

Sharp decline in overall adherence

Adherence fell to **73.2%**, primarily due to spikes in harmful content linked to a number of syndicated or high-profile stories.

Harmful language and absence of helplines each appeared in 96 items, representing the largest categories of guideline breaches.

Compared to Q1 2025, harmful language incidents nearly quadrupled (25 in Q1 to 96 in Q2).

The omission of helpline information more than doubled (41 in Q1 to 96 in Q2).

Online media remains the platform where most breaches occur accounting for **66.7% of harmful content**, consistent with the previous quarter (66.1%).

About

Shine's Media Programme is Ireland's national programme for responsible reporting and representation of mental illness and suicide. Funded through the National Office for Suicide Prevention, our media monitoring can offer media professionals evidence-based insights to support them in telling important and complex mental health stories.

Find out more at www.shine.ie

Introduction

This report analyses **885 media items** published or broadcast in Ireland between **21 April and 11 May 2025**, across print, online, radio, and television.

Overall, **73.2%** of items adhered to media guidelines, marking a significant decline from 86.5% in Q2 2024, the lowest adherence rate recorded since the redevelopment of our monitoring model in 2023.

This reduction was driven largely by two high-volume, high-profile stories that dominated the monitoring period: the **Tina Satchwell murder trial** and the **death of Virginia Giuffre**.

When these stories are excluded, the overall adherence rate rises to **80.8%**, indicating that most Irish reporting continues to follow responsible practice.

For details of Shine's monitoring methodology, contact media@shine.ie

Framing and context

Suicide frame: It is worth noting that items with only a minor reference to suicide account for 28.7% of all harmful content (68 items), compared to 3.9% last quarter (5 items). The suicide frame is the context or theme of the media item, such as suicide prevention, thematic reference, suicide attempt and more.

Court reporting represented 36.3% of harmful content (up from 27.6% in the previous quarter).

Breaking news items had particularly low adherence to the guidelines. There were 44 breaking news items out of 69 items that didn't follow guidelines. (63.8%).

High-profile cases accounted for nearly **39.5% of all harmful content**, showing the influence of story type on adherence outcomes. There were 19.1% last quarter.

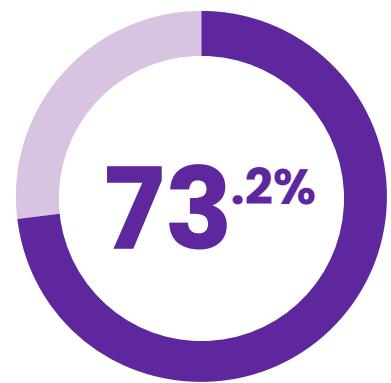
High-Impact Stories

There were two stories with high volume and low adherence to guidelines that impacted the overall adherence rate.

Tina Satchwell: This was the highest-volume story, with 138 items published. Of these, 56 items (40.6%) did not follow reporting guidelines. Tina Satchwell was murdered, and coverage of the murder case frequently referenced how her brother had taken his own life often with inclusion of suicide details.

Virginia Giuffre: This was the second highest-volume story, with 85 items. Of these, 54 items (63.5%) did not follow reporting guidelines. Coverage focused on the death of Virginia Giuffre, a victim of Jeffrey Epstein, who died by suicide.

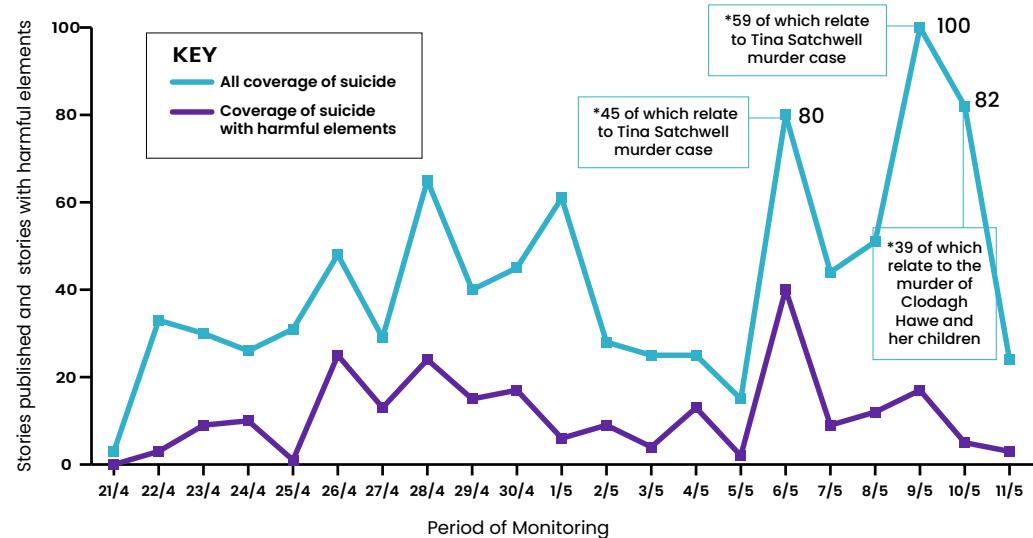
Overview of suicide coverage in Irish media



