

Suicide Conversation Tool and Support Package

2025 / DERBYSHIRE EDITION



Suicide prevention is everyone's business

The Suicide Conversation Tool is designed to help non mental health professionals in organisations in Derbyshire respond to disclosures of suicidal thoughts. It was originally developed for telephone conversations, but this support package includes resources to help you to adapt it for face-to-face situations.

This package provides a comprehensive set of resources to help you to integrate the Tool into your organisation. It includes a series of editable guides to enable you to tailor the Tool to fit your team's existing processes.

We know that having conversations about suicide can be challenging. By using this Tool and Support Package, staff will feel more confident to manage these potentially lifesaving conversations.

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Thank you

About the Suicide Conversation Tool and Support Package

Any organisation or team working with the public will encounter people who are struggling with their mental health, including having suicidal thoughts. A compassionate, informed, and clear response is essential.

In alignment with local principles, we want everyone in Derbyshire to feel confident and competent to have a conversation about suicide and to know what action to take to support a person in distress. We initially developed this Tool for Live Life Better Derbyshire, which is a free health behaviour change support service, dedicated to improving health. Collaborating with the team, and with specialist input from clinical psychologists, we created a Tool and Support Package. The benefits to using this Tool within Live Life Better Derbyshire are clearly evidenced and it is now being used in a number of other services across Derbyshire.

The Suicide Conversation Tool ([page 13](#)) is a series of questions and prompts, designed to guide a conversation when someone discloses suicidal thoughts. It helps staff to have a validating and compassionate conversation, and to know what action to take to support the person. It helps support teams to work in line with confidentiality requirements and duty of care. This Support Package is a comprehensive set of resources which enable team leaders and managers to work with their team to ensure that

robust processes are in place to support the member of staff, and the person in distress. It comprises a series of editable guides for you to adapt to fit your team, ensuring that you have a clear framework in place.

This Tool and Support Package provides structure and consistency to conversations that we know are already happening. By implementing it into your team or organisation, staff will feel as comfortable as possible to navigate these conversations, ensuring managers, team members and people in distress feel better supported. We want to help you transform the uncertainty and anxiety that often surrounds these conversations, into informed action. We want the silence and avoidance that can occur, to turn in to support. Together we can help prevent suicide.

James Creaghan

Public Health Lead for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
Chair of Derbyshire Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum (DSSPPF)
Public Health Department | Derbyshire County Council

Suicide prevention is everyone's business

“My experience of using the tool was that it helped to keep my mind focussed on helping the client rather than panicking.

It is easy to follow and clear to the person listening that you are asking questions to support them. There was always a helpful response from supporting managers”

Live Life Better Derbyshire

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "04 Suicide Conversation Tool T..." with the following content:

Suicide Conversation Tool Template

All conversation prompts are written in **bold blue font**.

Take your time. **Read the section first before asking the questions.**

If there is an immediate threat to life

At any point during this conversation, if you think that there may be an immediate threat to life, complete the following actions:

- Seek support from a manager by **(detail internal process for seeking support)**.
- A manager will contact you urgently **(detail internal process)** to take the name of the person and call 999 on your behalf.
- Try to keep the person on the phone/within sight and provide the manager with as much information as possible (e.g. location, clothing).
- You do not need to continue with the remainder of the Suicide Conversation Tool if not appropriate.

Opening Conversation Prompts

I'm glad you felt able to share these thoughts with me / Thank you for sharing those thoughts with me.

It sounds like things are really hard at the moment / You are experiencing some difficult thoughts at the moment.

Would it be ok if I asked you some more questions about these thoughts? It will help me to get the right support in place for you, if needed.

Some of these questions might not feel relevant for you, but please answer as honestly as you can.

Confidentiality Reminder

If you have not already spoken about confidentiality during the conversation, discuss this before completing the Suicide Conversation Tool.

