



**It's
about
life**

It's about life

Sweden's national strategy for mental health
and suicide prevention, 2025–2034

Brief version based on the Government's Communication 2024/25:77

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Read more (in Swedish):
www.dethandlaromlivet.se

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Introduction

This national strategy provides a long-term direction for work in the field of mental health and suicide prevention for the years 2025–2034. The strategy is based on a cross-sectoral approach that creates the conditions for the development of collaborative, society-wide measures to support mental health and prevent suicide. The national strategy encompasses both mental health promotion and suicide prevention and seeks to develop new methods and to unify and strengthen existing efforts. The national strategy also includes efforts to promote mental wellbeing, prevent mental ill-health, and reduce suicide by improving the lives of people with psychiatric conditions. The starting point is a broad and joint effort that addresses both individual and structural factors that affect mental health. The strategy focuses on the mental health of both current and future generations and addresses the need to create sustainable societal structures. The national strategy is based on the vision of “a society that pro-

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motes good and equitable mental health across the entire population, where no one should find themselves in such a vulnerable position that suicide is perceived to be the only way out”. The national strategy includes four overarching goals and seven objectives for guiding the work in the field. A monitoring and evaluation system will be developed to assess the results of the national strategy.

The text in this publication is based on Government Communication 2024/25:77. In the communication, the Government presents a national strategy for mental health and suicide prevention.

Vision and overarching goals

Vision

The national strategy is based on the vision of “a society that promotes good and equitable mental health across the entire population, where no one should find themselves in such a vulnerable position that suicide is perceived to be the only way out”.

Overarching goals

The vision for the national strategy is supported by four overarching goals that define the key shifts needed during the strategy period:

1. Improved mental health across the entire population.
2. Fewer lives lost to suicide.
3. A reduction in preventable disparities in mental health.
4. A reduction in the negative consequences of psychiatric conditions.



It's about life

A national strategy for mental health and suicide prevention

Vision

A society that promotes good and equitable mental health across the entire population, where no one should find themselves in such a vulnerable position that suicide is perceived to be the only way out.

Overarching goals

1. Improved mental health across the entire population.
2. Fewer lives lost to suicide.
3. A reduction in preventable disparities in mental health.
4. A reduction in the negative consequences of psychiatric conditions.

Objectives

1. An increased focus on strengthening mental health and wellbeing as a resource for individuals and society.
2. Increased investments in children and youth to ensure good mental health and wellbeing throughout life.
3. An inclusive and sustainable working life that promotes mental health and wellbeing.
4. An inclusive society with engaged citizens.
5. Health and social care that meets the needs of patients and users.
6. Strengthened suicide prevention efforts.
7. Strengthened knowledge of mental health and suicide prevention.

Objectives and prioritised measures

The objectives are designed to both individually and collectively advance the overarching goals and to drive progress in achieving the vision of the national strategy.

The four overarching goals are supported by seven objectives that are intended to guide the operational work. The objectives are designed to both individually and collectively advance the overarching goals and to drive progress in achieving the vision of the national strategy. To achieve each objective, targeted measures and activities must be implemented. Prioritised areas within each objective highlight where to focus the most effort during the strategy period.

Objective 1: An increased focus on strengthening mental health and wellbeing as a resource for individuals and society

The objective of increasing the focus on strengthening mental health and wellbeing as a resource for individuals and society involves measures that can contribute to improved mental wellbeing of both individuals and the population as a whole. This includes measures to identify and strengthen individual resources as well as societal factors that foster meaning and connectedness. Such efforts often align with the goals and activities of broader preventative and health-promoting initiatives. This includes efforts related to parental support; the use of alcohol, narcotics, doping, tobacco, gambling; and school absenteeism, as well as efforts to prevent violence, criminal activity, and loneliness. By increasing the focus on these areas and on factors that promote mental wellbeing, opportunities for interventions across diverse societal sectors can be created. Investments in measures that promote mental wellbeing can also strengthen overall societal development, both socially and economically.

Priorities:

- Develop work within relevant societal sectors to promote mental wellbeing.
- Increase mental health literacy in the general population.
- Implement measures to build resilience and maintain good mental health and wellbeing in a changing society.

Objective 2: Increased investments in children and youth to ensure good mental health and wellbeing throughout life

This objective aims to strengthen and develop conditions for lifelong mental wellbeing. Mental wellbeing is predominantly built during childhood and adolescence because this is the period of life when key abilities develop, such as regulating emotions, forming secure social relationships, and exploring and learning new things. Children and youth who grow up in good living conditions have better opportunities to develop mental wellbeing, thus reducing the risk of mental ill-health and suicide later in life. Investing in children and youth is therefore crucial to ensuring the best possible conditions for their upbringing, development, learning, and wellbeing. The term youth includes individuals aged 16–29 years of age because this is a particularly vulnerable group in this context.

Priorities:

- Further develop efforts to ensure a safe and secure upbringing for all children.
- Promote health-enhancing practices in day-care and early education.
- Advocate for schools to focus on health-promoting and preventative work.
- Continue creating equal opportunities for learning and development for all children and students.
- Increase efforts to ensure meaningful leisure time for children and youth.
- Implement measures for safe and healthy use of screens and digital media.
- Increase access to various support mechanisms for children and youth.
- Develop work on early and coordinated interventions for children and youth with mental health conditions.



Participation in society, including the ability to influence one's daily life and the opportunity to contribute to society, is also essential for mental health and wellbeing.

