

MEDIA RELEASE

Community invited to art exhibition

5 June 2019

Community members are invited to attend a new art exhibition which aims to encourage people to seek help and reduce stigma associated with suicide.

The Community Connections exhibition at the Benalla Library is being hosted by Murray PHN, Benalla Rural City Council and Central Hume Primary Care Partnership, as part of the Benalla place-based suicide prevention trial.

The exhibition opens on Thursday 6 June, with artwork by local Aboriginal artist Chris Thorne on display. The artwork was created to encourage community conversation about mental health, suicide prevention and resilience.

“What I have tried to show in one of the paintings ‘Life’s Purpose’ is, that someone with mental health issues may not always feel that they have a purpose in life. Life’s purpose can be different for everyone. Therefore, it’s important that we connect and share to help each other, and to find purpose in our lives,” said Mr Thorne.

Matt Jones, Murray PHN CEO, encouraged Benalla community members to visit the art exhibition.

“This is a great opportunity to come together, to continue the conversation around mental health and learn more about Benalla’s place-based suicide prevention trial.

“Suicide prevention is everyone’s business. We must keep building on community activities that encourage conversation and as a result resilience, wellbeing and education.”

Mayor, Cr Scott Upston said the Council is pleased to present such an important exhibition.

“The place-based suicide prevention trial, and the learnings from it for our community around resilience and wellbeing are critically important.

“We are very proud to host an exhibition in the Library that encourages people to talk about mental health and the stigma around suicide.”

Benalla is one of 12 locations taking part in Victorian Government trials to develop local strategies to prevent suicide. This work forms part of the Victorian Suicide Prevention Framework 2016-2025, which aims at halving the state’s suicide rates by 2025.

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

A note on reporting suicide: *There is extensive literature linking media reporting of suicide with increased suicide rates. Suicidal behaviour can be 'learned' from the media when reports are sensationalised, focus on celebrities, are repeated, and explicitly describe location and method details. Evidence suggests that responsible reporting of suicide by the media can reduce suicide rates. Mindframe Australia Media Guidelines support the media to report suicide accurately, responsibly, and ethically. A summary version of these guidelines accompanies this Murray PHN media release. This information is also available from mindframe-media.info or on the Mindframe App.*

Contact details

For more details, Amity Bradford, Communications Specialist e: abradford@murrayphn.org.au or t: 0436 820 014.