Just a reminder of how confidentiality works in (organisation). What you share

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1 Laying the foundation

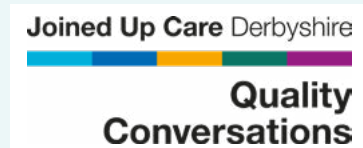
We strongly recommend that staff who use the Suicide Conversation Tool should also:

- Receive regular supervision.
- Participate in reflective practice sessions.
- Complete mental health and suicide awareness training.

There are many mental health and suicide awareness trainings available, varying in length and content. You can find out about available courses by visiting the [Derby and Derbyshire Emotional Health and Wellbeing website](#). This website also has lots of helpful information and resources about suicide prevention.

On this page are four courses which we particularly recommend.

Quality Conversations Training



Quality Conversations training helps participants develop more confidence for everyday conversations with people around mental health. Funded by Joined Up Care Derbyshire, this half-day training is for staff and volunteers from statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations, working in Derbyshire County or Derby City.

It is available as both a virtual (online interactive) and face-to-face course. Registration and booking of places are through Eventbrite. The course is designed to enable participants to:

- learn how to start conversations about wellbeing, mental health, and helpful ways to respond
- develop more confidence in everyday interactions around people's wellbeing
- learn mental health conversation skills for your working life - and life away from work

For any queries related to Quality Conversations training email dchst.qualityconversations@nhs.net

<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/stay-well/quality-conversations-personalisation/quality-conversations/>

Suicide Awareness Training E-Learning - Zero Suicide Alliance



By doing this short training <https://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/suicide-awareness-training>, you will gain the skills and confidence to:

- Help someone who may be considering suicide
- Have a potentially life-saving conversation.

What will you learn?

- How to spot suicide warning signs
- How to have a conversation with someone you are worried about
- Where to signpost for further support
- Suicide is preventable.

Derbyshire Suicide Awareness and Managing Mental Health Conversations Training



For staff and volunteers working with Derbyshire County residents
A half-day course delivered online or face to face, it aims to:

- Build your general awareness and understanding of suicide
- Equip you with skills and confidence to have supportive conversations with people displaying emotional distress.

Visit the Derbyshire County Council website to book your place:

Suicide awareness and bereavement training - Derbyshire County Council: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-training/suicide-training/suicide-awareness-and-bereavement-training.aspx>

Mental Health First Aid Training



Derbyshire Public Health provides this free face to face or online training to increase mental health awareness, knowledge and skills across Derbyshire County.

It is primarily aimed at staff and volunteers who are not qualified as mental health professionals and are likely to be in contact with vulnerable adults.

It reflects a whole-system cross-sector workforce approach to prevention and support. It reinforces that mental health is everyone's business.

Click [here](#) for available dates, eligibility criteria and to book your place.

People who have completed an Adult Mental Health First Aid course more than 3 years ago, can apply to attend a Mental Health First Aid Refresher.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-training/mental-health-first-aid-training/mental-health-first-aid-training.aspx>

2 Laying the foundation as managers

Before starting to use the Suicide Conversation Tool, you need to carefully consider how it will work within your service. The first step is to work through the guide for supporting managers: [Responding to Disclosures of Suicidality - Suicide Conversation Tool Process for Supporting Managers.](#)

Responding To Disclosures Of Suicidality - Suicide Conversation Tool Process for Supporting Managers

Click here to download Word document

This document provides guidance to managers who are supporting team members, following the completion of the Suicide Conversation Tool. Working through this guide will help you to understand the Tool and be able to support team members appropriately. It helps you to consider aspects like:

