

NSW Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010–2015

A whole of government strategy promoting a whole of community approach

NSW Health

3.3.3 Strategic direction

3: Improving community awareness, strength, resilience and capacity in suicide prevention
Under Strategic Direction 3, the NSW Government will implement initiatives to develop:

Improved community, strength and resilience

Increased community awareness of what is needed to prevent suicide

Improved capability to respond at potential tipping points and points of imminent risk

What the NSW Government will do

Outcome 3.1: Improved community strength and resilience

i.	<p>Raise awareness of the characteristics of healthy and resilient communities and support their development.</p> <p>Develop partnerships with key community stakeholders and networks and work collaboratively to raise awareness of the characteristics of healthy and resilient communities, including increased linkages between good mental and physical health, and with a particular focus on at risk groups.</p> <p>Continue to develop and implement programs across life stages and at risk groups that encourage and build healthy and resilient communities, reduce social isolation, and maintain social and family engagement and cultural identity.</p>
ii.	<p>Use mentoring and leadership development programs to promote the development and sharing of good practice in local communities.</p> <p>Continue to resource and support local community groups to run skill development building workshops and activities to build social cohesion and cultural awareness.</p> <p>Establish annual whole of government and whole of community showcases for innovative approaches to suicide prevention and resilience building.</p>
iii.	<p>Develop and promote strategies that enable and support groups within local communities to work together on suicide prevention.</p> <p>Use existing suicide prevention networks, community networks and new e-technologies, including the development of “communities of practice”, to link various community health and non health professions and specialists together to share skills and knowledge, and provide improved coordination of responses and local pathways to care.</p>

Outcome 3.2: Increased community awareness of what is needed to prevent suicide

i.	<p>Educate communities to identify and respond to warning signs, tipping points and imminent risk factors associated with suicide.</p> <p>Continue to develop and implement programs that raise awareness of suicide prevention and at risk people, encourage help seeking behaviour and challenge stigma associated with suicide.</p> <p>Conduct a social marketing campaign to raise awareness of suicide prevention and people at risk, encourage help seeking behaviour and challenge the stigma associated with suicide.</p>
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ii.	<p>Work with mainstream and multilingual media to improve community understanding of suicide and suicide prevention and encourage responsible coverage of these issues. Develop whole of government, whole of community culturally appropriate guidelines for dealing with and discussing suicide and attempted suicide within families, schools, workplaces and communities, including how to respond to reports in the media.</p>
ii.	<p>Reduce the stigma and myths surrounding suicide by actively communicating the range and complexity of factors that contribute to suicidal behaviours.</p> <p>Develop and build partnerships across government agencies, the education system, and community and business groups to encourage active communication of factors that contribute to suicidal behaviour through mental health education.</p>
iii.	<p>Develop and promote strategies that enable organisations to work together to reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors in individuals and communities.</p> <p>Continue to implement and champion the work of suicide prevention networks and other community groups, and develop and promote strategies that reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors in individuals and communities.</p> <p>Connect to existing community networks and in particular those that provide support to high risk groups, as environments for discussion and raising awareness.</p>

Outcome 3.3: Improved capability to respond at potential tipping points and points of imminent risk

i.	<p>Enable locally based networks and cooperative partnerships to respond effectively to traumatic incidents or significant changes in local circumstances (e.g. drought, industry closures).</p> <p>Continue to implement initiatives that enhance community awareness of and capacity to respond to traumatic incidents and significant changes in local circumstances, including identifying emerging needs, improving early intervention strategies and pathways to care, reducing stigma and strengthening the role of General Practitioners in networks and services.</p>
ii.	<p>Develop materials and provide locally based support to assist staff and volunteers in organisations such as pubs, clubs, cultural and religious centres and recreational and sporting groups, to identify potential suicidal behaviour and to respond effectively.</p> <p>Connect to existing community and suicide prevention networks to promote new pathways to discussion and awareness raising, including through the promotion of appropriate skills training.</p>
iii.	<p>Expand and resource the capacity of schools, workplaces and other relevant settings, to identify and support those at risk.</p> <p>Continue to develop and implement risk assessment frameworks to identify and provide pathways to care and support for those at risk across a variety of community settings, including through education, health, emergency, social, criminal justice, corrective and other relevant services.</p> <p>Work across government agencies and community groups to improve understanding about risk factors and pathways to care.</p>
iv.	<p>Use media and other strategies to raise awareness of the risk factors, warning signs and tipping points for suicide.</p> <p>Develop whole of government, whole of community guidelines for dealing with and discussing suicide and attempted suicide within families, schools, workplaces and communities.</p>

Examples of initiatives that will contribute to Strategic Direction 3

What we are already doing

initiatives that target different life stages, including Families NSW initiatives for families expecting a baby or with young children such as the Triple P Parenting Program, Safe Start and Schools as Community Centres, evidence based depression prevention programs for children and adolescents, youth mental health services, Elderly Suicide Prevention Networks, and Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People Active & Health Groups.

Initiatives delivered through the education system, including those that provide support at transition points, such as School Link, mental health discussion as part of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus, Supporting Students in the HSC years, school and TAFE counselling programs, resources in mental health and drugs and alcohol and health promotion for TAFE students and staff, and the Access Employment, Education & Training Framework.

Initiatives delivered through the Corrective Services system, including risk management approaches for offenders at key points including entry to custody and at the time of court and sentencing events, pre-release planning, and special units that assist with the further assessment, treatment and management of offenders in custody with mental health, mental disorder, personality disorder, cognitive impairment, and/or self-harm risk. New initiatives

Community based initiatives, such as suicide prevention networks, the expansion of Community Drug Action Teams, including involvement in local events to promote awareness, and the development of communities of practice to link various community health and non health professions and specialists; and, targeted at specific communities, the Drought Mental Health Assistance Program, Farm-Link and Community Action Plans in Aboriginal communities under the Partnership Community Program.

Media focused initiatives, including new guidelines for discussing suicide and a social marketing campaign to raise awareness of suicide prevention and people at risk, encourage help seeking behaviour and challenge the stigma associated with suicide.

Initiatives to provide training and support in the workplace, including Mental Health First Aid training.

How will we know?

Number of wellbeing focused Community Drug Action Team initiatives.

Release of community suicide prevention resources.

Rate of participation in the arts, sport and recreation.

Number of referrals to the Employee Assistance Program.

Number of self-harm incidents in custody.

Workforce training:

Number of people who have received workforce mental health awareness training.

Rate of school counsellors managing mental health issues.

Percentage of frontline police officers accredited as specialist Mental Health Intervention officers.

Relevant indicators for success of the Justice Health Community Integration and Connections Teams.

Number of Corrective Services NSW staff participating in training including refresher training for Suicide Awareness and Mental Health First Aid.

Partners NSW Health, NSW Department of Education & Training, TAFE NSW, NSW Department of Community Services, NSW Police Force, all agencies.

