone who is suicidal can be a difficult experience. You may need time and support to process your own emotions about it.

More info?

If you are interested in becoming an Advocate or a Champion please speak with the lead person for the Creating Hope Scottish Borders Awards Scheme in your group or organisation.

The Creating Hope Scottish Borders scheme is run by the Joint Health Improvement Team, Public Health Directorate, NHS Borders. If you would like to get in touch with us please email health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Suicide Prevention is everyone's business, thank you getting involved and for helping to challenge stigma and normalise talking about mental ill health and suicidal thoughts.



The Creating Hope Scottish Borders awards scheme was developed in association with Breathing Space, NHS24's emotional support helpline.

**BREATHING
SPACE**

**Open up when
you're feeling down**

Call: 0800 83 85 87
or visit: www.breathingspace.scot



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