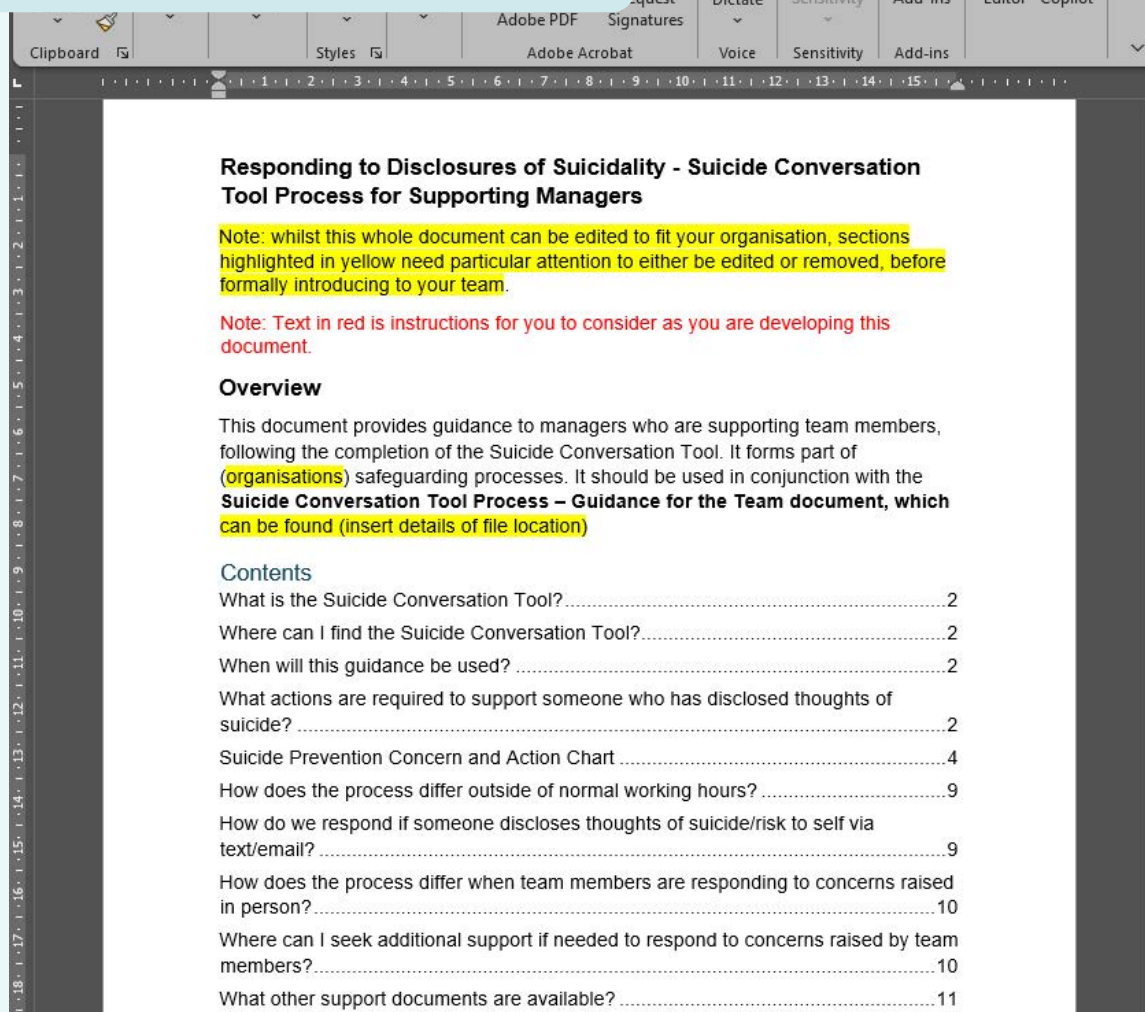
- Where can staff find the Suicide Conversation Tool?
- When will this Tool be used?
- What actions are required to support someone who has disclosed thoughts of suicide?
- How to adapt the Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart ([page 18](#))
- How does the process differ outside of normal working hours?
- How to respond if someone discloses thoughts of suicide/risk to self via text/email?
- How does the process differ when staff are responding to concerns raised in person? See the Face To Face Suicide Conversation Tool Prompt ([page 17](#))
- Where can managers seek additional support if needed to respond to concerns raised by staff?
- What wellbeing support may a team member need after completing the Suicide Conversation Tool?
- What other support documents or templates are available or needed? See the Templates section ([page 12](#)) to find examples which you may want to use and amend to suit your service.

