

Creating Hope

Scottish Borders

Information Bulletin – News / Events / Resources / Training December 2024 / January 2025

Upcoming awareness dates:

- National Grief Awareness Week (2nd-8th December)
- [Brew Monday](#) (20th January 2025)

NEWS

KEEPING SAFE AND WELL OVER WINTER

Self-care is really important at any time of year - especially over the winter months when the weather and dark nights can affect how we're feeling. Think about what could nurture you at this time and how you could make small changes to take good care of your body and mind. To nurture yourself you should try to eat well, drink sensibly, sleep well, recognise your stress triggers and find ways to cope with stress. Be mindful what you spend your time and energy on and remember that it's ok to say no. Saying no can be really hard but sometimes it is the kindest thing to do for ourselves if we are already stressed or overloaded.

With the extra socialising that comes with the festive period, you might find yourself drinking more than usual, which can affect mental health and wellbeing. 'Limit Alcohol' is one of Ways to Be Well – if you're likely to drink then try to plan ahead and follow these top tips from our Alcohol and Drugs Partnership which can help you enjoy the festivities whilst keeping you safe.

- **Always eat before you go out** – this slows down the effect of alcohol on our body
- **Try to avoid having drinks before going out** - home measures can be a lot larger which can mean people being drunk by the time they reach the pub, club or bar and may result in them not being allowed in
- **Be aware of how many units you are consuming** - a large glass of wine can contain 3 units of alcohol. It is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis (this applies to all adults)
- **Drink at your own pace** - avoid being in a 'round'. Rounds may mean you are trying to keep up with the person who is drinking the fastest. If you're not ready for another alcoholic drink then have a zero alcohol alternative, a soft drink or some water
- **Keep an eye on your drinks** and don't leave them unattended
- **Stop drinking** if you start to feel sick, dizzy or unwell and seek help
- **Have a plan to get home before you go out** - if you have had too much to drink, you are at a much greater risk of having an accident, or coming to harm because you are vulnerable, especially if you are alone – so stick with your friends.

It might help to plan some self-care activities that are good for your wellbeing and that protect your mental health. You can use the [Ways to be well](#) to think about what you might like to do. You could even download our editable [Ways to Be Well Planner](#) and print it out to remind you to prioritise your mental health and wellbeing over the winter months. The Samaritans' Brew Monday is on 20th January but any day is a good day to reach out and connect with someone you care about!

COPING WITH GRIEF OVER WINTER

Losing a loved one, no matter what the circumstances, is one of the most difficult things that we can go through. It can be even tougher during the festive period, when it seems like people are celebrating around you. There are no set rules to grieving. Here are some ideas on how to cope with your grief during the festive period:

Have a plan - Take some time to think about which festivities you feel comfortable participating in, and which ones you don't. Decide what you want to do around the festive period and know that it's okay to say 'no'.

Keep a routine and look after yourself - With everything that's going on across the festive period, it might mean that you can't keep to your usual routines. This can often make it easy for people to forget to look after themselves. Simple things like sticking to regular sleeping patterns and eating well can have a real impact on our wellbeing.

Do something to remember your loved one - Thinking about ways you can remember your loved one can be a comforting way to celebrate their life and keep their memory close this Christmas. You could hang something special on your tree, look at old photos, or cook their favourite meal.

Ask for help when you need it - Christmas can be a hard time for many of us, but it can be more challenging when you're trying to cope with grief. It's okay to ask for help when you need it, so do try to open up and make the time to connect with those around you.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with grief following the loss of a loved one, this **Bereavement and Grief Self-Help Guide** from NHS Inform might be useful. It's an online guide to work through and uses cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques, click [HERE](#) to access the guide.

EVENTS

WINTER WORKSHOPS @ HEART OF HAWICK

Thursdays in January, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Informal, gentle arts based sessions with no pressure. Have a cuppa and a blether over a small project and enjoy simply being creative. **£5 per session**

- 9th January – Journaling
- 16th January – Textile Art
- 23rd January – Winter Landscapes
- 30th January – Nature as Nurture

Visit the Live Borders website to book or call in to the café www.liveborders.org.uk

INFORMATION STATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING at the WHAT MATTERS HUBS

PEEBLES - Wednesday 11th December, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee

HAWICK - Thursday 12th December, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick

KELSO - Wednesday 18th December, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre

PEEBLES - Wednesday 8th January, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee

HAWICK - Thursday 9th January, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick

KELSO - Wednesday 15th January, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre

GALASHIELS - Wednesday 22nd January, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café

Drop-in service where you can find out more about the advice, information and support that is available to help mental health and wellbeing. **Find out more** [HERE](#)

1st Tuesday of the month, Galashiels

SURVIVORS OF BEREAVEMENT BY SUICIDE LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP

For more information contact the local co-ordinator on 0770 4691 111 or email

scottishborders@uksobs.org

AFTER A SUICIDE WORKING GROUP

Have you or someone you know lost a family member or friend to suicide? If you feel ready and able to contribute to improving the support and information available to others going through a similar experience come and join the After a Suicide Working Group. The working group are a group of people with lived experience of bereavement by suicide. The group is not a support group, but offers members the opportunity to use our lived experience to contribute to the local suicide prevention strategy.

