



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Sport

MEDIA RELEASE

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Marking World Suicide Prevention Day

Today is World Suicide Prevention Day and this year's theme, "Take a Minute, Change a Life", captures the idea that each of us has a role to play in suicide prevention.

The same concept lies behind R U OK? Day, which will be marked next Thursday.

Just a simple, sincere question can show a distressed friend, colleague, family member or even a stranger that they are not alone and that help is available.

More than 3000 Australians take their own lives each year and sadly, the rate is increasing. This means that many of us have been touched by this tragedy, directly or indirectly.

But not everyone understands that they can help to reduce this number.

Results of a recent survey by Colmar Brunton show that almost one in five Australians believe that talking about suicide will make a depressed person more likely to take their own life.

More than one in three others surveyed were unsure whether talking about suicide was a good or bad thing to do.

In fact, at the personal level, asking someone who is depressed and suicidal, about their thoughts can be the most effective way to allow them to get perspective, find support and reach a solution.

The Turnbull Government is committed to improving our national suicide prevention effort through new regional approaches, innovative programs and research.

We are spending \$34 million over three years on 12 national suicide prevention trials which will gather evidence on better suicide prevention in regional areas of Australia, and particularly, in high risk populations.

Specific areas of focus for the trials include Indigenous communities in the Kimberley and Darwin regions and the former Defence Force members in in Townsville.

Regions of Queensland, NSW, Victoria and SA have also been selected to trial strategies that better target people at risk of suicide and ensure a more integrated, regionally-based approach to suicide prevention.

To support the National Suicide Prevention Trials, we're also providing \$3 million to the Black Dog Institute.

This funding is enabling the Black Dog Institute to provide assistance with the development of local strategies and to share best practice.

We are providing \$43 million in funding for national suicide prevention leadership and support activity to organisations across Australia, such as R U OK?, Mates in Construction Australia, Suicide Prevention Australia, United Synergies, Mindframe and Orygen.

Suicide Prevention Australia has also been selected to establish and manage our new \$12 million suicide prevention research fund that will tell us what works and how to deliver effective support – to individuals, families and communities.

And to help care for those that care for us, we are providing \$1 million to specifically support mental health and reduce suicide in the health workforce.

On 4 August 2017, the Commonwealth and State and Territory Health Ministers endorsed the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan and Implementation Plan.

The Turnbull Government will continue working together with the States and Territories to develop a national approach to address suicide prevention and to support health agencies to interact with other portfolios to drive action in this vital area.

The loss of a loved one to suicide is an immense tragedy and this is why the Turnbull Government is delivering on its commitment to provide a range programs and services that support local needs so we avoid this unnecessary loss of life now and into the future.

(ENDS)