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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Word Suicide Prevention Day – Launch of New Three Year 2021-2023 Triennial Theme ‘Creating Hope Through Action’:

Introduction – ‘Creating Hope Through Action’ – Professor Rory O’Connor President of the International Association For Suicide Prevention Statement:

This call to action seeks to instil hope in those who feel despair, a sense of hope in those who feel isolated or trapped. Anyone of us can reach in to show someone that we care, offering a listening ear, engaging in a non-judgemental conversation, sharing a useful resource or helping someone in crisis to make a ‘safety plan’. These are examples of actions that can promote hope, compassion, trust and empathy go a long way in supporting someone who’s thinking of suicide. Hopefully by showing compassion or trust or empathy, one can help somebody feel that ‘life is worth living’, that there will be brighter days ahead.

Raising awareness of suicide can help to strengthen our understanding and reduce the stigma surrounding suicide. This in turn helps to bring down the many barriers to people seeking help. It can also help create a more acceptable society. A society where people are encouraged to come forward to receive help and support that they so badly need.

It’s also so important to remember that suicide is preventable right up until the very last moment.

Through sharing life experiences we learn that no one is alone in this pain. The insight offered by anyone of us discussing our own personal accounts of distress, our own accounts of suicidal crisis, our own experiences of grief and despair following bereavement by suicide, that by sharing these accounts we can help others recognise that we can overcome anguish and if we can overcome anguish, we can inspire hope in others who face very similar challenges.

The IASP invites everyone to join the campaign to be a beacon of hope, spreading the message that can help inspire others and together we can create a world where fewer people think of suicide and fewer people die of suicide.

Background:

World Suicide Prevention Day, which first started in 2003, is annually held in September each year. Organised by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), the purpose of the day is to raise awareness, promote worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicides. 2021 marks the 19th anniversary of the worldwide campaign.

WHO and IASP work with governments and other partners to ensure that suicide is no longer stigmatised, criminalized or penalised. WHO's role is to build political action and leadership to develop national responses to prevent suicide, strengthen national planning capacity to establish the core building blocks of such a national response, and build the national capacities to implement these responses.

Nearly 3000 people on average take their own lives through suicide daily, according to the WHO. For every person who completes a suicide, 20 or more may attempt to end their lives. About one million people die by suicide each year. Behind these statistics are the individual stories of those who have, for many different reasons, questioned the value of their own lives. Additionally, the tragic ripple effect means that there are many, many more people who have been bereaved by suicide or have been close to someone who has tried to take his or her own life. And this is happening in spite of the fact that suicide is preventable. Suicide is a major preventable cause of premature death which is influenced by psycho-social, cultural and environmental risk factors that can be prevented through worldwide responses that address these main risk factors. There is strong evidence indicating that adequate prevention can reduce suicide rates.

Every year organisations and communities around the world come together to raise awareness of how people can create a world where fewer people die by suicide. In the UK over 70 suicide prevention and mental health groups under the National Suicide Prevention Alliance (NSPA) collectively campaign to raise awareness of suicide prevention and together, ask governments in the UK and Ireland to make suicide prevention a priority, and help raise awareness about how people can each support each other better.

In 2020, in the UK, more than 6,200 people died of suicide. (See attached UK statistics for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland plus the Republic of Ireland – provided by the 'Samaritans').

Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy.

And we know that suicide is preventable, it's not inevitable.

But not being okay is still widely stigmatized, and governments can still make better, more ambitious plans to prevent suicide.

World Suicide Prevention Day is not to be seen as a one-off, one-day issue but this year is the launch of the new three-year theme aiming to promote on-going worldwide action to prevent suicides. It's about raising awareness that suicide is a major preventable cause of premature death.

The WHO and IASP want organisations, government agencies and individuals to promote awareness about suicide, mental illnesses associated with suicide, as well as suicide prevention.

What Trade Unionist can do:

- Raise awareness that suicide is preventable.

- Improve education and training about suicide and mental health issues and awareness.
- Spread information about suicide, stress, anxiety, depression awareness.
- Decrease stigmatisation regarding suicide.
- Write to Ministers and MPs demanding more government attention and action to tackle suicide:

'Take a Minute, Change a Life.'