Contact Charlotte for more information and to join the group email: charlotte.jones2@nhs.scot

Various dates

BORDERS IN RECOVERY GROUPS

Borders in Recovery runs weekly Recovery Cafés in Galashiels, Eyemouth, Hawick and Peebles, open to anyone over 16 years and in recovery (substances and/or mental ill health) or supporting someone who is (friend/family). The café offers recovery support, meaningful activities, socialisation opportunities and health and wellbeing activities as well as many other leisure and personal development opportunities. Borders in Recovery also have a Weekly Music Group on a Tuesday and Recovery Coaching Training is available. There is also a Whatsapp group and SMART meetings in Peebles and Gala including a Womens SMART meeting in Gala. **To find out more click [HERE](#).**

Mondays - 7-9pm

ANDY'S MAN CLUB

Andy's Man Club is a peer to peer support group for men (aged 18+) who have either been through a storm, are currently going through a storm or have a storm brewing in life. Andy's Man Club meets every Monday from 7pm (excluding English Bank Holidays).

Where:

- Gala RFC Hospitality Suite (to the right when you enter through the gate), Netherdale, Nether Road, Galashiels TD1 3HE
- Eyemouth Parish Hall, Victoria Rd, Eyemouth TD14 5JD

Find out more at <https://andysmanclub.co.uk/>

RESOURCES

LIST OF SUPPORT SERVICES TO KEEP HANDY OVER WINTER

NHS24 Mental Health Hub (24/7) - Call 111 and select mental health option

Urgent mental health support from NHS24.

Breathing Space - Tel: 0800 83 85 87 www.breathingspace.scot

Monday - Thursday 6pm - 2am, Friday 6pm - Monday 6am

A free and confidential helpline for anyone experiencing low mood, anxiety or depression or who is unusually worried and needs someone to talk to.

Samaritans (24/7) - Tel: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org <https://www.samaritans.org/>

Provides free confidential emotional support for anyone experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

NHS Inform - www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/mental-wellbeing

Information about mental health and wellbeing including self-help guides and tools.

Kooth - www.kooth.com

Online emotional wellbeing support service for young people aged 11–18. Articles, personal experiences and tips.

Togetherall - www.togetherall.com

Online peer support community where people across the world support each other, 24/7. Anyone in the Scottish Borders aged 16+ can join the online community. You can join groups that are relevant to you for example Students, Military or Health Workers. Also has courses and self-help resources.

Stay Alive App - www.stayalive.app/

Information and tools to help you stay safe in a crisis or support someone in crisis. Free to download. Download on the App Store or Google Play.

Self-harm Network Scotland - www.selfharmnetworkscotland.org.uk

Website hosted by Penumbra. Information, resources and compassionate support for anyone who self-harms or who is supporting someone who self-harms. 12+.

Creating Hope Scottish Borders - www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope

Online hub with resources and useful information about looking after your mental health and wellbeing, includes suicide prevention resources.

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE

If you feel affected by a suicide or know someone who has been affected, there are organisations that can help to talk through difficult emotions. It may help to talk to people who have also experienced bereavement by suicide. There are a number of different support options available:

- **PETAL** offer therapy and counselling support services for young people - [PETAL Support – Supporting People Experiencing Trauma and Loss](#)
- **Winston's Wish** provide support, they also have an online space for young people and live chat etc - [Grief support for young people | Winston's Wish](#)
- **SOBS Helpline** - 0300 111 5056 (open everyday 9am—7pm) <https://uksobs.org/>
- Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide) have some information online about suicide bereavement and grief which could be helpful to share [Understanding suicide bereavement and grief | Papyrus](#)
- **CRUSE Scotland** - Provides professional support for bereaved adults, children and families across Scotland. Also provides support to workplaces where there has been a suicide. <https://www.crusescotland.org.uk/> 0808 802 6161 Open weekdays 9am - 8pm and weekends 10am - 2pm support@crusescotland.org.uk

UNDERSTOOD: A GUIDE TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE WHO ARE NEURODIVERGENT

This guide published by the Support after a Suicide Partnership is to help professionals support people who are, or may be, neurodivergent who have been bereaved by suicide, the guide can be accessed [HERE](#)



TRAINING

Webinars - Online Harms and Suicide Prevention

Suicide Prevention Scotland are running two webinars on online harms and suicide prevention.

Session one will look at the Online Safety Act and social media, and session two will look at social media use in the aftermath of a suicide.