Working through and amending this guidance document to fit your team, will help you to set up a clear and robust procedure. We recommend that you discuss and share it with other members of the management team.

With this guide amended and completed, you can move on to the next step.

Responding To Disclosures Of Suicidality - Suicide Conversation Tool Process for Supporting Managers

Click here to download Word document



<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/01-Responding-to-Disclosures-of-Suicidality-S-C-T-Process-for-Supporting-Managers-October-2025-Copy-1.docx>

We have developed two documents which will help support the management team to feel confident to support staff having these conversations:

The Training Session Template - Supporting Managers.

A guide for training managers supporting staff using the Tool, including some frequently asked questions.

Click here to download Word document

Practice Case Studies: four examples of case studies for you to use in practice scenarios.

Click here to download Word document

3 Laying the foundation for staff

You've done the hard work by working through and amending the supporting managers guide to fit your team processes. Before introducing the Tool to the wider team, the next step is to work through and amend the guidance for staff: [**Suicide Conversation Tool - Guidance for the Team.**](#)

This is a simple guide, explaining how to use the Tool during interactions with people. It explains the Tool's purpose, where to find it, and the steps to take when someone discloses suicidal thoughts, including seeking support from a manager.

You will be able to copy over some of the content from the managers guide. We suggest you try to keep it as clear and simple as possible. Discuss the content with the management team or another colleague, as they may have other ideas about how to help make this guide best fit for your team/organisation.

This document will lay out the procedure in writing for the team. To help them understand the importance of the Tool and how to use it, we have provided you with resources to train them (see Bringing the Team into the Conversation ([page 15](#))).

Suicide Conversation Tool – Guidance for the Team

Click here to download
word document

Suicide Conversation Tool – Guidance for the Team (organisational position responding to disclosures)

Note: while the whole document can be edited to fit your organisation, sections highlighted in yellow need particular attention to either be edited or removed, before formally introducing to your team.

Overview

This document outlines the (organisation) Suicide Conversation Tool process. It explains the Tool's purpose, where to find it, and the steps to take when someone discloses suicidal thoughts, including seeking support from a manager. This process is part of (organisation)'s guidelines and should be used alongside manager support.

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<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/02-Suicide-Conversation-Tool-Guidance-for-the-Team-October-2025-1.docx>

4 Templates

Here are some example templates of communications that can be sent to the person in distress and their GP, after using the Suicide Conversation Tool. These can be edited and used as required.

Mental Health Support Signposting Email Template

**Click here to download
Word document**

This email template is designed to be sent to the person in distress, following the completion of the Suicide Conversation Tool with them. It lists details of various mental health support options, both local and national. It includes a link to [Derbyshire County Council's mental health and wellbeing page](#). If the person lives outside of Derbyshire, you may need to edit parts of this.

Mental Health Support Information Template

**Click here to download
Word document**

This template contains very similar content to the Mental Health Support Signposting Email Template, but is designed as a printable information sheet. This can be given to the person in distress if you have spoken with them face to face or can be sent to them via the post.

GP 'Risk to Self' Email Template

**Click here to download
Word document**

This template has been designed to be sent to a GP following the completion of the Suicide Conversation Tool with someone. This is to inform the GP of the person's suicidal disclosure. It can be edited to tailor it as appropriate.

5 Suicide Conversation Tool Template

Having completed the steps in the Laying the Foundation sections, you'll be ready to take a good look [at the Tool itself.](#)

We have designed this template as a step-by-step guide with nine questions to support staff in their conversations after someone discloses suicidal thoughts. Staff do not need to follow the 'script' word for word. However, we have written the questions in a way that can be read out loud. This is because we have found that some staff benefit from having it in this format, particularly if they are feeling anxious.

Editing the Tool to make it work for your team should be relatively straightforward. We have highlighted the key parts you will want to edit, within the document. You can then copy and paste it into a format that best suits your team.

Once you have introduced the Tool to the team (see next section), and trialled it, you will likely want to make further edits to it based on staff feedback.



