

The University of Glasgow and NHS Health Scotland to Host Landmark Suicide Prevention Seminar in Edinburgh

Tuesday 18 November, 2014

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Suicide prevention experts from the University of Glasgow and NHS Health Scotland will host the first ever Suicide Prevention Seminar in collaboration with the International Academy of Suicide Research to be held in the UK today (Tuesday 18 November) in Edinburgh.

The seminar is being organised jointly by NHS Health Scotland, the International Academy of Suicide Research and the Suicidal Behaviour Research Lab at the University of Glasgow.

It is the first time that the International Academy of Suicide Research has hosted such an event with suicide prevention experts in the UK and reflects Scotland's position as world-leaders in the area of suicide prevention research.

The theme of the seminar is 'Thinking and Learning more about Suicide Prevention Research' and it will address issues such as:

- Understanding suicide risk: Why do people attempt suicide
- Self-harm and suicidality in looked-after young people: A vulnerable and neglected group
- Inequalities in suicide: the epidemiological picture and the policy implications
- New technologies and suicide prevention: opportunities, challenges and ethical issues
- Knowledge into Action: translating suicide research into policy and practice

800,000 people are estimated to die every year by suicide across the world, which equates to one every 40 seconds. It is estimated that more people die by suicide each year than by murder and war combined.

University of Glasgow academic, Professor Rory O'Connor, is Joint Organiser of the Seminar and is the President of the International Academy of Suicide Research, the first holder of this post in the UK and recognised world lead in the area of suicide research.

Alongside Prof O'Connor, speakers at the conference will include experts from the universities of Edinburgh, Nottingham, Ghent and NHS Health Scotland.

Prof Rory O'Connor said: "On behalf of the University of Glasgow and the International Academy of Suicide Research, I am delighted to join forces with the National Programme for Suicide Prevention to host this landmark seminar on suicide prevention. I am particularly pleased to host the seminar in Scotland given its long and distinguished history at the forefront of suicide prevention research."

O'Connor added: "In addition to showcasing excellent suicide prevention research, we will also share our experiences of translating research into policy and practice. Such exchanges are vital to ensure that suicide research does not remain within the confines of ivory towers but that it helps to save people's lives in the real world."

Alana Atkinson, Programme Manager of the National Programme for Suicide Prevention said: "NHS Health Scotland is delighted to co-host this seminar. We are encouraged by the fact that Scotland's national rate of suicide has decreased by 19% over the last 10 years. However, we welcome the opportunity this seminar gives us to know more about suicide and to make our preventative work even more focused and effective."

The University of Glasgow's Suicidal Behaviour Research Laboratory, which Prof O'Connor leads, is Scotland's leading research group looking at suicide and self-harm. Its primary aim is to conduct high quality and innovative research and promote collaboration between suicide and self-harm researchers and experts working in the social, psychological and biomedical sciences.

NHS Health Scotland leads the National Programme for Suicide Prevention on behalf of the Scottish Government. The programme team works in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, both local and national. Key deliverables of the programme team include: Workforce development; national and local targeted campaigning; developing evidence-informed guidance, and; providing national leadership.

The International Academy for Suicide Research is the leading international organization in the field of suicide research and it aims to promote high standards of research and scholarship in the field of suicidal

behaviour by fostering communication and co-operation among scholars engaged in such research.

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