

## Samaritans

### Harassment

#### **Q17: What recommendations would you make for guidance to this clause?**

Journalists should be aware that those who are bereaved by suicide are themselves at greater risk of suicidal behaviour. It is advisable to refer to guidance in cases of suicide where bereaved family members, and/or friends, are to be approached.

Expert advice on this is available from Samaritans' Media Advisory Service on 020 8394 8300 and specific guidance can be found here: Working with bereaved families in the aftermath of a suicide (link to guidance on Samaritans' website)

### Suicide

#### **Q24: What, if any, changes would you recommend IMPRESS make to this clause?**

To add: 'To avoid the risk of news coverage influencing imitational suicidal behaviour, when reporting suicide....' To remove or replace the word 'excessive' in relation to the level of detail of suicide methods reported, including inquests, and to ask editors to question whether any detail about the suicide method is really necessary in the reporting of a suicide, suicide attempt or inquest.

To add: 'Care should be taken to avoid generating coverage that is extensive, prominent, sensational – such as speculation of causes, or glorifies suicidal behaviour in any way.'

It is advisable to always include sources of support, such as Samaritans 24hr helpline, when covering the topic of suicide.

#### **Q25: What recommendations would you make for guidance to this clause?**

Due to the complexity of this topic and the risks, we recommend strengthening this clause with background guidance for journalists, including reference to the body of research evidencing the risk of contagion in relation to suicide reporting:

It has been proven through extensive worldwide research that certain types of media reporting of suicide can have a negative influence on the behaviour of people who may be vulnerable, putting them at greater risk of suicide. This can be particularly harmful if reports contain explicit details of the suicide method, if the coverage is extensive with dramatic headlines and situated on the front page, and if the story glorifies or romanticises suicidal behaviour. In studies carried out links have been made with media depiction of suicide and increases in suicide rates. It is advisable to signpost sources of support, such as Samaritans, for those who may be affected by the topic covered in a news report: Anyone can call Samaritans any time from any phone on 116 123 (this number is FREE to call and will not appear on your phone bill), email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org), or visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) to find details of your nearest branch.

Expert advice on media reporting of suicide is available from Samaritans' Media Advisory Service on 020 8394 8300 and guidance can be found here: Samaritans Guidelines for Reporting Suicide (link) Working with bereaved families in the

aftermath of a suicide ([link](#)) Best practice for reporting on suicide using digital media ([link](#)) Reporting rail suicides and attempts ([link](#)) Reporting murder-suicides ([link](#))

**Q29: Do you agree the IMPRESS draft Standards Code is a practical working tool which enables journalists, editors and publishers to do their jobs?**

Agree

**Q30: Do you agree that the IMPRESS draft Standards Code is easily understood by the public?**

Agree

**Q31: Do you agree that the IMPRESS draft Standards Code is enforceable through regulation?**

agree