

New suicide prevention clinical guidance

NHS England suggests a new safety-first approach for suicide prevention.¹

This prioritises understanding precipitating, protective, and perpetuating factors, not risk prediction tools. Practitioners are advised to co-produce this, by focusing on emotional, physical, and social wellbeing, to agree on immediate actions (e.g. refer to crisis teams if appropriate) and long-term safety planning.

A written plan with patients consisting of actionable steps and support services are then incorporated into ongoing care. Effectiveness remains uncertain; more research is needed.

Specialist GP Sophie Ball and Liz Moulton have some suggestions - called the HOLLA action (How Often? Long Lasting? Act?)²

- How often are you having these thoughts?
- Do these thoughts come into your head and go quickly, or do they stick around?
- Do they bother you?
- Have you ever acted on these thoughts?
- Do you think you ever would?

References:

1. [Staying safe from suicide](#) NHS Guidance (2025)

[What do I say next? Everyday mental health conversation in primary care: a practical guide.](#) (Book)

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