Of 885 suicide-related media items across online news, print and broadcast, 648 contained no harmful elements (73.2%).

Coverage and volume of harmful elements

Over monitoring period 20 Jan to 9 Feb inclusive



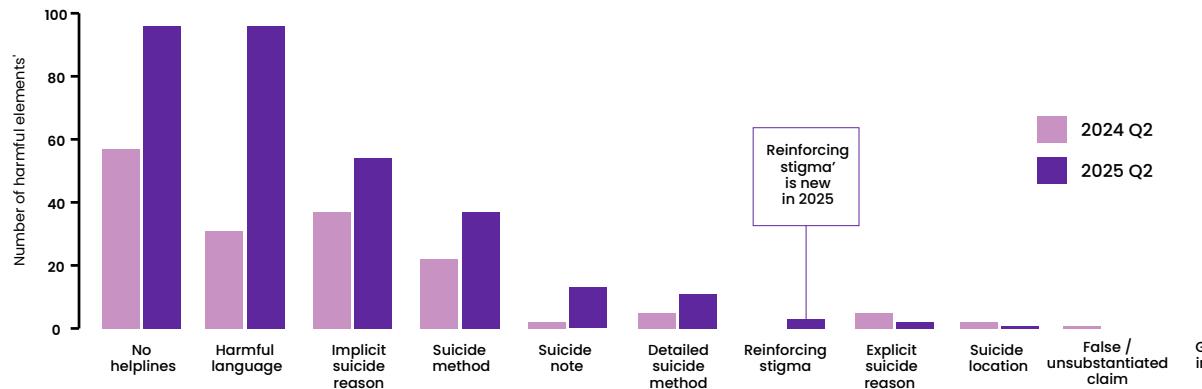
Do peaks in coverage imply peaks in harmful elements?

On 6 May, there was a notable spike in coverage, with 80 items published in total. Of these, 40 contained harmful elements, 39 of which related to the Tina Satchwell murder case – including 28 instances of the same syndicated article.

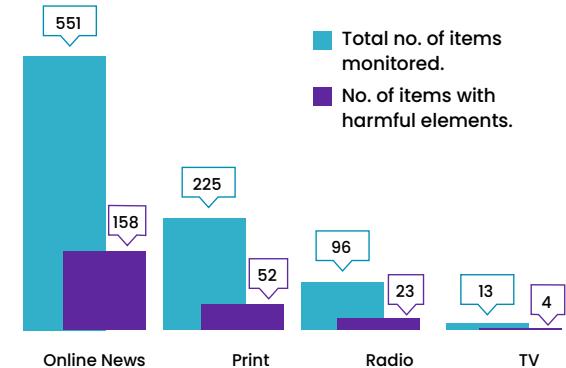
In contrast, on 9 May, there were 100 suicide-related items, but only 17 included harmful content. Similarly, on 10 May, while coverage remained high with 82 suicide-related items, just 5 contained harmful elements.

This suggests that higher volumes of reporting do not necessarily correspond with higher levels of harmful content, and that spikes may be driven by specific cases or syndicated material rather than widespread poor practice.