Suicide Conversation Tool Template

Click here to download word document

Suicide Conversation Tool Template

All conversation prompts are written in **bold blue font**.

Take your time. **Read the section first before asking the questions.**

If there is an immediate threat to life

At any point during this conversation, if you think that there may be an immediate threat to life, complete the following actions:

- Seek support from a manager by **(detail internal process for seeking support)**.
- A manager will contact you urgently **(detail internal process)** to take the name of the person and call 999 on your behalf.
- Try to keep the person on the phone/within sight and provide the manager with as much information as possible (e.g. location, clothing).
- You do not need to continue with the remainder of the Suicide Conversation Tool if not appropriate.

Opening Conversation Prompts

I'm glad you felt able to share these thoughts with me / Thank you for sharing those thoughts with me.

It sounds like things are **really hard at the moment** / You are experiencing some difficult thoughts **at the moment**.

Would it be ok if I asked you some more questions about these thoughts? It will help me to get the right support in place for you, if needed.

Some of these questions might not feel relevant for you, but please answer as honestly as you can.

Confidentiality Reminder

If you have not already spoken about confidentiality during the conversation, discuss this before completing the Suicide Conversation Tool.

Just a reminder of how confidentiality works in **(organisation)**. What you share

Page 1 of 3 855 words English (United Kingdom) Display Settings Focus 90%

<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/04-Suicide-Conversation-Tool-Template-August-2025.docx>

6 Bringing the team into the conversation

There are different ways to introduce the Tool to your team, and you will know what will work best.

You have already edited the [**Suicide Conversation Tool - Guidance for the Team**](#) document, so will be clear about the processes the team need to be aware of, and the support available to them.

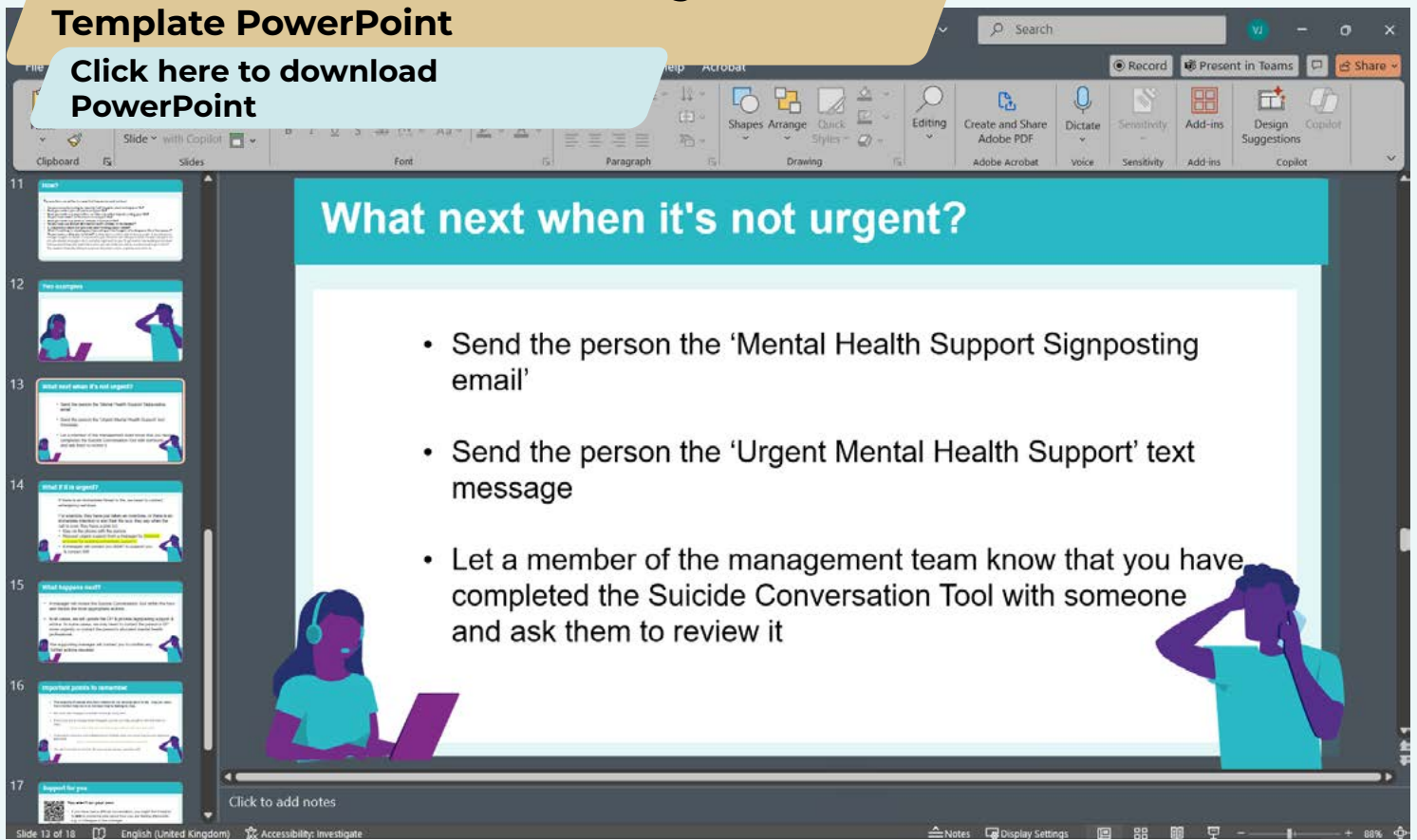
We have designed this training template which you may find helpful as a way of introducing the Tool to the team: [**Suicide Conversation Tool Training Template \(PowerPoint\)**](#). The colours we use are based around the suicide awareness and prevention ribbon that you have seen throughout this document. You can edit the slides to best suit and support your team.