Objective 3: An inclusive and sustainable working life that promotes mental health and wellbeing

This objective emphasises the importance of working life and the work environment for mental health and wellbeing. Being employed is an important factor in several ways. Through employment, individuals become active participants in society, allowing them to experience social community and a sense of belonging. At the same time, poor working conditions, workplace deficiencies, and unemployment increase the risk of mental ill-health, and even suicide. Measures related to this objective involve promoting a healthy working environment, preventing poor working conditions, and making employment more accessible. A sustainable working life also includes a good and accessible working environment for everyone, as well as support for returning to work after prolonged sick-leave.

Priorities:

- Develop measures for good working environments that promote mental wellbeing.
- Increase participation in working life.
- Enhance knowledge of support for persons suffering from ill-health and disability.

Objective 4: An inclusive society with engaged citizens

This objective aims to prevent social exclusion and to ensure that all people, regardless of health status, can participate in society and live their lives in community with others, both of which are prerequisites for mental wellbeing. This includes participation in working life and opportunities for self-sufficiency, as addressed in objective 3 regarding an inclusive and sustainable working life. It also includes social exclusion, which is associated with limitations in housing, education, health, and societal functions, exclusion from cultural or community life, and a lack of social relationships, for example, through loneliness. Participation in society, including the ability to influence one's daily life and the opportunity to contribute to society, is also essential for both mental health and wellbeing. However, mental ill-health can increase the risk of reduced participation in society. To achieve the strategy's overarching goal, it is therefore essential to strengthen the conditions for an inclusive society with engaged citizens.

Priorities:

- Combat stigmatisation and discrimination against people with mental ill-health.
- Improve professional interactions in public services that engage with individuals with mental ill-health and/or suicidal ideation.
- Develop interventions for groups at increased risk of mental ill-health.
- Strengthen the conditions for mental wellbeing among the Sami people.
- Develop social activities and social support.
- Develop good and sustainable living environments as well as access to outdoor recreation.

Objective 5: Health and social care that meets the needs of patients and users

This objective aims to ensure high-quality care in which patients, users, and their significant others are actively involved. This includes advocating for effective care that is based on the best available evidence and that is provided in a timely manner, on equal terms, and tailored to individuals' needs and circumstances. These interventions must be coordinated across and within services in order to ensure individual safety and legal certainty. Both the municipalities and regions have important roles in this work. To achieve the objective of care that meets the needs of patients and users, it is particularly important for healthcare, dental care, and social services to systematically strengthen and develop their work on mental health through collaboration and improved working methods. It is also important for healthcare and the relevant municipal services to strengthen their preparedness for addressing mental ill-health before, during, and after future societal crises.

Priorities:

- Develop leadership within health and social care.
- Ensure that basic knowledge of mental ill-health and suicidality is available in healthcare, dental care, and social services.
- Increase patient and user influence in healthcare in a purposeful manner.
- Develop both preventative and health-promoting efforts in health and social care.
- Improve accessibility to care and support services in order to ensure equitable healthcare and support.
- Develop and increase follow-up and evaluation of interventions for patients and users.
- Develop effective collaborations that are based on the needs of patients and users.
- Develop support for significant others and other individuals close to people with psychiatric conditions, as well as for those bereaved by suicide.
- Work towards secure and meaningful psychiatric inpatient care and compulsory care that promotes recovery.

Objective 6: Strengthened suicide prevention efforts

This objective aims to prioritise suicide prevention on the agendas of all relevant stakeholders. It also seeks to significantly reduce the number of lives lost to suicide and to enhance support for individuals who have attempted suicide, as well as their significant others and the bereaved. Suicides and suicide attempts often stem from complex causes such as serious mental or physical illness, trauma, difficult life events (for example, exposure to violence), and social isolation or lack of support. For a long time, suicide prevention efforts have primarily focused on the healthcare sector, particularly psychiatry. To create effective and strategic suicide prevention measures that ensure that nobody perceives suicide as the only way out, resources from all sectors of society must be mobilised. Because mental health, mental ill-health, and suicide share many common protective and risk factors, the national strategy as a whole, including all objectives, plays a critical role in suicide prevention. The sixth objective on strengthened suicide prevention work specifically emphasises measures directly targeting suicide prevention.



Priorities:

- Identify and support individuals in difficult life situations at an early stage in order to reduce the social and economic risk factors associated with suicide and suicide attempts.
- Provide safe health and social care for individuals at risk of suicide.
- Reduce access to methods and means for suicide.
- Coordinate responses to emergency suicidal events.
- Reduce stigmatisation and increase awareness about suicide and suicidality.
- Develop support for individuals who have attempted suicide and their significant others as well as for those bereaved by suicide.

Objective 7: Strengthened knowledge of mental health and suicide prevention

This objective aims to improve interventions for individuals, professionals, and society through research and knowledge development. Knowledge development can occur in many different ways – through research, the dissemination of information, and the application of research findings and innovations. It can also occur through dialogue, the exchange of experiences, and collaboration among stakeholders and between countries. Utilising the unique knowledge and insights of individuals with lived experience of mental ill-health, as well as their significant others, and involving them in research, such as through citizen science and other inclusive approaches, is a vital part of knowledge development. There is a need for knowledge development across all objectives in the strategy, as well as for a unified direction for knowledge development in the field of mental health and suicide prevention. This requires enhanced collaboration among researchers, research funders, and other societal stakeholders.

Priorities:

- Develop research in order to advance knowledge development across all objectives in the strategy.
- Promote closer links between research, policy, and practice.
- Improve opportunities for follow-up and monitoring.
- Develop digital tools for individuals and societal stakeholders.
- Expand international collaboration and the exchange of knowledge and experience.



This publication has been produced by the Public Health Agency of Sweden in collaboration with the National Board of Health and Welfare. This text is based on the Government Communication Skr. 2024/25:77, although only certain sections of the communication are presented here. The full communication is available in Swedish on the Government's website.



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