

Suicide Prevention Community Meeting - Port Pirie

Monday 23 September 2024

On Friday 23 September 2024, members of the Suicide Prevention Council met with local community representatives in Port Pirie to deepen their understanding of current suicide prevention issues in the Yorke and Mid North region.

During this meeting a diverse range of stakeholders, including community organisations, mental health professionals, and individuals with lived experience, shared their insights and wisdom. The Council is sincerely grateful to the following organisations who presented to the Council:

Northern and Yorke LGA
Lifeline Connect Centre Port Pirie
Uniting Country SA
E2 Expert by Experience
Mental Health Alternative Care Service team, YNLHN
Port Pirie Regional Council
Bouncing Back Suicide Prevention Network
Stamp Out Suicide (SOS) Yorke Peninsula
SOS Copper Coast Suicide Prevention Network
Mid North Suicide Prevention Network.

What the Council Heard:

Attendees valued the meeting as a networking opportunity with several themes and needs identified throughout the presentations and discussions across the forum:

- Stronger collaboration and communication across the Local Health Networks, Primary Health Networks (PHNs), community organisations, and the broader community, to enhance sector-wide support and improve service linkages to effectively address community need.
- Broadening the inclusivity of Suicide Prevention Networks (SPNs) by raising awareness and ensuring representation of the whole of community (including Aboriginal people, those from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, and LGBTQIA+ individuals) and organisations (such as schools and community groups) which will enhance outreach and strengthen SPN effectiveness.
- Consideration of stable funding arrangements to strengthen SPNs, boost membership skills and capabilities through attending conferences or other best practice learning opportunities and enable local engagement in strategies which could otherwise be cost prohibitive.
- The need to address disparities in service provision between regional and metropolitan areas through modernised and innovative strategies, including community based solutions, differentiated service delivery methods and modalities, expansion of local support mechanisms, fostering of culturally appropriate services, and incentives to attract and retain a qualified workforce.
- Increased training and educational opportunities in regional areas to empower local residents, strengthen community support networks, and potentially help alleviate workforce shortages.



The Impact and Opportunities:

Members of the Council have further reflected on these key messages, with consideration given to their collective roles and opportunities to act, influence and advocate to achieve advancement in these areas. Whilst all of these learnings will be utilised to inform future planning and drive the strategic ambition for a responsive, holistic, and evidence-based systems approach to suicide prevention, work has commenced on the design and implementation of pertinent initiatives which respond to the understood community concerns and priorities. These include:

- The focus of the current SA Suicide Prevention Community Grants directed to supporting access and uptake of suicide prevention training and education, with the aim of building community capacity and resilience through skill development and expanding broader awareness.
- A Backbone Coordinator position to be established with key responsibilities around support provision to the SPNs for facilitation of the ongoing reform and growth of locally relevant suicide prevention partnerships and activities in the respective regions.
- A request to meet with the South Australian Skills Commissioner, Mr Cameron Baker, has been communicated and accepted, with a meeting being scheduled to enable the Council to both advocate for upskilling of the SA lived experience workforce and highlight the ongoing regional challenges in the areas of education, training, and workforce sustainability.
- Contact has been made with the PHNs as the first step to building stronger foundations which promote collaborative ways of working and endorse more robust, coherent, and effective mechanisms in service delivery across organisations and sectors.

Our Commitment and Appreciation:

The South Australian Suicide Prevention Council remains dedicated to its mission of reducing the incidence of suicide and providing support to those affected by it. We extend our gratitude to all those who contributed to our community meeting and look forward to working collaboratively with our partners to create a safer and more supportive environment for all South Australians.

