

20 January 2015

NHS in Bassetlaw should aim for zero suicides – Leon Duveen

Health bosses in Bassetlaw have been urged to back a campaign aimed at dramatically reducing the number of suicides across the NHS.

Local Liberal Democrat parliamentary Spokesman Leon Duveen has called on local NHS trusts to commit to an ambition for 'zero suicides' in their care.

It follows Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg's call for an overhaul of how the health service treats mental health.

Today Leon said [Nottinghamshire Healthcare](#) and [Bassetlaw CCG](#) should think about how it could to provide better provide care for people suffering depression and other serious illnesses.

He said: "Latest figures show 384 people took their own lives in the East Midlands, with 4,700 suicides in England in 2013. More than three quarters of these deaths were men.

"This is not inevitable. These tragic deaths can be prevented. The majority of people who are feeling suicidal do not want to die. We have to do more to make sure people have the support they need so they do not get to the point where they believe taking their own life is their only option.

"That's why I hope Nottinghamshire Healthcare & Bassetlaw CCG commit to the new ambition of zero suicides in our area. We have to work together to remove the stigma around talking about suicide, so people are not afraid to ask for help."

Three areas - Liverpool, the South West and East England have already created programmes to eliminate suicide by 2017/18 and steps could include:

- Keeping in touch with patients who move back home after being on a ward
- Having a personal safety plan in place so patients, family and friends know what to do and where to go for help if they need it
- Bringing safety systems in line with treatment for physical health - for example, designing a process for any member of staff to follow if a patient is at high risk of suicide. This would tell staff what to do, who to call, where to send the patient, and how to follow it up
- Joining all services up so that patients who are at risk will not fall through the cracks - linking GP, carers and mental health services

Nick Clegg said: "Suicide is, and always has been, a massive taboo in our society. People are genuinely scared to talk about it, never mind intervene when they believe a loved one is at risk.

"This isn't about blame. It is about doing more in every area of our society to ensure that people don't get to that point where they believe taking their own life is their only option."

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Leon Duveen

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Notes to editors:

Yesterdays's conference at the King's Fund, in London, is part of a wider campaign by Nick Clegg and the Liberal Democrats to bring treatment for mental health problems out of the shadows and in line with physical health. In Government we have helped build a strong foundation for the improvement of mental health services, including:

- Setting up and leading the first ever Mental Health Taskforce with senior ministers from across the coalition
- Securing a £400 million investment over the course of this parliament to improve access to talking therapies
- £150m investment for treatment and support for children and young adults with eating disorders
- Introducing ground-breaking waiting time and access standards to put a limit on the length of time people have to wait for treatment, backed up by more than £120 million investment
- £54m for the Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme
- £7m investment to fund 50 new inpatient beds for children and young people

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