

National Communications Charter

Tool One: Language Guide - Suicide

Do say	Don't say	Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 'died by suicide'✓ 'took their own life'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ 'successful suicide'✗ 'unsuccessful suicide'	Because it suggests suicide is a desired outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 'took their own life'✓ 'died by suicide'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ 'committed suicide'✗ 'commit suicide'	Because it associates suicide with crime or sin
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 'increasing rates'✓ 'higher rates'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ 'suicide epidemic'	Because it sensationalises suicide
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 'suicide attempt'✓ 'non-fatal attempt'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ 'failed suicide'✗ 'suicide bid'	Because it can glamourise suicide attempts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ refrain from using the term suicide out of context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ 'political suicide'✗ 'suicide mission'	Because it is an inaccurate use of the term 'suicide'