Nature of harmful elements over time

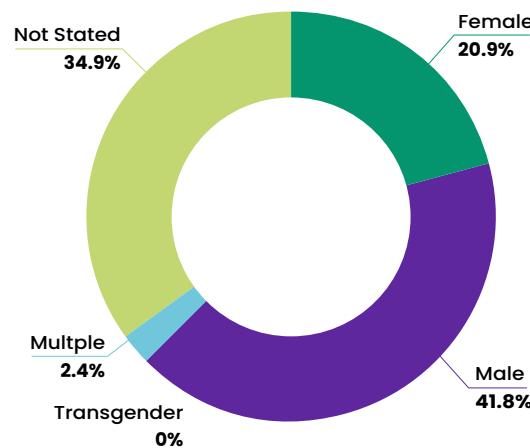


All monitored content and harmful content by platform



Demographics and Suicide Reporting

Gender Representation

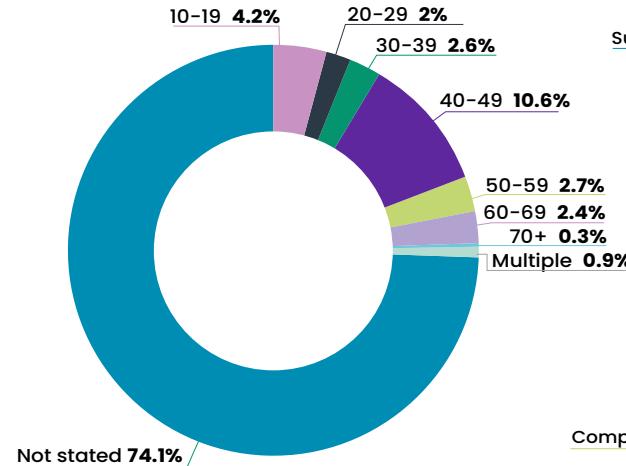


Men were referenced in **41.8%** of coverage and women in **20.9%**. In **34.9%** of items, gender was not stated. This is disproportionate coverage when compared to Ireland's national suicide data, which shows significantly higher rates of suicide among men ([men accounted for 78% of suicides in Ireland in 2022](#)).

"Not stated" refers to articles where key details such as gender or age are missing.

No reference to suicide and transgender people.

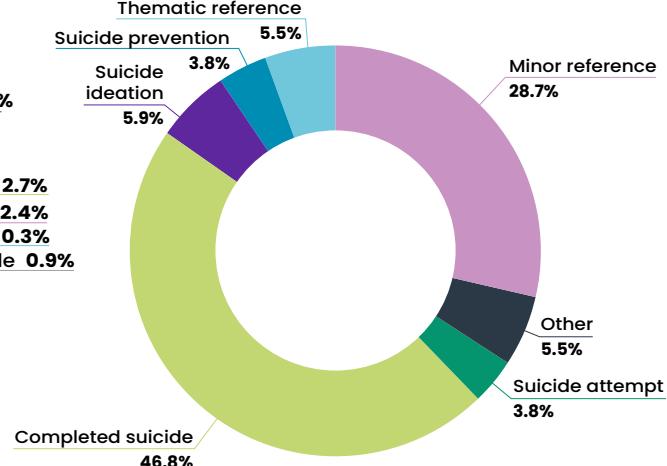
Age Representation



The majority (74.1%) of media coverage this quarter did not specify age. Where age was mentioned, individuals aged 40-49 accounted for the highest proportion of coverage (10.6%). This range aligns with our most recent national figures for suicide and age range with the highest number of suicides occurring among those aged 40-44 ([12.6%](#)).

The coverage of younger cohorts also aligns with our national figures with coverage of 10-19 years at 4.2% (compared to 6% of deaths by suicide in that range). In 2022, 1 in every 10 deaths by suicide were by those aged 65 and older. While these deaths may be represented in the "Not stated" range, it is concerning that deaths by suicide of our older population is not reflected in media coverage for this quarter with it representing just over 2% of our monitoring.

Framing



Nearly half of the stories included a "completed suicide" (46.8%) while 28.7% made only a "minor reference" to suicide indicating that a large proportion of coverage either focused directly on completed suicides or included only brief mentions of suicide within a broader story.

Coverage of items that solely focused on suicide prevention was present in just 8.9% of items.