These words are at the heart of suicide prevention and worth reminding ourselves of. Each one of these individuals is part of a community, a Union, a workforce etc. Some may be well linked in to this community and their workplace and Union Branch, and they'll have a network of family, friends and work colleagues or school mates. Others may be less well connected, and some may be quite isolated. Regardless of the circumstances, communities, workmates, first aiders and Union Reps for example have an important role to play in helping support those who are vulnerable. As members of communities, it is our responsibility to look out for those who may be struggling and distressed, check in with them, and encourage them to tell their story in their own way and at their own pace. Offering a gentle word of support and listening in a non-judgemental way can make all the difference.

People who have lived through a suicide attempt have much to teach us about how the words and actions of others are important. They often talk movingly about reaching the point where they could see no alternative but to take their own life, and about the days, hours and minutes leading up to this. They often describe realising that they did not want to die but instead wanted someone to intervene and stop them. Many say that they actively sought someone who would sense their despair and ask them whether they were okay.

Sometimes they say that they made a pact with themselves that if someone did ask if they were okay, they would tell them everything and allow them to intervene. Sadly, they often reflect that no one asked.

The individuals telling these stories are inspirational. Many of them recount reaching the point where they did try to take their own lives, and tell about coming through it. Many of them are now working as advocates for suicide prevention. Almost universally, they say that if someone had taken a minute, the trajectory that they were on could have been interrupted.

Life is precious and sometimes precarious. Taking a minute to reach out to someone – a complete stranger or close family member, a friend or work colleague – can change the course of their life.

No one has to have all the answers; People are often reluctant to intervene, even if they are quite concerned about someone. There are many reasons for this, not least that they fear they will not know what to say. It is important to remember, however, that there is no hard and fast formula. Individuals who have come through an episode of severe suicidal thinking often say that they were not looking for specific advice, but that compassion and empathy from others helped to turn things around for them and point them towards recovery. Another factor that deters people from starting the conversation is that they worry that they may make the situation worse. Again, this hesitation is understandable; broaching the topic of suicide is difficult and there is a myth that talking about suicide with someone can put the idea into their head or trigger the act. The evidence suggests that this is not the case. Being caring and listening with a non-judgemental ear are far more likely to reduce distress than exacerbate it.

RESOURCES:

CWU Guide to Work and Suicide

See attached pdf copy of the popular CWU 'Guide to Work and Suicide' for CWU Reps.

BITC Suicide Prevention Toolkit

This Suicide Prevention Toolkit, helps senior leaders, line managers, HR and occupational health professionals identify staff members who may have suicidal feelings and gives practical advice on how to deal with a crisis situation. It was produced in partnership with Public Health England and supported by the Samaritans. The toolkit is aimed at employers to help embed suicide prevention strategies in their organisation's health and wellbeing policies, guide the approach to supporting those at risk and act as a resource to provide support across the workforce and it gives guidance on a workplace suicide prevention programme. CWU Reps will find a lot of interesting and useful information in the toolkit. Employers are in a unique position to help employees understand the importance of wellbeing and good mental health, and the knowledge of how to keep safe and well and how to spot the signs of being unwell. This toolkit is designed to help organisations adopt a strategy to reduce the risk of a suicide that will have an impact on the workplace. In this context, the term 'workplace suicide' is understood to be a suicide in or outside the workplace. (See copy attached).

Zero Suicide Alliance Booklet

The Zero Suicide Alliance campaign wants to shatter this stigma by getting more people talking about suicide, sharing thoughts, offering support. They state that there are more of us affected by it than you think. Because it's only when we start talking about suicide that we realise how many of our friends, neighbours and colleagues' lives have been touched by it. The Zero Suicide Alliance campaign aims to get people together and start a conversation and to help friends and work colleagues to understand that it can affect anyone, and what we can all do to help in raising awareness and educating EVERYONE about the part we can all play in suicide prevention. The concise 10-page booklet gives some good basic 5-step advice on keeping physically and mentally well; staying active, eating well, limiting alcohol, avoiding drugs and staying social. A copy of the Booklet is attached. The ZSA Poster is also attached to display.

