

MEDIA RELEASE

Community event for World Suicide Prevention Day 3 September 2019

An emerging suicide prevention network, together with Murray PHN, is inviting community members to attend a free World Suicide Prevention Day event on Tuesday 10 September from 5.30pm, at Ornamental Lakes Park on the Mildura riverfront.

The event will include a candlelight vigil, that aims to raise awareness, remember those lost to suicide and unite to take preventative action.

Speakers on the night will also be sharing their lived experience of suicide, to encourage people to open up and communicate, care for one another and connect with local support services if needed.

World Suicide Prevention Day is an initiative of the World Health Organisation aimed at raising awareness and inspiring action on suicide prevention. More than eight people die each day in Australia by suicide with suicide the leading cause of death for Australians aged between 15-44.

This year's World Suicide Prevention Day theme is 'Working together to prevent suicide', with Coordinator of the Mildura Suicide Prevention Trial, Murray PHN's Meryll Whyte, saying this reflects the need for strong collaboration and connection between community and services to help prevent suicide.

"During this event, community organisations and individuals with lived experience will come together to make a positive impact on community mental health and wellbeing, and shine a light on suicide prevention," she said. "We are speaking up, offering a gentle word of support and listening in a non-judgmental way, and linking our community to support services in the local area. This can make all the difference."

Mildura 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 Government 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 suicidcallbackservice.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. Guidelines are 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.