

Media Release



KIMBERLEY
Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial

20 December 2018

Green light for three suicide prevention community action plans

Communities in Derby, Broome and Bidyadanga have been given the go ahead to roll out community action plans to develop and strengthen suicide prevention activities, as part of the Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial.

Each community has been given a \$130,000 grant to implement a locally developed plan. It will be overseen by the community liaison officer and a working group, reflecting the Trial's community-focussed approach.

Suicide Prevention Trial coordinator, Vicki McKenna has been working closely with the communities to offer guidance and support as they developed their individual action plans.

Vicki said, "It's great to be getting these plans off the ground, with the support of the community liaison officers who are employed at each of the sites to support each community with its chosen activity.

"If the passion and enthusiasm of the working groups is anything to go by, I am confident we will see great progress when these activities are evaluated at the end of the Trial in June 2020.

"Importantly, the activities are designed to be sustainable so that, even when the Trial is over, the communities will have developed skills and experience that will stand them in good stead," Vicki said.

Derby's plan will promote a positive identity, enhanced social wellbeing and recognising and sharing the healing journeys that exist locally.

Activities will include family and community forums, song writing workshops, writing a local theme song, developing a local suicide prevention campaign and identifying traditional healers and medicines.

Bidyadanga's CARE project is focused on developing community members' existing strengths and building their capacity to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour.

Suicide prevention and awareness initiatives being considered include an on-country swag out for young men affected by a peer's suicide, a midnight basketball competition with life promotion messaging and language classes.

Broome's project, Wirriya Liyan (feeling happy), aims to identify community members with lived experience of suicide and life promotion, and cultural strengthening knowledge, stories and skills.



The Trial is led by WA Primary Health Alliance in partnership with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services. For more information, email kaspt@wapha.org.au

Participants will visit schools, youth centres and other youth-friendly venues to connect young people to culture and focus on promoting a positive identity, and social and emotional wellbeing

Plans for the other six communities involved in the Trial – Dampier Peninsula, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Wyndham and Balgo – are in the pipeline.

A strong cultural framework underpins all the Trial's activities and all the projects identified by the communities must fit within the systems-based approach, guided by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP).

The outcomes will be evaluated by the Australian Government, as part of a national evaluation to find the most effective approaches to suicide prevention for at-risk populations and share this knowledge across Australia.

Helplines

If you find yourself in an emergency, or at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please contact emergency services on 000. Other 24-hour services include: Lifeline on 13 11 14 and Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.

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About the Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial

The Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial Site is one of 12 sites nationally identified by the Australian Government as priority areas for suicide prevention due to their high-risk populations. The Trial aims to identify the best approaches to doing this, which will inform a wider national approach.

The Trial is guided by the recommendations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP) and is focussed on the following nine areas: Broome, Bidyadanga, Dampier Peninsula, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Wyndham and Balgo.

The four-year Trial comprises a planning and implementation phase and its findings and outcomes will be evaluated by the Australian Government, as part of a national evaluation.

The Kimberley Trial is led by the WA Primary Health Alliance, Country WA PHN. It has partnered with the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) who is responsible for the Trial's operationalisation. A Working Group, co-chaired by the Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt AM MP and the KAMS Deputy CEO, has strategic oversight of the Trial and a Steering Committee has operational oversight.