TRAINING:

Zero Suicide Alliance (ZSA) On-Line Suicide Prevention Training:

ZSA provide a range of awareness training options, which provide a better understanding of the signs to look out for and the skills required to approach someone who is struggling, whether that be through social isolation or suicidal thoughts. The ZSA 'FREE' on-line suicide prevention training course will teach you how to recognise the warning signs and safeguard someone that could be contemplating suicide – It takes 20 minutes to complete and is available at: www.zerosuicidealliance.com.

Also available at the ZSA Website are FREE newsletters, videos and resources such as posters, e-mail banners, screen-savers and other campaign material to help spread the word and raise awareness.

The CWU Health, Safety & Environment Department is supporting the ZSA campaign as part of the Union's overall Mental Health Strategy and is urging all CWU Reps to access and complete the on-line training.

Mental Health First Aid Training

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) came to England in 2007 and was developed and launched under the Department of Health and National Institute for Mental Health in England as part of a national approach to improving public mental health. Mental Health First Aid England was launched as a community interest company in 2009.

The CWU Health, Safety & Environment Department has been raising awareness and promoting Mental Health First Aid Training for CWU Reps since the courses became available in the UK in 2007. Following the policy decision of CWU Conference, the Health, Safety and Environment Department in conjunction and partnership with the Equality, Education & Development Department, through the CWU National HQ Mental Health Strategy Group have taken this forward to develop our own in-house network of MHFA Trainers across all regions of the UK, providing courses where required. We now provide and continue to encourage CWU Reps to attend the 2-Day MHFA Course as well as the TUC developed Mental Health Awareness Course. For further information, contact either the CWU Regional Secretary or CWU/HQ Equality, Education & Development Department.

Suicide Prevention Skills Training – ‘Two Roads Charity’

The ‘Two Roads Charity’ – is a registered UK charity established to advance the education of the general public in all areas related to the prevention of suicides. The Charity directly delivers suicide prevention training to organisations across the UK including several police forces, universities, colleges and other charities etc. They also deliver train the trainer courses in order that organisations can deliver their own suicide prevention workshops. The ‘Suicide Prevention Skills Programme’ lasts for three hours and has the overall objective of developing basic suicide prevention skills in participants. The training programme is structured as follows:

Section 1: Myths and Facts around Suicide

- Exercise covering many of the most common myths around suicide.

Section 2: Emotional Resilience and Depression

- What is resilience, and why it is so important.
- Protective and risk factors.
- Clinical depression.
- Recovery from depression – what works?

Section 3: Depression and Suicide Risk

- What is suicide?
- The five elements of the suicidal mind.
- Why would someone consider suicide?
- How we can reduce suicide risk – World Health Organisation.
- Can we save someone?
- Why might someone not ask for help?
- Why might someone not try to help?

Section 4: Safely helping someone – using the Look Listen Link model

- Look Listen Link Model
- Look for the signs
- Listen and Ask – Active listening model.
- Link to the help that is available- Crisis, Serious Concern or Needs Help

Contact Details:

CWU 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX
email: info@cwu.org Tel: 020 8971 7200 Fax: 020 8971 7300
General Secretary: Dave Ward

'Two Roads' - Charity
Kemp House,
152-160 City Road,
London EC1V 2NX
Tel: 07544754621
Email: hello@tworoadscharity.com
Website: <https://www.tworoadscharity.com/>

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP:

The Samaritans

Samaritans is a charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide and they are available round the clock, every single day of the year, providing a safe place for anyone struggling to cope, whoever they are, however they feel, whatever life has done to them. If you need someone to talk to, Samaritans will listen and won't judge or tell you what to do! For urgent support call – 24 Hours a Day.

- Call Samaritans on their Helpline 116 123 or
- e-mail jo@samaritans.org or
- visit Samaritans website: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

Contact Details:
Samaritans HQ
The Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AF
Tel: 020 8394 8300
Email: admin@samaritans.org

Papyrus – (National Charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide).

Suicide is the biggest killer of young people under 35 in the UK. Every year many thousands more attempt or contemplate suicide, harm themselves or suffer alone, afraid to speak openly about how they are feeling. The Charity has a vision for a society which speaks openly about suicide and has the resources to help young people who may have suicidal thoughts. The Charity exists to reduce the number of young people who take their own lives by shattering the stigma around suicide and equipping young people and their communities with the skills to recognise and respond to suicidal behaviour.

