

National Suicide Prevention Trial Update December 2020

While there have been many challenges this year due to COVID-19, it is important we take some time to look back and celebrate some of the achievements of the Country SA National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) in 2020.

Engaging the community to be part of the change

During 2020 many of our small grant recipients continued to play an important role within their communities in suicide prevention by helping to reduce stigma, provide training and encourage help-seeking.

Mission Australia Whyalla have developed a local suicide prevention resource booklet for employers and leaders of small, medium, and large organisations with a guide to help encourage healthy conversations about suicide in the workplace. To obtain a copy of the resource please contact [Rebecca Gow](#).

The Whyalla Suicide Prevention Network held a First Responder Wellbeing dinner, which involved several first responder guest speakers sharing their stories of struggle to strength. The event was attended by over 60 responders from South Australian Ambulance Service, South Australian Police, and the Metropolitan Fire Service. To compliment the event the WSPN have also commenced a new campaign called 'Helping the Helpers' to view please visit [Courage Bug](#).

The Whyalla Suicide Prevention Network also held their annual Roses in the Ocean event on World Suicide Prevention Day to remember those lost to suicide, their families and friends, and to acknowledge those who have attempted suicide and those with suicidal thoughts.


SOS Yorkes have developed a 2021 Calendar which showcases twelve local people who generously shared their personal stories to support mental health and wellbeing on the Yorke Peninsula. To request a copy of the 2021 calendar please contact [SOS Yorkes](#).

SILPAG have also used local champions to develop a range of drink coasters that will be distributed throughout the Port Augusta community to encourage men to seek help in times of need.

Local Trial Evaluation

In June, the trial moved into its final year with a major focus on transition and sustainability of current activities funded under the trial. This has included formal evaluation of several key activities including the Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) program, the Aboriginal Aftercare Service currently being delivered by the Pika Wiya Health Service and a whole of trial evaluation which involves analysis of all our South Australian trial activities to further understand what strategies and activities were most effective in prevention suicide at a local level.

The first stage of the whole of trial evaluation is currently underway and to assist evaluators to better understand what activities have had an impact on the local communities they have developed a short survey which we would like to encourage everyone to complete. The survey can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#).



Promoting help-seeking, mental health and resilience in schools – YAM Evaluation

Between 2017 -2020 Country SA Primary Health Network (CSAPHN) implemented the Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) program into three rural high schools. The aim of the CSAPHN YAM implementation was primarily to assess the effectiveness of the program in increasing help-seeking behaviours and reducing suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. To evaluate these factors the Paykel's Suicide Feelings and General Help-Seeking Questionnaire were utilised. Overall help-seeking increased from baseline to post intervention and remained constant at the 6-month follow up. Interestingly, the increase in help-seeking post intervention correlated with a decrease in depressive symptoms. Likewise, suicidal ideation decreased post intervention and continued to show reductions at the 6-month follow up.

The evaluation indicated that the expected outcomes were achieved for the study, whereby a reduction in suicidal ideation and an increase in help-seeking behaviour was evident in the students who partook in the YAM program and the evaluation.

The findings from the evaluation have been presented to the South Australian Department of Education and we are currently in discussion with the Department of Education and the Black Dog Institute to explore the sustainability of the YAM program.


Improving emergency and follow-up care for suicidal crisis – Aboriginal Aftercare Model Evaluation

In February 2018 CSAPHN commissioned the University of South Australia Department of Rural Health (UniSA DRH) to evaluate the Aboriginal Aftercare Service. In the evaluation, the aim was to understand the effectiveness of the Aftercare Service and its service delivery model in reducing suicide.

The UniSA DRH concluded that the Aboriginal Aftercare Service is closing a service delivery gap for Aboriginal people in Port Augusta. The service delivery model is widely perceived as being responsive, culturally appropriate, and consistent with best practice in suicide prevention in Aboriginal settings.

The Aboriginal Aftercare Service is providing a service to the population it was commissioned to serve. Participant narratives suggest that the Aboriginal Aftercare Service is having a positive impact on the outcomes for patients and their family members. To the best of our knowledge there have not been any deaths due to suicide for patients of the service during the time the evaluation was conducted. Similarly, colleagues located in the Emergency Department (ED) in Port Augusta reported presentations to the (ED) hospital for attempted suicide reduced for patients of the Aboriginal Aftercare Service.

CSAPHN will share findings from this evaluation with the Commonwealth Department of Health and continue to explore external funding options for this vital service after the NSPT has concluded.



Finally, on behalf of the Country SA National Suicide Prevention Trial team, we would like to thank everyone who have continued to engage with the NSPT, provided feedback, advice, and support and or delivered activity under the NSPT in 2020. We wish you a relaxing and well-deserved holiday season.

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