



The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template



SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority - Department of Health

1B. Please provide the official title/ description of the Strategy, Policy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative:

Protect Life 2 – A Strategy for Preventing Suicide and Self-Harm in Northern Ireland 2019-2024

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to -

Developing a:	Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a:	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a:	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a:	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service		<input type="checkbox"/>				
Delivering a Public Service		<input type="checkbox"/>				

1D. Please provide the aims and/or objectives of the Strategy, Policy, Plan or Public Service:

The Strategy has two aims:

- 1 – Reduce the Suicide rate in Northern Ireland by 10% by 2024.
- 2 – Ensure suicide prevention services and support are delivered appropriately in deprived areas where suicide and self-harm rates are highest.

The Strategy has 10 objectives:

- 1 - Ensure strategic, collaborative cross-departmental engagement to reducing deaths from suicide
- 2 - Improve public awareness of suicide prevention and associated services
- 3 - Enhance responsible media reporting on suicide
- 4 - Enhance community capacity to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour within local communities.
- 5 - Reduce the prevalence of suicide amongst people who use mental health services
- 6 - Restrict access to the means of suicide
- 7 - Enhance the initial response to, and care and recovery of, people who are suicidal /



experiencing suicidal behavior

8 - Enhance services for people who self-harm, particularly for those who do so repeatedly

9 - Ensure the provision of effective and timely support for those who are exposed to suicide or suicidal behavior

10 - Strengthen the local evidence base on suicide patterns, trends and risks, and on effective interventions to prevent suicide and self-harm

1E. Which definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?:

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition)

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below)

Empty text box for providing details and rationale for the 'Other Definition'.

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable¹

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas? Yes No

Please explain:

While local research has shown that suicide is more prevalent in urban areas, rural dwellers have experienced a unique set of circumstances and challenges in recent years, including an ageing population, decline in farm incomes, changing labour markets and depopulation/migration in some areas.

If the response is NO after entering explanation GO TO Section 3

definition of 'rural' is not applicable, the policy is unlikely to fall under the scope of the Act and you should be able to screen out at this stage



2B. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it will impact people in rural areas differently:

Certain factors have been identified as creating risk and stress to people living in rural areas over and above the risk factors for suicide affecting general populations. These include isolation, barriers to accessing services, a more conservative approach to help seeking, heightened stigma associated with mental health issues, being "different" (e.g. LGBT) in a rural context, availability of some means of suicide (firearm ownership, pesticides) and high risk occupational groups such as farmers and vets.

2C. Please indicate the rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on (see list at note 1):

Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas.
Deprivation in Rural Areas.



SECTION 3 – Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes

No

Please explain:

Protect Life 2 positively affects the economic needs of people in rural areas where services are delivered free of charge to the client. Consultation responses and local research have identified social needs.

If the response is **NO** please explain above and **GO TO Section 4**

3B. Please indicate which methods or information sources were used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas (see note 2 for examples) and provide details including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc:

- Protect Life 2 consultation workshops September – November 2016
- Protect Life 2 Consultation responses from rural stakeholders (Rural Support, Costa Rural Support Network)
- [DoH Health Inequalities Report](#)
- University of Ulster Research Understanding Suicide and Helpseeking in Urban and Rural Areas in Northern Ireland 2016

3C. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified:

Using the definition of ‘social and economic need’ listed with guidance provided, two areas are identified in relation to Health and Social Care needs, and economic needs.

"A need can be considered as something that is essential to achieve a standard of living comparable to the population in general."

Health and Social Care Needs



The primary Health and Social Care 'need' of rural dwellers is identified as availability and provision of timely and high quality suicide prevention and self-harm services.

Economic Needs

We considered an economic 'need' may relate to the cost of service provision.



SECTION 4 – Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas identified by the Public Authority:

Local suicide prevention plans take account of particular circumstances in rural areas when selecting interventions. In the Northern Area, suicide prevention officers are based in Rural Community Networks. This provides a potential template for helping to address suicide in rural areas.

All suicide prevention services under Protect Life are provided free of charge to the client.

Under Protect Life 2 there is potential for a new range of services to be procured which will be available to those in rural areas. This will include training, community support, and suicide prevention services.

The Strategy identifies a number of ways in which rural needs can be addressed and actively promotes positive action in rural areas. Farmers have been identified as a particular group who may require additional support and this is promoted through the Farm Families Health Checks scheme.

The Strategy includes the provision of services at a locality level to promote accessibility; availability of Lifeline on a 24/7 basis; delivery of the Self Harm Improvement Programme; and identification of the Rural Support helpline as a key initiative for those in rural areas.

SECTION 5 – Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revision of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

No

Please explain:



The Strategy has a specific section detailing the rural issues which are specific to Northern Ireland in relation to suicide prevention. As the Strategy is implemented a range of services will be procured on a regional and local basis with equality of access for rural residents.

The Strategy will be overseen by the Ministerial Co-ordination Group on which all Departments are represented and provides an opportunity to ensure rural needs are addressed. The All Departmental Officials Group for the Making Life Better Public Health strategy also has suicide prevention as a standing agenda item. All Departments are also represented on this group and this provides another opportunity for any rural issues to be raised in relation to suicide prevention.



SECTION 6 – Documenting and Recording

6A. I confirm that details of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment will be recorded on the Public Authority’s Annual Monitoring Return and the RNIA Template retained by the Public Authority (please check box)

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Position / Grade:	Suicide Prevention Policy Lead
Division/Branch	Health Improvement Policy Branch
Signature:	<i>Sholto Carnew</i>
Date:	10 May 2019
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Bryan Dooley
Position / Grade:	Head of Health Improvement Policy Branch
Division / Branch	Health Improvement Policy Branch
Signature:	<i>B Dooley</i>
Date:	10 May 2019

Note 1

Rural Policy Areas (relates to question 2C):

- Rural Businesses
- Rural Tourism
- Rural Housing
- Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas
- Education or Training in Rural Areas
- Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas
- Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas
- Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas
- Poverty in Rural Areas
- Deprivation in Rural Areas
- Rural Crime or Community Safety
- Rural Development
- Other (Please specify)

Note 2

Examples of methods or information sources used (relates to question 3B):

- Consultation with Rural Stakeholders
- Consultation with Other Organisations
- Surveys or Questionnaires
- Other Methods or Information Sources (include details)
- Published Statistics
- Research Papers
- Other Publications