Papyrus provide confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone either in distress or worried about a young person can contact the Charity's helpline, called 'HOPELINEUK' which is a confidential support and advice service for children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, or anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide. If you are having thoughts of suicide or are concerned for a young person who might be - contact "HOPELINEUK" for confidential support and practical advice.

Call: 0800 068 4141
Text: 07860 039 967
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org
Every Day 9:00 am to 12:00 am (midnight)

Papyrus Head Office
Bankside 2, Crosfield Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA1 1UP
Telephone: 01925 572 444
Website: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

CWU 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX
email: info@cwu.org Tel: 020 8971 7200 Fax: 020 8971 7300
General Secretary: Dave Ward

 [@DaveWardGS](https://twitter.com/DaveWardGS)  [Dave Ward CWU](https://www.facebook.com/DaveWardCWU)

Other Charities which provide support and information:

Breaking The Silence Suicide Forum

<https://www.suicideforum.com/>

<https://www.suicideforum.com/community/>

A website for suicidal people and those in mental health crisis

Online forums, chat, information and support

Email: email of SFOpsAcct@gmail.com

Calm:

Helpline: 0800 585858

Website: www.thecalmzone.net

Campaign Against Living Miserably is a Charity providing help and support for young men aged 15-35 on issues which include depression and suicide.

CALM,

5 Wooton Street,

London, SE1 8TG

SupportLine

Helpline: 01708 765200

Website: <https://www.supportline.org.uk/>

SupportLine provides a confidential telephone helpline offering emotional support to any individual on any issue. The Helpline is primarily a preventative service and aims to support people before they reach the point of crisis. It is particularly aimed at those who are socially isolated, vulnerable, at risk groups and victims of any form of abuse. SupportLine is a member of the Helplines Association. SupportLine also provides support by email and post.

PO Box 2860

Romford

Essex RM7 1JA

Helpline: 01708 765200

Admin: 01708 765222

Email: info@supportline.org.uk

Lifeline (N.Ireland)

Helpline: 0808 808 8000

Website: www.lifelinehelpline.info

For anyone in N.Ireland who is in distress or despair. Immediate help on phone 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Face to face counselling can be arranged, also befriending, mentoring. Issues dealt with include suicide prevention, self-harm, abuse, trauma, depression, anxiety.

National Suicide Helpline UK

Helpline: 0800 689 5652

Website: <https://www.spbristol.org/>

Confidential 24hr listening service to anyone contemplating suicide run by trained volunteers from Suicide Prevention Bristol

Suicide Prevention Bristol

Suite 601

179 Whiteladies Road,

Bristol, BS8 2AG.

Email: info@spbristol.org

Premier Lifeline

Helpline: 0300 111 0101

Website: www.premier.org.uk/lifeline

Helpline providing a listening service, information, emotional and spiritual support from a

Christian perspective
22 Chapter Street,
London, SW1P 4NP.

Ripple Suicide Prevention

Website: <https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/>

Ripple is an online monitoring tool designed to present a visual page on a user's device the second they are flagged as searching for a harmful keyword or phrase highlighted within the Ripple monitoring tool configuration. Keywords and phrases include any words or terminology which have been identified as displaying potentially damaging online content. The Ripple page is presented before harmful online search results are displayed, and act as an interception to encourage users to visit a mental health support page from one of our charity partners as an alternative to viewing harmful online results. Ripple aims to minimise the risks of the internet, while harnessing its potential for good, by encouraging users to seek mental health support

SHOUT

Text 85258

Website: <https://www.giveusashout.org/>

Anxious/worried/stressed - get 24/7 help from a crisis volunteer

21 Whitefriars Street, London EC4Y 8JJ

Email: info@giveusashout.org

SOS Silence of Suicide

Helpline: 0300 1020 505 Monday-Sunday 8am until midnight

Website: <https://sossilenceofsuicide.org/>

Striving to reduce Shame, Stigma and Silence surrounding Emotional Health & Suicide

For children and adults who need emotional support, understanding, compassion and kindness.

