



# IFA



# Mind Our Farm Families

If you are feeling suicidal or are concerned about a family member or friend, call the IFA Pieta House PHONE line

**1890 130022**

Mon Fri 9am-6pm & Sat 10am-2pm

**SPOT THE SIGNS  
SAVE A LIFE**

Pieta  House



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## Message from the IFA & Pieta House

Farmers face many challenges - be they financial pressures, red tape, long working hours, isolation or family difficulties - it is important to know there is help out there. This booklet and the dedicated suicide and self-harm phone line is the result of a joint initiative between IFA and Pieta House in response to the need for increased information and support for farmers and their families. The phone line for IFA members will put farmers and their families in direct contact with a Pieta House trained therapist. The high rate of suicide, particularly among men in rural areas, is the driving force behind IFA's involvement in setting up this dedicated service. If you have concerns about a family member or friend or if you are feeling suicidal yourself, please contact the IFA Pieta House phone line on **1890 130022**.

## Watch out for signs that someone might be suicidal or in distress

Unforeseen changes in farming work conditions such as continual bad weather, failing a herd test, bad harvest, isolation, being over worked, financial difficulties, impending retirement or ill health are all things that might cause a farmer distress or bring on suicidal feelings.

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### Signs they might be in distress

- **Isolating themselves**  
Withdrawing from social situations and being less communicative
- **Turning off their mobile phone, not receiving visits from neighbours**
- **Lack of interest in work**  
Noticeable deterioration in the conditions of the farm or care of the farm animals
- **Emotional outbursts**  
Either angry or tearful
- **Behavioural changes**  
Change in sleep patterns, loss of appetite, change in self-care or hygiene behaviour
- Possible increase in alcohol or drug use
- Becoming lethargic and emotionally withdrawn
- Becoming accident prone or continuously distracted
- And more importantly, It's the language that they use that is most telling...
  - "I have no future"*
  - "I see no light at the end of the tunnel"*
  - "My family would be better off without me"*
  - "I wish I could go to sleep and never wake up"*
  - "What is the point of anything?"*

## What to do next

The stigma of suicide is still very strong. The subject is often brushed under the carpet and the majority of families truly believe that this tragedy will not come to their door. If you think that someone close to you is showing signs of distress, the best thing you can do is ask them:

*“Are you feeling suicidal?”*

Some people may find this question too difficult to ask, so you could also say:

*“You haven’t been yourself lately. What’s wrong?”* or

*“I know you’ve been down lately. How are you feeling today?”*

Even if they are not feeling suicidal, something is bothering them, so it is a good opportunity to encourage them to open up. If they do admit to having suicidal thoughts, then don’t panic, and follow these steps.

### 1 Take them seriously

**This is not attention seeking** – he/she wants to stop the pain that’s making their life unbearable at the moment. Honour their trust by showing them kindness and compassion.

**Reassure them** that you’ll get the help they need.

### 2 Take action

**Call the IFA Pieta House Phonenumber 1890 130022.** This allows IFA members direct access to support for someone who is in suicidal crisis or engaging in self-harm.

When you contact 1890 130022 an appointment will be made swiftly at our nearest service which is free of charge.

### 3 Create a support network

**Do not keep this information to yourself.** We are aware that pride and privacy are so important to you, but share your concerns with other family members. This way you can all be supportive and vigilant. Or there might be someone in your community, such as the clergy or local doctor, that you might trust with your worries.

Pieta House offers a compassionate, solution focused, one to one counselling service to those in suicidal crisis or engaging in self-harm, completely free of charge



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**LEEP DISTURBANCE**

**I**

**SOLUTION**

**G**

**IVING AWAY POSSESSIONS**

**N**

**0 INTEREST IN ANYTHING**

**S**

**PEAKING OF NO FUTURE**

*of suicide*

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