We recommend that this training is ideally led by two managers with mental health training. Within the slide deck are two example scripts that the trainers can act out, which can really help to bring the work to life.



Suicide Conversation Tool Training Template PowerPoint

Click here to download PowerPoint



<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/05-Suicide-Conversation-Tool-Training-Template-PowerPoint-August-2025.pptx>

7 Additional Resources

Face to Face Suicide Conversation Tool Prompt

[Click here to download PDF](#)

Face to Face Suicide Conversation Tool Prompt

Ask for permission to explore

Advise the person that you would like to ask them some more questions about how they are feeling to make sure they have the right support in place/see if you can help. Encourage the person to answer as honestly as they can. Let them know that some of the questions might not seem relevant.

Confidentiality

Remind the person of the organisation's confidentiality statement, if you haven't already talked about this during the conversation

Questions to ask the person

- Have you made a specific plan of how to end your life?
- Have you made any preparation or taken any action towards ending your life?
- Do you have access to the means to end your life?
- Do you have contact with mental health services at the moment?
- Is anyone else aware that you have been experiencing thoughts of suicide?
- What, if anything, is stopping you from acting on the thought of ending your life at the moment?

Do you have a safety plan in place?

- **If Yes** – encourage the person to engage with their safety plan
- **If no** – explain that a safety plan is a practical tool to help keep you safe when you are feeling distressed. Encourage the person to think about activities they can do/people they can speak with to help them stay safe whilst they are awaiting further support.

Advise & Reassure

- Reassure the person e.g. these feelings will pass, there is hope things will get better, there is help available
- Provide the person with appropriate resources
- Advise the person that we will be in touch with any further support available.



Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart

The Suicide Conversation Tool helps us to determine the most appropriate follow-up actions and support for a person at a given time. The chart on this page outlines suggested follow-up actions. It can be used as a quick reference version of the whole chart which you will find on the following pages.

The chart on the next pages provides more detail on the actions required by the team member and the supporting manager.

