

MEDIA RELEASE

Working together to prevent suicide in Mildura

10 September 2018

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September) a locally emerging suicide prevention network will host a simple ceremony on Wednesday 12 September.

The event is about connecting with community and services, encouraging communication and caring for members of the community who have been affected by suicide.

Mildura is one of 12 sites where the Victorian Government is trialing a place-based suicide prevention initiative. It forms part of the *Victorian suicide prevention framework 2016-2025* aimed at halving the state's suicide rate by 2025.

Murray PHN is working in partnership with the local community on behalf of the state government to develop and deliver suicide prevention plans that address local priorities and build on existing supports and services.

World Suicide Prevention Day is an initiative of the World Health Organisation aimed at raising awareness and inspiring action on suicide prevention globally.

In Australia, almost eight people die by suicide every day. Annually, more than 2800 people take their own lives, 65,000 attempt suicide and thousands more consider it.

Murray PHN CEO, Matt Jones, said mental health, including suicide prevention, is a priority for the organisation as it aligns with Murray PHN's goals of ensuring people get the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

"We know that suicide is more than just a mental health issue – it's a community one. It affects so many people, including families, friends, colleagues and the communities of those who have taken their own lives or attempted suicide," Mr Jones said.

"We recognise the significant efforts made by families, professionals, schools and other services in the Mildura area in their best effort to understand suicide, identify those most at risk and support people to seek and access help."

"Together we can further understand the complexities of suicide and coordinate actions that build on empirical and emerging evidence to reduce unacceptable rates of suicide," he said.

"Raising awareness of mental health services and support services is important to help build a resilient community."

"World Suicide Prevention Day provides a timely reminder about the work that needs to be done in this area to support individuals and communities," Mr Jones said.

Contact details:

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EVENT DETAILS:

Date: **Wednesday 12 September 2018**
Venue: **Ornamental Lake, Mildura Riverfront**
Time: **5.30pm**

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.