

## Press release

### World Health Organization redesignates the National Suicide Research Foundation as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Surveillance and Research in Suicide Prevention

The World Health Organization has redesignated the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) as a WHO Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Surveillance and Research in Suicide Prevention until December 2027. WHO collaborating centres are institutions which are designated by the WHO to carry out activities in support of the WHO's programmes at country, intercountry, regional, interregional and global levels.

The NSRF is an independent multi-disciplinary research unit which aims to provide a nationally and internationally recognised body of reliable knowledge from a multi-disciplinary perspective on the risk and protective factors associated with suicidal behaviour with the ultimate aim of providing solid evidence to inform policy development and intervention in the prevention of suicide and the management of patients presenting with self-harm. The NSRF is primarily funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Health and the HSE as part of *Connecting for Life*, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2024. It has a Memorandum of Collaboration with University College Cork where it is based.

The Irish NSRF has been a WHO Collaborating Centre for 8 years following initial designation in December 2015 and has provided technical advice to inform WHO's work in establishing surveillance systems of self-harm and suicide, as well as in implementing and evaluating national suicide prevention programmes. This work has spanned across more than 20 countries, including Namibia, Iran, Ecuador and Trinidad & Tobago. In particular, the template of the [National Self-Harm Registry Ireland](#) has been central in informing surveillance of self-harm internationally.

NSRF and WHO, with support from the Department of Health in Ireland, will continue to build on this collaboration, by providing technical support informing the establishment of surveillance systems of self-harm and suicide and improving suicide monitoring in specific countries; and guiding and supporting countries in establishing national suicide prevention strategies and implementation, including evaluation plans and measurable indicators, in addition to contributions to the following resources:

- [Preventing Suicide: A resource for filmmakers and others working on stage and screen](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Strategies: Progress, examples and indicators](#)
- [Live Life: An Implementation Guide for Suicide Prevention in Countries](#)
- [WHO Mental Health at work guidelines](#)

Professor Ella Arensman, Chief Scientist at National Suicide Research Foundation and Head of the School of Public Health, UCC, WHOCC lead states:

*"The redesignation of the NSRF's WHOCC is a reflection of the specialist expertise and high-quality research in the area of self-harm/suicide surveillance and suicide prevention, which has been crucial in making a difference in a growing number of other countries globally."*

Dr Alexandra Fleischmann, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use at the World Health Organization, states that:

*"WHO Collaborating Centres are essential for WHO to fulfill its mandated activities and to ensure the scientific validity of global health work. In particular, the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) provides strategic support in developing and strengthening capacity in surveillance and research for suicide prevention in countries and regions. WHO highly appreciates having this top centre among the WHO Collaborating Centres and that the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) is part of the international collaborative network."*

Mary Butler TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, states:

*'I am pleased that the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) has been re-designated as a Collaborating Centre by the World Health Organisation. The work undertaken by the National Suicide Research Foundation is absolutely vital in understanding the scale, as well as the underlying causes, of suicide and self-harm, so that we can tackle these most effectively as a country. The NSRF has worked extensively for many years with international partners and their re-designation as a WHO*

*collaborating centre is a tribute to the excellent work the NSRF has done in Ireland and in supporting other countries in the development of national suicide prevention programmes, and in their efforts to establish and maintain their own surveillance systems for suicide and self-harm. Globally, there are just five such research centres in the world recognised by the WHO as collaborating centres in suicide research and prevention. I whole-heartedly commend the efforts of the National Suicide Research Foundation and congratulate them on their fantastic achievement.'*

## Notes for Editors

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- For further press queries please contact Mr Niall McTernan, National Suicide Research Foundation.  
E: [niall.mcternan@ucc.ie](mailto:niall.mcternan@ucc.ie)
- Suicide reporting guidelines for journalists can be found here: <http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-work-ireland/media-guidelines-ireland>
- Journalists reporting on this event are advised to include information on relevant helpline and websites: **Text About It:** Text HELLO to 50808; **Samaritans:** free phone 116 123 or email [jo@samaritans.ie](mailto:jo@samaritans.ie); **Childline:** 1800 66 66 66; [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie); [www.yourmentalhealth.ie](http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie) ; [www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)