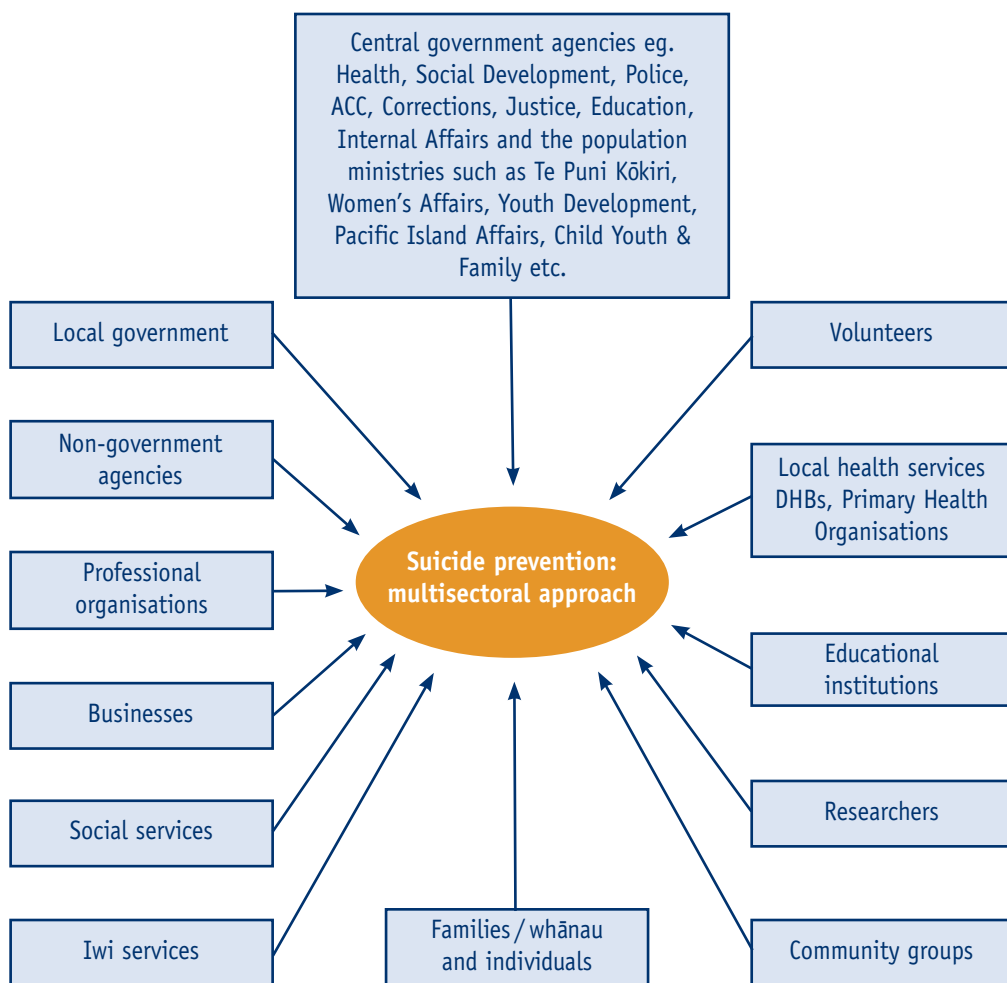


Suicide Prevention in New Zealand - Aotearoa

Suicide Prevention is everybody's business (International Association for Suicide Prevention).

The full spectrum of suicide prevention is a shared responsibility for the whole of New Zealand society, including community groups, friends, colleagues, whānau, hapū, iwi, families, professional groups, all levels of government, business, and non-governmental organisations.

These efforts will be most effective when everyone is clear about their specific role, is using a safe, evidence based approach and is working towards a common goal.



Multisectoral approach to suicide prevention

Source: Figure 5, New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy



The New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy focuses activities into seven main goals:

GOALS	RATIONALE	EXAMPLES
1. Promote mental health and wellbeing, and prevent mental health problems	A substantial body of research evidence has shown that social, familial, individual and related factors contribute both to the development of suicidal behaviour and to the development of mental disorders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting initiatives to support the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of families, whānau and individuals • Implementing policies and practices in a range of settings including schools, universities, marae, churches and other faith based organisations, prisons and workplaces to promote mental health and wellbeing
2. Improve the care of people who are experiencing mental disorders associated with suicidal behaviour	Research evidence has shown that mental disorders are the major contributor to the development of suicidal behaviour. Estimates have suggested that up to 70 percent of suicide attempts can be attributed to mental disorders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the public to recognise and be more responsive to people experiencing symptoms of mental disorder, including how to seek appropriate help • Improving access to primary and secondary mental health services
3. Improve the care of people who make non-fatal suicide attempts	Research evidence has shown that amongst those making non-fatal suicide attempts approximately 50 percent will make at least one further suicide attempt with one in 10 ultimately dying by suicide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving methods of treatment, management, after-care and support for those who have made a suicide attempt • Supporting families and whānau to care for someone who has made a suicide attempt
4. Reduce access to means of suicide	Research evidence has shown that, under some circumstances, controlling access to means of suicide may reduce risks of suicidal behaviour. For example, in New Zealand the introduction of the amendment to the Arms Act in 1992 was associated with a dramatic reduction in firearm-related suicides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging the adoption of safer dispensing of medications and other lethal chemicals commonly used in suicide and suicide attempts • Promoting vigilance amongst families, whānau and friends of people with suicidal behaviour to limit access to means of suicide
5. Promote the safe reporting and portrayal of suicidal behaviour by the media	Research evidence has shown that some styles of media reporting and portrayal of suicide and suicidal behaviour may, under some circumstances, increase suicide rates through encouragement of 'copycat' suicide and through the normalisation of suicide as an acceptable response to adversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the media to promote safe reporting and encourage consistent practice; encouraging media to promote help-seeking behaviours • Providing accessible and up-to-date information on suicidal behaviour to the media
6. Support families, whānau, friends and others affected by a suicide or suicide attempt	Research evidence has shown that being exposed to a family/whānau member who has died by suicide is often associated with feelings of grief, guilt and shame. In turn, these reactions may lead to increased risks of mental health problems and suicidal behaviour in the surviving family/whānau members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice and guidance to communities, agencies and organisations in key settings on postvention response • Supporting people who have lost someone close to them by suicide, or who are affected by a suicide attempt
7. Expand the evidence about rates, causes and effective interventions	The success of any prevention initiative is largely determined by the level of understanding of the problem and how best to address it. Focus needs to be on careful programme design and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting and supporting research to expand the evidence base on suicide prevention • Promoting ways to improve the use of research findings

Reference: Associate Minister of Health. (2006). *The New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy 2006 - 2016*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
See SPINZ Info sheet 3 to find out more about suicide prevention activities.

Visit www.spinz.org.nz for information about what people can do to prevent suicide.

If you are concerned about somebody who might be unsafe now, call Youthline (0800 37 66 33) or Lifeline (0800 54 33 54).
In an emergency, call 111.