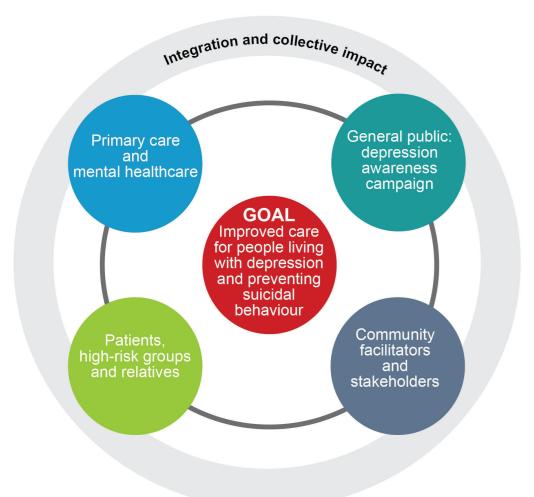
Mentally healthy communities

Good mental health is fundamental to the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) understands the important role primary care plays in supporting whole communities to be mentally healthy.

WAPHA is leading the implementation of the Alliance Against Depression as a key strategic approach to achieving the vision of improved health equity in WA. The strong link between depression and suicide requires a focus on improving access to primary mental healthcare for all people. This can be achieved by raising awareness of depression, by increasing the number of people who seek treatment, and by reducing stigma associated with depression and suicide.

The Alliance Against Depression is an approach based on evaluated trials and is recognised as the world's best practice for the care of people with depression and in the prevention of suicide. The initial implementation of the framework in the trial region of Nuremberg (The Nuremberg Alliance Against Depression) resulted in a 24 per cent reduction of suicidal acts within a two year period. The Alliance Against Depression can be adapted to meet the specific cultural and regional needs of a community and has been successfully implemented internationally.

The Alliance Against Depression Framework



The evidence from the European Alliance Against Depression studies revealed that while there is value in intervening through each pillar, real impact on the reduction of suicide only comes with integration of activities in all four.

Alliance Against Depression for your community

Establishing a local Alliance Against Depression helps a community work together on:

- Public awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma associated with depression and suicide;
- Support for high-risk groups, patients and their families;
- Localised training for health professionals, including GPs; and
- Education activities on depression and suicide for community members and leaders.

The international evidence is that this leads to increased access to primary mental health care, improved identification and treatment rates of depression by general practitioners and specialised mental health professionals, and improved service and program support for people at risk as well as their family and carers.

This evidence-based approach aims to build strong connected communities, where the established local Alliance activities can continue to recognise depression and respond to the ongoing needs and concerns of the community.

Anyone can start an Alliance

All local Alliances start with a small number or people wanting to improve the mental health and wellbeing of their community. Those 'initiators' then follow three stages to work with networks across the community to plan, prepare and implement their local Alliance.

WAPHA can help local Alliances to get started by providing relevant health data, including information on primary care services that target mental wellbeing. The Alliance Against Depression Coordination Centre at WAPHA can continue to help at each stage.

WAPHA supports local Alliances with resources, tools, case studies and co-ordination support. The Alliance Against Depression Coordination Centre is continually adding to the resources for use by local Alliances. These support materials are being informed by the European Alliance Against Depression Coordination Centre (Germany) and from other Alliances globally.

For more information on forming an Alliance in your community contact the Alliance Against **Depression Coordination Centre at WA Primary** Health Alliance



Acknowledgement

the whole community.

Disclaime

While the Australian Government Department of Health has contributed to the funding of this material, the information contained in it does not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government and is not advice that is provided, or information that is endorsed, by the Australian Government. The Australian Government is not responsible in negligence or otherwise for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use or reliance on the information provided herein

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WA Primary Health Alliance acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners and Elders of the country on which we work and live and recognises the significant importance of their cultural heritage, values and beliefs and how these contribute to the positive wellbeing of

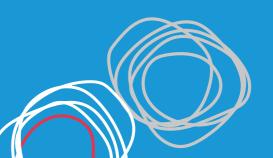
wapha.org.au





The Alliance **Against Depression**

An integrated, community-based approach to tackling depression and suicide.



wapha.org.au

The Alliance **Against Depression**

An integrated, community-based approach to tackling depression and suicide.

STAGE 1: Preparation (0-6 months)

You have decided that your community needs to take action to prevent suicide and to improve the awareness and treatment of depression.

You can begin by identifying any existing depression and suicide prevention programs in your community and by talking about the Alliance Against Depression within your existing networks. Establishing an Alliance aims to connect and strengthen communities, not duplicate or replace existing activities.

Define the geographic Build your network Identify an Alliance place of your Alliance by bringing together Coordinator. This may and identify what your Alliance members and be an individual or an community needs to other local partners. organisation. support its mental health and wellbeing. (6) Analyse available Set SMART goals. Prepare for your first financial, personal and community meeting Outline actions and local resources. Consider and form a steering responsibilities. which activities will committee. require funding e.q. media advertising, trainina. GOALS

STAGE 2: Planning (6-12 months) Explore how your community will know your Alliance is making a difference. (3) Involve a well known community leader or champion to promote your local Alliance. 5 Identify activities to support at-risk groups in your community and build broad awareness of depression. 7 Plan the first training events for the primary mental healthcare sector, community

facilitators, media and the

broader community.



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STAGE 3: Implementation (12-18 months)



Depression Coordination Centre at WA Primary

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