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MEDIA RELEASE

Learn how to support those affected by suicide

23 February 2018

A community workshop will be held in Merbein to help people who would like to support someone who is affected by suicide by increasing their understanding of suicide bereavement and basic support skills.

Even though rural communities are generally quite good at supporting each other when times get tough, it can be hard for people to understand what to do and what to say when someone dies by suicide.

Murray PHN has partnered with StandBy Murray to bring the *What do I say? What do I do?* workshop to the Mildura region. The workshop will focus on understanding grief, suicide bereavement and support skills.

This free community workshop will be held in the White Cliffs Room at the Merbein Community Hub on Monday 5 March 2018 from 5.00pm to 9.00pm and is open to all: friends, neighbours, employers, teachers, parents, family or team mates.

Workshop facilitator, StandBy Murray Coordinator Lucinda Fraser, said the event has been embraced by other communities in the Murray PHN region.

“We recently held this workshop in Albury and Bendigo and are about to hold one in Castlemaine. It has been well-attended in these communities, and people have told us they are eager to learn more,” Ms Fraser said.

“Those attending the Merbein workshop will learn about the experiences and needs of people bereaved by suicide, basic support approaches and self-care. They will also have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions on the topics covered,” she said.

“I recommend this workshop as a good way for the Mildura community to learn how to take care of themselves and each other.”

Mildura is one of 12 locations in the state taking part in the Victorian Government’s trial to develop local strategies to prevent suicide. It forms part of the *Victorian Government suicide prevention framework 2016-2025* aimed at halving Victoria’s suicide rates by 2025.

Event details:

Where: Merbein Community Hub, 11 Main Avenue Merbein VIC 3505.

When: Monday 5 March 2018, 5:00pm to 9:00pm

Cost: Free – pizza dinner and soft drinks/tea and coffee provided. Gluten free and vegetarian diets catered for.

RSVP: For catering purposes by Friday 2 March to Connie Cirillo at Murray PHN on 03 40404300.

Presented by StandBy Murray (a support after suicide program delivered by Lifeline Central)

Contact details:

Caroline Hamilton, Communications Specialist, e: chamilton@murrayphn.org.au or t: 0449 257 776.

Victoria and Mallee) with support from Murray PHN and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services as part of the Mildura Place Based Suicide Prevention Trial.

If you are in an emergency or at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please contact emergency services on 000.

Other services include:

Lifeline – 13 13 14 or www.lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467 or www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Background information about the Mildura Place Based Suicide Prevention Trial

The Mildura Place Based Suicide Prevention Trial began in August 2017, and will run until 2020.

It is coordinated by Murray PHN on behalf of the Victorian Government. There are twelve trial sites in Victoria, including Benalla which is also in the Murray PHN region.

Using the Lifespan Framework developed by the Black Dog Institute, the trials will address suicide prevention by working with local communities to develop community-driven suicide prevention plans that address local priorities and build on existing services and supports.

This includes: improving emergency and follow up care for suicidal crisis; using evidence-based treatments for people at risk of suicide; equipping primary care to identify and support people in distress; improving the competency and confidence of frontline workers to deal with suicidal crisis promoting help-seeking, mental health and resilience in schools; training the community to recognise and respond to suicide risk; engaging the community and providing opportunities to be part of the change; encouraging safe and purposeful media reporting; and improving safety and reducing access to means of suicide.