[IE] New Guidelines for Media on Covering Suicide

IRIS 2006-9:1/24

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On 20 June 2006, new guidelines for the media on covering suicide were issued by the National Office of Suicide Prevention, which is part of the Health Service Executive. Drawn up by experts in the field and support groups such as the Samaritans and the Irish Association of Suicidology, the guidelines aim to promote responsible coverage of suicide and to reduce the risk of "copycat" deaths, estimated in Ireland as 6% of all suicides. The key provisions are designed to prevent glamorising or sensationalising suicide, to ensure, in the words of the Minister of State for Mental Health, "that public discussion and media coverage of suicide and deliberate self-harm remains measured, well-informed and sensitive to the needs and well-being of psychologically vulnerable and distressed individuals in our society". The provisions of the guidelines urge the media to avoid including explicit technical details of suicide; to educate the public by challenging common myths about suicide; to remember the effect on survivors of suicide; to avoid simplistic explanations and help the public to understand the complexities, listing appropriate sources of help or support at the end of an article or programme on the subject. The Guidelines were launched simultaneously in Northern Ireland.

Media Guidelines for the Portrayal of Suicide

http://www.hse.ie/en/Publications/HSEPublications/MediaGuidelinesforthePortrayalofSuicide/FiletoUpload,3269,en.pdf

Minister's speech at the launch of the guidelines

http://www.dohc.ie/press/speeches/2006/20060620.html

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