

MEDIA RELEASE

Building capacity to prevent suicide

4 October 2019

This World Mental Health Day, 10 October, Benalla community members are invited to participate in free suicide prevention training, designed to provide everyday people with simple steps to help save a life from suicide.

As part of its place-based suicide prevention trial, Murray PHN is offering community members access to *Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR)* training provided through the Black Dog Institute.

QPR is an online, evidence-based training program that provides the knowledge and skills to help people identify warning signs that someone may be suicidal, gives them confidence to talk with that person about suicidal thoughts, and explains how to connect them with available supports.

Since the QPR launch last month, 100 per cent of community members who have completed the training so far now feel comfortable to directly raise the question of suicide with someone showing signs of suicide.

Suicide has been recognised as a global health issue by the World Federation for Mental Health, which has chosen suicide prevention as this year's World Mental Health Day theme. Every 40 seconds someone dies by suicide and suicide is the leading cause of death in 15-29 year olds (World Health Organisation).

Coordinator of the Benalla Suicide Prevention Trial, Murray PHN's Bek Nash-Webster said QPR training is helping to strengthen skills within the Benalla community and ultimately help prevent suicide in the region.

"We have 500 licences for use in our region, so we encourage all interested community members to register and complete the course," she said. "Given the training is online, it's a great, flexible option for workplaces, schools and other community organisations.

"It can be undertaken in multiple sittings and once completed, participants will have essential skills to talk to someone who's thinking about suicide."

QPR training is open to anyone 18 years or more, takes only 60 minutes and can be completed in multiple sittings. Interested community members can visit murrayphn.org.au/qpr to register for the course and its useful suicide prevention resources.

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 available from <https://mindframe.org.au/industry-hubs/for-media> or on the Mindframe App.

Contact details

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