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart

Click here to download editable Powerpoint

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Thoughts of Suicide only •Person informs that they do not plan to act on thoughts. •I have made no plans or preparations. •States reasons to continue living e.g. family, pets, hope for future. •Feels able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify. <i>This may include people with strong feelings of hopelessness, wishing to escape but not wishing to die.</i>	Thoughts of suicide & some level of intention to act •Experiencing thoughts of suicide but does not have a concrete/immediate plan to act on these thoughts. •May have considered how, where, or when they may end their life. •Able to identify/engage with a safety plan to keep safe. •Feels able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify.	Clear intention to act on thoughts & plans or preparations in place to make a suicide attempt •Informs that they have plans to end their life. •May have prepared to end their life, for example, stockpiling medication, written suicide note. •Does not feel that they will be able to keep themselves safe from thoughts of suicide.	Immediate risk to life •Person has informed they are actively trying to end their life whilst speaking to us or they have immediate plans to. •For example, the person has taken an overdose of medications or is experiencing a strong urge to end their life imminently.
With person's consent, update GP of the conversation. Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent	GP or allocated MH professional to be informed. Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent	Person requires urgent support from Crisis teams-via GP or allocated Mental Health Professional. Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent	Immediate support required from emergency services – A&E or 999

<https://joinedupcarederbyshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/09-Suicide-Prevention-Concern-and-Action-Chart-August-2025.pptx>

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart

Level 1

Thoughts of Suicide only*

- Does not plan to act on thoughts.
- Have made no plans or preparations.
- States reasons to continue living e.g. family, pets, hope for future.
- Feel able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify.

*This may include people with strong feelings of hopelessness, wishing to escape but not wishing to die.



With person's consent, update GP of the conversation.

Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent.

Level 2

Thoughts of suicide & some level of intention to act

- Having thoughts of suicide but does not have concrete/ immediate plan to act on these thoughts.
- May have considered how, where or when they may end their life.
- Able to identify/engage with safety plan to keep safe.
- Feels able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify.



GP or allocated MH professional to be informed.

Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent.

Level 3

Clear intention to act on thoughts & plans or preparations in place to make a suicide attempt

- Informs that they have plans to end their life.
- May have prepared to end their life, for example, stockpiling medication, written suicide note.
- Does not feel that they will be able to keep themselves safe from thoughts of suicide.



Person requires urgent support from Crisis teams - via GP or allocated Mental Health Professional.

Support email & Urgent MH text to be sent

Level 4

Immediate risk to life

- They are actively trying to end their life whilst speaking to us or they have immediate plans to.
- For example, taken an overdose of medications or experiencing a strong urge to end their life imminently.



Immediate support required from emergency services – A&E or 999.

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart Level 1

Level 1

Thoughts of Suicide only*

- Does not plan to act on thoughts.
- Have made no plans or preparations.
- States reasons to continue living e.g. family, pets, hope for future.
- Feel able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify.

*This may include people with strong feelings of hopelessness, wishing to escape but not wishing to die.



Actions for Team Member

- Inform management team that you have completed the Suicide Conversation Tool with the person.
- Send 'Mental Health Support Signposting' email to person via email (or letter if requested) to the person.
- Send Urgent Mental Health Support text to the person.

Actions for supporting Manager

- Review completed Suicide Conversation Tool within 1 hour.
- Follow up with team member to confirm you have reviewed/seek further information if required.
- If person has consented complete 'GP Risk to Self' template and send to GP email address.
- Complete the supporting manager's notes section on the Suicide Conversation Tool to confirm appropriate action has been taken.
- Record visibly on person's record 'Suicide Conversation Tool completed with person on (date)'.

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart Level 2

Level 2

Thoughts of suicide & some level of intention to act

- Person is experiencing thoughts of suicide but has no concrete/immediate plan to act on these thoughts.
- May have considered how, where, or when they may end their life.
- Able to identify/engage with safety plan to keep safe.
Feels able to access support if thoughts of suicide intensify.



Actions for Team Member

- Inform management team that you have completed the Suicide Conversation Tool with the person.
- Send 'Mental Health Support Signposting' email to person (or letter if requested).
- Send Urgent Mental Health Support text to the person.
- Inform the person that you will share this information with their GP/CMHT and they will receive further support.