Full details can be found on Eventbrite:

[Suicide Prevention Scotland: Online Harms Webinar - Session 1 of 2 Tickets, Wed, Dec 4, 2024 at 2:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

[Suicide Prevention Scotland: Online Harms Webinar - Session 2 of 2 Tickets, Thu, Jan 23, 2025 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

BORDERS CARE VOICE TRAINING

SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (SMHFA)

Tuesday 18th March & Monday 24th March 2025– Borders Care Voice, Triest House, Bridge Street, Galashiels TD1 1SW.

This training covers:

- How to apply the 5 steps of SMHFA
- How to respond if you believe someone is at risk of suicide
- How to give immediate help until professional help is available
- What to say and do in a crisis
- The importance of good listening skills
- Practise listening and responding
- Understanding recovery from mental health problems
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and alcohol and drugs
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and discrimination
- Some basic information about common mental health problems
- Self-help information.

To book click [HERE](#)

MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Wednesday 19th February 2025 & Wednesday 26th February 2025 – online

The training is for staff and volunteers in health and social care settings and beyond. It aims to help them develop their abilities in recognising and responding to people they meet who may be in distress and require additional support.

The training will cover:

- Mental health and how to maintain it
- The factors that can lead to mental distress or mental ill-health
- Having compassionate conversations to support people who are experiencing mental distress and may be suicidal, and help them to seek help
- Suicide prevention

To book click [HERE](#)

WAVE AFTER WAVE SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT TRAINING

Tuesday 25th February 2025 9am – 1pm - Borders Care Voice, Triest House, Bridge Street, Galashiels TD1 1SW.

The training will cover:

- Statistics and context – the prevalence and impact of suicide bereavement in the Scottish Borders
- Understanding grief and suicide bereavement
- Providing a compassionate response to suicide bereavement
- The impact of working with suicide bereavement on staff and strategies to manage wellbeing

To book click [HERE](#)

SAFETALK

Monday 3rd March 12:30pm – 4:30pm - Borders Care Voice, Triest House, Bridge Street, Galashiels TD1 1SW.

Training that will help you, regardless of prior experience or training, to become suicide alert

- Access to support
- TALKsteps: tell, ask, listen and KeepSafe
- Hands-on skills practice and development

To book click [HERE](#)

SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE - SKILLED LEVEL

All dates are IN-PERSON at Scottish Borders Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells

- **Thursday 5th December 2024:** 9am – 1pm **Places still available**
- **Tuesday 4th March 2025:** 9am – 1pm
- **Thursday 27th March 2025:** 9am – 1pm
- **Tuesday 27th May:** 9am – 1pm

This is a bespoke half-day training session facilitated by Health Improvement Specialists from the NHS Borders Public Health Team. It is aimed at anybody working with children and young people who are likely to have direct and/or substantial contact with those who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide. The content is drawn from the NHS Education for Scotland Skilled Level packages for Self-harm and Suicide Prevention. **Anyone attending this training must first complete the Informed Level e-module 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and preventing self-harm and suicide' on the NHS 'TURAS' website.** Email health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk to register for one of the dates at SBC HQ

APPLIED SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING (ASIST)

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

To be added to the distribution list to be informed when the booking goes live please email:

health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING INFORMATION

There are two catalogues available that set out the training available at the Informed, Skilled and Enhanced Levels of the Knowledge and Skills framework for Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention, one for adults and one for people working with children and young people.

Download the Adults catalogue (PDF) [HERE](#)

NEW – download the updated Children and Young People's catalogue (PDF) [HERE](#)

SELF HARM NETWORK SCOTLAND TRAINING

The Self-Harm Network Scotland, run by Penumbra, has a number of free training opportunities coming up about self-harm.

1-hour Self-Harm Awareness Session - for anyone in Scotland who is interested in learning more about self-harm. This includes professionals, parent's, carers and loved ones. It is delivered in a webinar/seminar style with a presentation and time at the end for questions. The topics covered in this session include:

- What is self-harm?
- Who self-harms?
- How do people self-harm?
- Functions of self-harm
- Starting the conversation about self-harm
- Resources and support available

3 hour Self-Harm Awareness Training (for professionals) - will dive deep into the underlying reasons for self-harm and give information, tools and resources that can be used to support people who self-harm.

These sessions will cover topics including:

- Underlying causes of self-harm
- Functions of self-harm
- Practical guidance in supporting people who self-harm

To find out more and book click [HERE](#)

LIVING WORKS START SUICIDE PREVENTION MODULE self-directed learning (60 – 90 mins)

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

To register for a licence email health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

GET IN TOUCH

This information bulletin was produced by Charlotte Jones, Health Improvement Specialist (Mental Health and Suicide Prevention) and Steph MacKenzie, Health Improvement Specialist (Mental Health) Joint Health Improvement Team, Public Health. If you'd like to join our mailing list or talk to us about any of the news, events, resources or training above, you can get in touch with us by emailing

health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk



For our updates on Facebook please follow [NHS Borders Small Changes, Big Difference](#)



For our updates on Instagram please follow [@small_changes_nhs_borders](#)



CREATING HOPE WEB PAGES

We are building new web pages, you can find them here:

www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope



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