



## **BS 30480:2025: Suicide and the workplace**

This British Standard provides practical guidance to help organisations prevent suicide, support people in crisis, and build safe, supportive workplaces. It emphasises proactive action - clear strategies, policies and practices - rather than reacting unprepared to crises.

Some recommendations reflect good general practice; others focus specifically on suicide prevention. Although some measures may feel new or resource intensive, effective prevention reduces risk, improves wellbeing, and avoids the significant personal and organisational impacts of suicide.

Suicide touches most workplaces - through a colleague's death, bereavement, or exposure to an attempt. While suicide itself is uncommon, exposure is frequent, and stigma, limited knowledge, and discomfort discussing suicide often block open conversation. Many people experience suicidal thoughts, and each death affects a wide network.

Reactions to suicide vary widely and all are valid. Recognising this helps organisations respond with compassion. Stigma can deter people from seeking help, yet personal struggles cannot be separated from work, and workplace stressors can contribute.

Using clear, non judgemental language reduces stigma and encourages help seeking. Distinguishing between suicidal thoughts and behaviours enables more appropriate support.

Without proper support, suicide exposure can harm wellbeing, attendance and performance. Creating psychologically safe environments strengthens prevention and supports those affected.

Most suicide deaths occur among working age people, and many are preventable. As expectations around staff wellbeing rise, organisations face increasing responsibility - and potential risk - if they neglect suicide prevention. This Standard offers guidance to help them make a meaningful, protective impact.

## 1. Scope and Purpose

- Guidance for preventing suicide, responding to suicide risk, and supporting those affected.
- Applies to all sectors and organisation sizes.
- Intended for all workers, especially managers, HR, H&S, OH, and wellbeing teams.

## 2. Foundational Components

The Standard covers:

- **Organisational culture** — creating psychologically safe, supportive workplaces where emotional needs can be met.
- **Strategy and policy** — developing suicide prevention strategies, cross referenced policies, crisis plans, communication plans, and governance.
- **Ethical considerations** — confidentiality, record keeping, autonomy, safe conversations, and limits of personal support.
- **Implementation & monitoring** — using plans, procedures, and self evaluation tools (Annex E) to ensure continuous improvement.

### **3. Suicide Prevention Guidance**

- Understanding suicide, risk factors and causes of workplace distress.
- Warning signs and indicators of distress.
- Helpful vs harmful coping strategies.
- Reducing access to means of suicide through environmental and procedural controls

### **4. Intervention Guidance**

The Standard outlines:

- How to approach someone in distress.
- How to ask about suicide directly and safely.
- Supportive communication and active listening.
- How to manage confidentiality appropriately.
- How to respond to suicide risk, crises, or immediate danger.
- How to create an individual safety plan.

### **5. Support After Suicide (Postvention)**

Guidance includes:

- Supporting bereaved colleagues, witnesses, or teams.
- Communicating sensitively with staff and families.
- Practical considerations after a death (e.g., belongings, leave, events, adjustments).
- Managing media enquiries.
- Understanding grief and long term needs.
- UK resources and support organisations.

## 6. Toolkits & Annexes

The standard contains several detailed annexes:

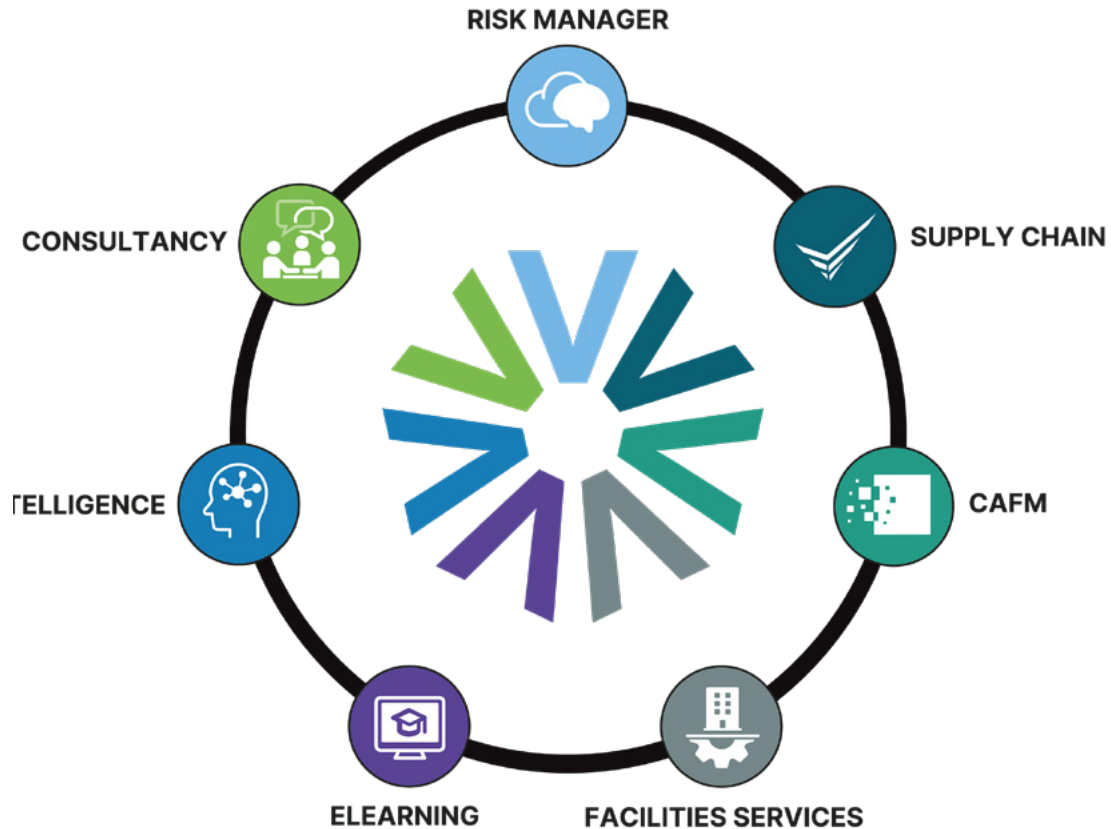
- **Annex A:** Commissioning suicide-prevention training.
- **Annex B:** HR toolkit (conversations, note taking, crisis management, checklists).
- **Annex C:** Workplace stressors across job types.
- **Annex D:** Line manager toolkit, including safety plans, crisis response steps and postvention.
- **Annex E:** Self evaluation and benchmarking questions for organisational suicide prevention maturity.

The British Standard is free to download via the BSI website:



[Click here  
to download the guide](#)

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