



Prioritising Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (Pillar 2) – Suicide prevention

In response to the Productivity Commission and the National Suicide Prevention Adviser's reports, the Australian Government will commit \$298.1 million towards suicide prevention, as part of a record \$2.3 billion whole-of-government mental health and suicide prevention package. This is in recognition of the devastating impact suicide has on individuals, families and communities.

The Australian Government is taking a national leadership role in suicide prevention, and will invest in measures such as:

- \$61.6 million to expand the *National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program* which will provide support for a range of whole-of-population suicide prevention activities and services
- \$12.8 million to create a National Suicide Prevention Office (NSPO) responsible for building whole-of-government capability to deliver a national approach to reducing suicide rates, based on evidence and in collaboration with the mental health and suicide prevention sector, and
- \$12 million to maintain support to the former National Suicide Prevention Trial sites to continue delivery of local suicide prevention initiatives across Australia.

The Australian Government will also work jointly with states and territories to deliver:

- \$158.6 million for universal suicide aftercare services to all Australians discharged from hospital and pilot broader referral pathways to anyone who has attempted suicide or experienced suicidal distress that may not have presented to a hospital
- \$22.0 million to provide national suicide postvention services to support those bereaved or impacted by suicide, and
- \$31.2 million to directly help people experiencing psychological distress, including establishing a national distress intervention trial, implementing national standards for Safe Spaces services, and expanding the *Roses in the Ocean CARE connect* service.

Why is this important?

Around Australia, 9 people die by suicide each day. More years of life are lost to suicide than any other cause of death in Australia and the impact of suicide is devastating for individuals, families and communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians die by suicide at more than double the national rate.

Men and boys account for around 75% of all suicides.

The highest period of risk for suicide is the 3 months following a suicide attempt, with research indicating that many of these occur within the first month after discharge from a hospital.

It is also estimated that people who are bereaved by suicide, including families, friends and colleagues, are between 2 and 5 times the risk of dying by suicide themselves.

The Government is committed to ensuring services are available where people need them, which includes Australia-wide programs and services, as well as locally focused services.

Early distress intervention approaches focus on linking people with a range of services and support to address their diverse needs well before they may connect with a mental health service.

These investments are in response to the National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Advice (Recommendations 1, 5 and 6) and the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health (Recommendations 9).

Who will benefit?

These investments will benefit individuals, families, workplaces and communities at risk of, and impacted by, suicide and will provide increased funding and initiatives towards suicide prevention.

The NSPO will partner across all levels of governments and the suicide prevention sector to build capacity and work together.

How much will this cost?

The Australian Government is investing \$298.1 million over 4 years, from 2021–22.