THE DATA 2025 Q2

Adherence to suicide-reporting guidelines fell sharply in Q2 2025, reaching 73.2% the lowest level since our model was redeveloped in 2023. Several factors contributed to this decline, most notably a high concentration of complex, high-profile cases during the monitoring period. Two stories in particular contributed to the low adherence.

1 The Tina Satchwell Murder Trial

The trial of Richard Satchwell for the murder of his wife, Tina, generated 138 media items, accounting for 15.6% of all coverage this quarter making it the single largest story of the quarter. Of these, 56 items (40.6%) contained harmful elements. Much of the problematic content stemmed from repeated references to the suicide of Tina Satchwell's brother. In many cases, reports included details of his suicide method.

On 6 May, 28 identical articles were published across multiple outlets, highlighting the impact of syndicated duplication – one harmful article reproduced across dozens of platforms.

Top Harmful Elements

Language:

53 of 56 harmful items (94.6%) used stigmatising or outdated phrasing such as "commit" or "committed suicide."

Methodology:

5 items included explicit method details.

Implied reason:

2 items linked deaths to speculative motives.

2 The Death of Virginia Giuffre

The second-largest driver of harmful content this quarter was the coverage of Virginia Giuffre's death, which generated 85 media items, 54 (63.5%) of which did not follow reporting guidelines.

Top Harmful Elements

Helplines:

43 items (50.6%) did not include support information – making this the most frequent harmful element associated with the story (79.6% of harmful content within this case).

Language:

The phrase "commit" or "committed suicide" appeared in 11.8% of all the coverage of this story, representing 10.8% of all the harmful language instances identified this quarter.

Implied reason:

16 reports included implied reasons or circumstances surrounding the death, contrary to best practice guidance. These 16 items account for 29.6% (16 out of 54) of all implied-reason instances recorded across all monitored stories this quarter.

Over half of these items (53.7%) came from just three international just three media groups all of which frequently publish international or syndicated material. This indicates that the coverage may not have originated in Ireland but rather replicated international reports with limited adaptation for Irish audiences.

If these two stories were excluded...

If both the Tina Satchwell and Virginia Giuffre stories were removed from the media monitoring this quarter, overall adherence would rise from 72.2% to 80.8% which is more inline with last quarter 80.2%.

These findings emphasise how syndicated, high-profile stories can disproportionately shape quarterly adherence trends.

Spotlight on Darkness into Light

Coverage of Darkness Into Light accounted for 69 media items this quarter, reflecting strong national engagement with the annual suicide prevention event. Overall adherence was very high, with only 6 items (8.7%) not following guidelines, all due to the absence of helplines.

Notably, just 9 items (13%) included lived-experience perspectives – That is the perspective of someone with direct, personal experience of suicide.

Recommendations

01 Improve handling of international and syndicated content

High-harm stories this quarter, notably the Virginia Giuffre and Tina Satchwell cases revealed how syndicated material can multiply harmful content across multiple platforms without editorial intervention.

Where possible, Irish publishers should review and adapt syndicated content before publication, ensuring compliance with reporting guidelines.

02 Strengthen focus on language use

Use of phrases "commit" or "committed suicide." reinforces outdated associations between suicide and criminality. When international or syndicated stories are published in Ireland, they should be checked for guideline compliance, especially for harmful or stigmatising language. Preferred alternatives such as "died by suicide" or "took their own life" may be used as an alternative.

03 Support responsible reporting of court cases

Court reporting continues to pose particular challenges for adherence with the inclusion of details of suicide method, effectively visualising and providing directions on completed suicide methods for audiences. The risk of copycat suicides is higher when this kind of detail is included by media.

04 Promote helpline consistency

Missing helplines remain one of the most avoidable breaches. Shine encourages media outlets to include relevant helpline numbers whenever a story mentions suicide, self-harm, or distressing content – whether in print, online, broadcast, or social media.

05 Continued Training

Media professionals at all levels are encouraged to access **freely available** training on responsible reporting. In these workshops, we cover contemporary case studies, put the guidelines in context across all platforms, as well as explore trauma-informed media practices.

To access this training,
email media@shine.ie.



Shine's media monitoring is made possible with the support of The National Office for Suicide Prevention and is directly linked with Ireland's national strategy for preventing suicide: **Connecting For Life**.

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Connecting for Life