

MEDIA RELEASE

Examining new ways of thinking to tackle suicide in Mildura

8 May 2018

Mildura community leaders will gather at a University of Melbourne workshop on Thursday, 10 May, to increase the effectiveness of their leadership in complex systems.

The workshop is being held as part of the Mildura Suicide Prevention Trial, which is one of 12 locations taking part in the Victorian Government's trial to develop local strategies to prevent suicide.

Coordinated by Murray PHN, the Mildura trial forms part of the *Victorian Government suicide prevention framework 2016-2025* aimed at halving the state's suicide rates by 2025.

Workshop presenter, Dr Sarah Wise, believes that societies often face complex social problems that are beyond the reach of a single sector of the community, organisation or individual acting alone.

"To address issues like suicide, we need leaders who can facilitate systemic change and promote new ways of seeing and learning," she said.

Dr Wise, a full-time researcher and policy consultant based at the University of Melbourne Department of Social Work, has a background in child development psychology, and more than 20 years' experience in research, social policy and evaluating complex interventions.

"Leaders are learning to fix broken systems and turn problem situations around in an exciting new way. We can drive sustainable community change by helping leaders to see the bigger picture and work systemically and collaboratively," she said.

The Leadership in Complex Systems workshop will provide participants with the foundations of individual and collective system leadership, including developing systems awareness and thinking skills, discovering the process for collective learning, gaining experience in designing a systemic change strategy, and networking with other leaders committed to social change in the Sunraysia region.

"System leadership is a new approach to tackling difficult problems that leads to far better systems, policies and programs," Dr Wise said. "Leading in complex system training develops the skills and behaviours leaders need to understand the behaviour of social systems and work with different stakeholders to manage a complex situation."

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

Contact details:

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