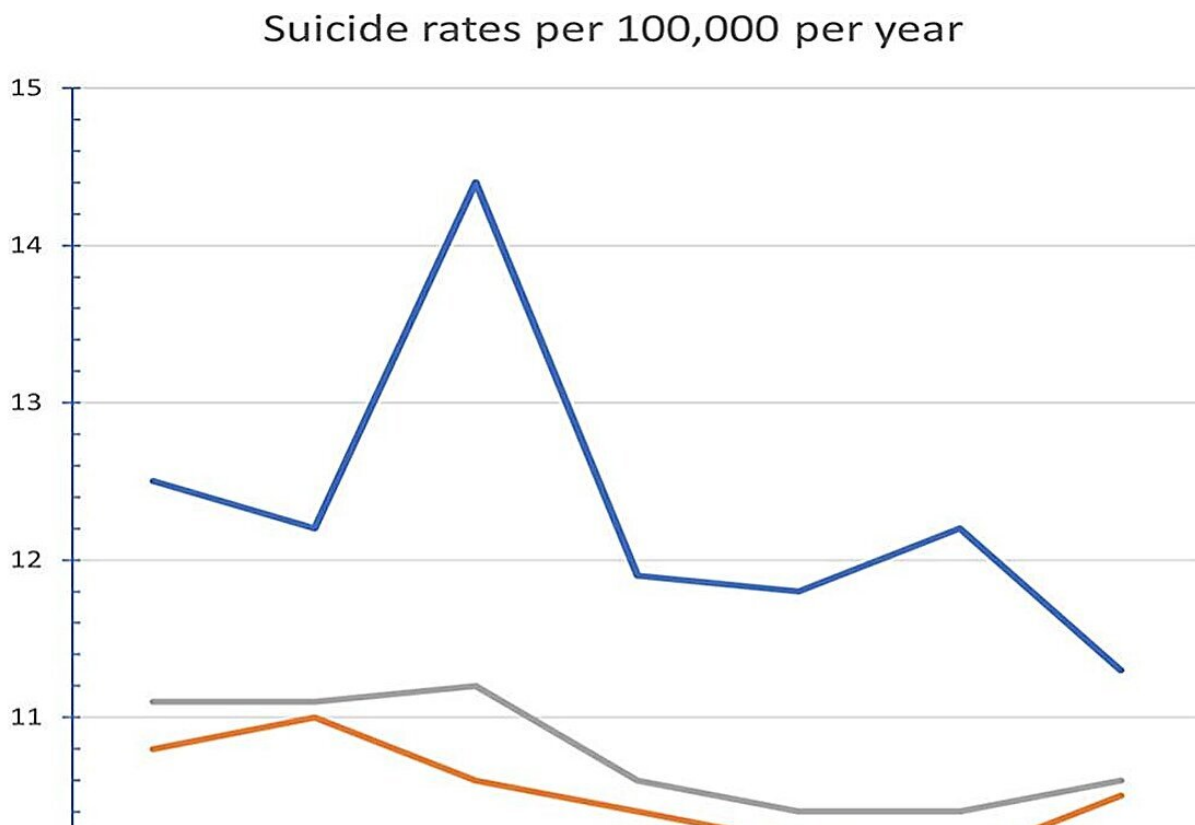


Integrated suicide prevention program sees deaths reduced by more than a fifth

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Suicide rates in Noord-Brabant, the rest of the Netherlands and the Netherlands as a whole over the years from 2015 to 2021 based on Statline data. Credit: *General Hospital Psychiatry* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.genhosppsy.2023.06.010

Researchers in York and the Netherlands have co-designed an integrated suicide prevention program that has led to a significant reduction in

deaths.

The team, from the University of York and Tilburg University, developed SUPREMOCOL (Suicide Prevention by Monitoring and Collaborative Care) and implemented the program in Noord-Brabant, a province in the Netherlands that historically had high [suicide rates](#).

Suicide rates dropped

The results from the five-year project showed that in the year prior to implementation, suicide rates in Noord-Brabant were 14.4 per 100,000 residents, but following implementation of the program in 2018, suicide rates dropped to 11.8 per 100,000 and remained low with a rate of 11.3 per 100,000 by 2021. A significant reduction of 21.5%.

In other areas of the Netherlands, there was no such reduction in the rates of suicides over the same five-year period. The results of the study are published in [General Hospital Psychiatry](#).

Mental health care

It is estimated that there are currently more than 700,000 suicides per year worldwide and the results of the study have been released to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September.

The study found that suicide occurs mainly in people not receiving [mental health care](#) and professionals in non-specialized settings and people in the community are insufficiently equipped to assess suicide risk and cannot provide treatment as needed.

Also, contacting specialized mental health care is haphazard and waiting lists impair swift intervention to address problems that may lead to

suicide.

Project lead, Professor Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis, from the Department of Health Sciences and Hull York Medical School at the University of York, said, "Suicide is a preventable event and we should do what we can to achieve the reduction of suicide rates.

"In this systems intervention, co-design and digital support for assessing [suicide risk](#) in the community combined with swift access and monitoring played a pivotal role."

The program consisted of four pillars:

- People at risk for suicide were swiftly identified by triage on the spot, supported by a digital decision aid.
- Provision of swift access to specialized mental health care for at-risk people.
- Use of a dedicated specialist mental health nurse who would liaise with treatment providers in [primary care](#).
- 12 months telephone follow-ups.

Professor van der Feltz-Cornelis, added, "The results of this study show that it takes a community to prevent [suicide](#) and that establishing a link between community level and specialist mental [health](#) care is essential to attain positive and sustained results."

More information: Christina M. van der Feltz-Cornelis et al, Efficacy of a digitally supported regional systems intervention for suicide prevention (SUPREMOCOL) in Noord-Brabant, the Netherlands, *General Hospital Psychiatry* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.genhosppsy.2023.06.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.genhosppsy.2023.06.010)

Provided by University of York

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