

MEDIA RELEASE



Wednesday, 5 September 2018

Let's work together to prevent rural suicide

The Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) is encouraging rural communities to take action and contribute to lowering suicide rates this World Suicide Prevention Day, by connecting and reaching out during tough times and starting a conversation that could save someone's life.

[World Suicide Prevention Day](#) (WSPD) is on Monday, 10 September and the theme this year is *Working Together to Prevent Suicide*.

Director of the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) Professor David Perkins said the day is a time to collaborate and commemorate.

"It is a day to remember loved ones who've died by suicide, and support those bereaved by suicide.

"We all have a part in helping to prevent suicide. You can make a real difference just by taking the time to have those conversations when you notice something has changed, and equipping yourself to help both yourself and others," Professor Perkins said.

"We also need to find solutions to empower communities to create effective local suicide prevention strategies. Our work with 'Our Healthy Clarence' in the Clarence Valley is a great example of a community working together to prevent suicide," he said.

Suicide prevention is one of the Centre's key priorities and this year the Centre hosted a second rural suicide prevention forum at the Easter Show to bring government and organisations together to identify key issues which should be considered when planning and implementing suicide prevention strategies and approaches for rural settings. Specifically the focus was on three key areas as identified in the [CRRMH's Position Paper on "Rural Suicide and its Prevention"](#).

The Centre also teamed up with the [Collective Purpose Partners](#), WayAhead, NSW Mental Health Carers and Being – Mental Health and Wellbeing Consumer Advisory Group, to host a regional suicide prevention forum in Orange.

"We know that rural communities are unique and that by listening to them and focusing on wellbeing, resilience and hope, effective strategies can be put in place.

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“A key part of this is working towards developing mentally healthy communities using successful mental health promotion campaigns such as Act- Belong -Commit,” Professor Perkins said.

“We also need to build resilience and provide local solutions and support during tough times such as a drought, bushfire or flood.”

The Centre is also addressing the issue of suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People delivering suicide prevention workshops, ‘We-Yarn’ in Aboriginal communities. This evidence-based training as well as training delivered in workplaces and communities has the potential to expand more broadly.

Professor Perkins said the Centre’s research activities are pivotal in understanding the key factors leading to suicide.

“Our research helps inform policy and guides future strategies in rural suicide prevention,” he said.

The CRRMH welcomes the opportunity to partner with organisations that wish to take action and have a positive impact on rural suicide prevention.

Download the Centre’s position paper on “Rural Suicide and its Prevention” at https://www.crrmh.com.au/content/uploads/RuralSuicidePreventionPaper_2017_WEB_FINAL.pdf

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

If you’re concerned about your own or someone else’s mental health, you can call the NSW Mental Health Line 1800 011 511 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

For best practice guidelines on reporting suicide or mental illness, visit <http://www.mindframe-media.info/>

#WSPD2018 #YouCanTalk

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MEDIA CONTACT: Jocelyn Johnston | Communications Coordinator

T: + 61 6363 8471

E: jocelyn.johnston@newcastle.edu.au

PO Box 8042 Orange East NSW 2800



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