

REPORT ON CONTENT FORUM'S PARTICIPATION AT THE 32ND INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION (IASP) WORLD CONGRESS 2025

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1. Overview

The Content Forum had the honour of representing Malaysia at the 33rd International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) World Congress, held in Vienna, Austria from 3–7 June 2025. Our submission on our suicide prevention initiatives including the *Guidelines for Ethical Reporting and Sharing of Suicide-Related Content* was selected from over 700 global abstracts and featured under Symposium 07: Media & Suicide - Practical and Policy-Related Developments in Media Guidelines and Monitoring.

This marks an important milestone for the Content Forum, affirming both our national leadership and international relevance in content self-regulation, particularly in the area of suicide prevention and ethical reporting.

2. Event Highlights

The 33rd World Congress for the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) in Vienna, 2025 brought together **over 800** researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and advocates from around the globe to share knowledge, exchange best practices, and collaborate on strategies to address this pressing public health issue. The goal was to foster an inclusive, multidisciplinary dialogue that advanced understanding, prevention, and intervention strategies for suicide and suicidal behaviours.

The Content Forum presented at the **Special Interest Group (SIG) Media & Suicide Symposium Part I: Practical and Policy-Related Developments in Media Monitoring and Media Guidelines.**

a. Symposium Chairs:

- Mark Sinyor, University of Toronto
- Thomas Niederkrotenthaler, Medical University of Vienna

b. Presenters:

- Mediha Mahmood – Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia
Leveraging Media and Policy: The Role of the Content Forum as Self-Regulation Organisation in Suicide Prevention Efforts in a Low-and Middle-Income Country (LMIC)
- Keith Hawton, University of Oxford & Lorna Fraser, Samaritans
Suicide reporting trends in the UK: The role of Samaritans' Media Monitoring Service
- Sinead Dalton from Shine Media Programme, Ireland
Efficiencies and Opportunities: Refining Media Monitoring for Suicide Reporting in Ireland
- Jane Pirkis, University of Melbourne
Media guidelines on the reporting of suicide: Summarising the evidence for their effectiveness
- Mark Sinyor, University of Toronto

3. Focus of Presentation

Our presentation centred on Malaysia's ***Guidelines for Ethical Reporting and Sharing of Suicide-Related Content***, launched on 3 June 2025. The Guidelines were positioned as part of a broader, long-term commitment by the Content Forum to promote responsible and harm-reducing communication around suicide, while preserving freedom of expression.

Key messages included:

- The collaborative, industry-led approach in drafting the Guidelines
- The involvement of diverse stakeholders, including media practitioners, persons with lived experience, mental health experts, civil society, and service providers.
- The supportive role of the Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Health, and National Centre of Excellence for Mental Health (NCEMH), which ensured the Guidelines were credible and comprehensive.

4. Reception and Impact

The Guidelines received **strong, positive feedback from international participants**, who highlighted:

- The inclusivity and practicality of Malaysia's model
- The significance of media organisations actively participating as co-creators, rather than passive recipients of regulation
- Malaysia's ability to bring together government, civil society, platforms, and mental health sectors into a unified, credible framework
- The uniqueness of a self-regulatory framework that is both supported by government and driven by industry

In several countries, media engagement on suicide remains a challenge, with guidelines often developed in silos. Malaysia's approach, grounded in trust and partnership, was seen as a standout model.

Researchers from the **University of Melbourne** have expressed interest in Malaysia's collaborative model and are exploring opportunities to work with us, Prof Chan Lai Fong and other Malaysian researchers to study its implementation, including the efficacy and impact of the Guidelines.

Meanwhile, academicians from **Duke-NUS** have requested permission to feature the Guidelines on the Mental Health Innovation Network (MHIN)—a global platform co-led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). MHIN connects mental health innovators worldwide, with regional hubs in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and most recently, Asia.

5. Strategic Value to the Content Forum and the Nation

Malaysia's representation at this global platform brought meaningful strategic value to both the Content Forum and the nation as a whole:

- Provided **international validation of the Content Code** as a dynamic, responsive framework for addressing complex public interest issues.
- Reinforced **Malaysia's leadership** in ethical content governance and its ability to contribute to global public health discourse through a self-regulatory, multi-stakeholder model.
- Elevated the **profile of the Content Forum** and its members, many of whom were credited during the presentation, enhancing national and international visibility.
- Positioned both the Content Forum and Malaysia as **credible partners** for cross-sector collaboration on media ethics, suicide prevention, and responsible content practices.
- Showcased Malaysia as a **model for other low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)** seeking to balance freedom of expression with public health and safety through ethical self-regulation.

6. Acknowledgement of Member and Stakeholder Contribution

The success of this initiative, and the credibility it carried on the international stage, was made possible through the collective effort of our members and key stakeholders.

The active participation of Content Forum members, particularly from media and platform sectors, brought integrity and industry insight to the table, and lent credibility and weight to Malaysia's self-regulatory model, distinguishing it from approaches that rely solely on regulatory enforcement. Their continued support in the development, promotion, and implementation of the Guidelines gave strength to Malaysia's self-regulatory model, making it one that resonates beyond borders.

Equally, the backing from the **Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Health**, and the **National Centre of Excellence for Mental Health (NCEMH)** turned this from a promising initiative into a nationally recognised and internationally respected effort. Their trust in a collaborative, industry-led approach did more than legitimise the work, it modelled the very ethos we advocate for: shared responsibility, mutual respect, and the belief that better content can lead to better outcomes.

7. Next Steps

Following the IASP World Congress, the Content Forum will:

- Expand our training programmes for journalists, content creators, government agencies, and institutions
- Strengthen cross-sector partnerships, including with health authorities and education institutions
- Continue advocacy around ethical content practices, focusing on media responsibility and suicide prevention

- Explore opportunities to share our model regionally, including through ASEAN networks or collaborations with other LMICs

8. Conclusion

Our presence at the IASP World Congress reaffirmed that Malaysia's self-regulatory model is not only functional; it is globally relevant. The response from international participants serves as motivation for us to continue leading through collaboration, integrity, and innovation.

We welcome further suggestions or directives on how we can build upon this milestone to expand our impact, both locally and internationally.

Attachments:

- Press Release: *Malaysia's Collaborative Guidelines Recognised on Global Stage at IASP World Congress 2025*
- Session Photos
- Presentation Overview