

SUICIDE PREVENTION: Place-based approach

BACKGROUND

Mount Alexander Shire has a statistically significant higher rate of suicide compared to the Australian rate.¹ In response to these statistics Castlemaine District Community Health (CDCH) and Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership (CVPCP) organised a community forum to discuss suicide concerns within Mount Alexander. Over 60 community members attended the forum and the suicide prevention community network, Every Life Matters (ELM), was subsequently established.

CVPCP successfully applied for a Murray PHN tender to develop a local, evidence-based integrated suicide prevention action plan on behalf of the Mount Alexander Suicide Response Network and ELM.

The aim of this 12 month project (2017-18) was to build the capacity of the local community and service providers to:

- Raise community awareness of suicide and suicide prevention
- Identify and respond to people at risk of suicide
- Improve local service response for people at risk of suicide
- Continue this work beyond the project time limits

PARTNERS

- CDCH (auspice of CVPCP)
- Murray PHN (funding body)
- Castlemaine Health
- HALT (Hope Assistance Local Tradies)
- ELM
- Standby (Lifeline)
- Headspace: School Support
- Vic Police
- Mount Alexander Shire Council
- General Practice manager (Mostyn Street Medical Clinic)

METHOD

A place-based approach was applied to this work. Support and authorisation for this project was provided by the established CVPCP Board². A local governance structure for this project was developed and included shared decision making between all steering group members.

As agreed by the CVPCP partners, the PCP staff applied for the funding, formed the governance structure and recruited and managed the project worker. For the project, it was agreed to use the evidence-based LifeSpan Model (Black Dog Institute) as the framework.

OUTCOMES

This project has resulted in:

- Skills-development in fundraising, communications and marketing for ELM members to support sustainability of their work
- 150 community members participating in awareness raising events held in local parks

¹ National Coronial Information System data (2001-2012) procured and shared by Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group

² CVPCP Board includes CEOs/senior managers of local government; health and social services.

- 120 community members participants in awareness raising events held through sporting clubs
- Capacity building of local community members, who have participated in the project and are delivering SafeTALK training (community suicide prevention training), Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training and Mental Health First Aid.
- Local service providers have undergone training including 75% of General Practitioners in Mount Alexander
- A whole of community suicide prevention plan has been developed and sits with the Mount Alexander Health and Wellbeing Alliance.



ELM



Community members receiving their SafeTALK Trainer certificates