Actions for supporting Manager

- Review completed Suicide Conversation Tool within 1 hour.
- If person is supported by IAPT services, VCSE mental health services, or has no MH support → **Contact GP during the same working day**. Request for GP to contact the person regarding concerns of suicidal ideation. Complete the 'GP Risk to Self' template and email to GP surgery.
- If the person is supported by CMHT → **Contact CMHT during the same working day** to provide an update on the level of safety concern.
- Complete the supporting manager's notes section on the Suicide Conversation Tool to confirm appropriate action has been taken.
- Record visibly on person's record 'Suicide Conversation Tool completed with person on (date)'.

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart Level 3

Level 3

Clear intention to act on thoughts & plans or preparations in place to make a suicide attempt

- Person informs that they have plans to end their life.
- They may have prepared to end their life, for example, stockpiling medication, written suicide note.
- The person does not feel that they will be able to keep themselves safe from thoughts of suicide.



Actions for Team Member

- Inform management team that you have completed the Suicide Conversation Tool with the person.
- Send 'Mental Health Support Signposting' email to the person (or letter if requested).
- Send Urgent Mental Health Support text to the person.
- Inform the person that you will share this information with their GP/CMHT and they will receive further support.



Actions for supporting Manager

- Review completed Suicide Conversation Tool within 1 hour.
- If person is supported by IAPT services, VCSE mental health services or has no MH support → **Contact GP ASAP**. Request for GP to contact the person regarding concerns of suicidal ideation. Complete the 'GP Risk to Self' template and email to GP surgery.
- If the person is supported by CMHT → **Contact CMHT ASAP** to provide update on level of safety concern.
- Contact the person to advise who will be in contact to support them and ensure they are aware of where to seek support whilst they are awaiting further contact.
- Complete the supporting managers notes section on the Suicide Conversation Tool to confirm appropriate action has been taken.
- Record visibly on person's record 'Suicide Conversation Tool completed with person on (date)'.

Suicide Prevention Concern and Action Chart Level 4

Level 4

Immediate risk to life

Person has informed they are actively trying to end their life whilst speaking to us or they have immediate plans to. For example, the person has taken an overdose of medications or is experiencing a strong urge to end their life imminently.



Actions for Team Member

- Keep the person on the phone (or with you if face to face).
- Reassure the person that you are listening and can seek help.
- Request urgent support from a manager.
- Follow guidance from the supporting manager and try to confirm the person's location, actions they have taken (& physical description if possible).
- Once emergency services have arrived, end the phone call and ensure conversation with the person has been clearly documented.



Actions for Supporting Manager

- Contact team member urgently by calling on mobile/MS Teams to listen into conversation with person.
- Using an additional device, call 999 to request police support (and ambulance support if needed).
- Request urgent support from emergency services for immediate risk to life.
- Communication with the team member e.g., via Teams chat/email/note pad to elicit person's details (record ID), location and description (if possible).
- Continue to support and reassure the team member until emergency services arrive.
- Request incident number from emergency services.
- Complete the supporting manager's notes section on the Suicide Conversation Tool to confirm appropriate action has been taken.
- Record visibly on the person's record 'Suicide Conversation Tool complete with person on (date)'.

Thank you

Your commitment to embedding this Tool into your organisation or team is more than a procedural update. It's a powerful act of care. By equipping staff with the competence to navigate conversations around suicide safely and compassionately, you are helping to create a culture where people feel heard, supported, and never alone.

This work matters. It empowers colleagues to respond with confidence in moments of crisis. It ensures that no one is left wondering what to say or how to help. And most importantly, it can reduce distress and save lives.

Thank you for leading with empathy, for championing safer conversations, and for showing what it means to truly support one another.

You are making a difference—one conversation at a time.



Suicide Conversation Tool and Support Package developed by Olivia Allanson, Service Development Officer, Live Life Better Derbyshire, Derbyshire County Council. Olivia.
Allanson@derbyshire.gov.uk



**Derbyshire Community
Health Services**
NHS Foundation Trust