Email: support@sossilenceofsuicide.org

The OLLIE Foundation

Website: <https://theolliefoundation.org>

A charity dedicated to delivering suicide awareness. Providing confidential help and advice to young people and anyone worried about a young person. Helping others to prevent young suicide by delivering a number of training programmes. Delivering online weekly mental health support sessions open and free to all young people.

The OLLIE Foundation

Faulkner House

Victoria Street

St Albans

Hertfordshire

AL1 3SE

Email: contactus@theolliefoundation.org

Call: 07715311891

Child Death Helpline:

Helpline: 0800 282986

Website: www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk

Helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child of any age. Advice, information, listening, befriending, referrals and face to face service by arrangement. Staffed by bereaved parents.

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children,

Barclay House, 37 Queen Square,

London, WC1 3BH

Telephone: 020 7813 8416

Cruse Bereavement Care:

Helpline: 0808 808 1677 or Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk.

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Helpline offering listening support and practical advice related to bereavement. Puts people in touch with local Cruse branches which can provide individual and group support.

Cruse Bereavement Care

PO Box 800,

Richmond,

Surrey TW9 1RG

Email: info@cruse.org.uk.

The Compassionate Friends:

Helpline: 0345 123 2304 or Email: helpline@tcf.org.uk

Website: www.tcf.org.uk

Helpline and support services run by bereaved parents. Support to parents and their immediate families after the death of a child of any age and from any cause. Local contacts and support meetings, befriending, phone and letter contact, leaflets and publications, postal library, retreats and an annual weekend gathering. Compassionate Friends have a sub group called Shadow of Suicide for parents and families of children who have taken their own lives.

The Compassionate Friends

Kilburn Grange,

Priory Park Road,

London NW6 7UJ

Email: info@tcf.org.uk.

Tel: 0345 120 3785

Sobs - Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide:

Helpline: 0300 111 5065 National Helpline Mon to Fri 9am to 9pm

Website: www.sobs.admin.care4free.net

National helpline and other support services run by a self-help group for people bereaved by suicide. Helpline provides listening support and will put people in touch with their nearest local group. Monthly group meetings in various locations. Bereavement pack and literature for survivors. Conferences and support days.

Email: email to email.support@uksobs.org

Way Widowed and Young:

Website: www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

Self-help support group for men and women under 50 whose partner or spouse has died.

Telephone support network of local members. Email support forums.

WAY Widowed and Young,

Suite 14, College Business Centre

Uttoxeter New Road,

Derby DE22 3WZ

Winston's Wish:

Helpline: 08088 020 021

Website: www.winstonswish.org.uk

Support for bereaved children and young people.

Head Office on 01242 515 157

Email info@winstonswish.org

CONCLUSION:

Mental health, stress, depression and anxiety are at epidemic levels in the UK and suicide rates are a big concern. Better support for people experiencing mental health problems would help prevent suicides and enable people to lead fulfilling lives with manageable conditions.

However, lack of support means many people are growing increasingly desperate. It needs to be made easier for people to find help without shame or stigma at work as well as at home and in the community. We also need to raise awareness generally to ensure those in distress are recognised and signposted to get professional help and support before it's too late.

Remember – We are working towards the common goal of preventing suicide but it's not just for one day! World Suicide Prevention Day is the annual focal point and effort needs to continue all year round. The information in this LTB will allow Health and Safety Reps, Branches, CWU Regional Health and Safety Sub-Committees, Joint Health and Safety Committees etc., to organise and run their own local awareness raising initiatives to their own timetable and agenda. Show your support by raising awareness through workplace, branch, regional, area or community action. We need to make sure that clinicians and other service providers care enough about it to make suicide prevention their core business. And we need to make sure that communities care enough about it to be able to identify and support those who may be at heightened risk. We also need to ensure that we are caring ourselves!

Finally, if there is anyone you are concerned about, take a minute to check in with them. It could change their life.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2020 UK & ROI Suicide Statistics
- CWU Guide to Work and Suicide
- BITC Suicide Prevention Toolkit
- Zero Suicide Alliance Guidance Booklet
- Zero Suicide Alliance Suicide Poster

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer