

# COMMUNITY FACT SHEET



**KIMBERLEY**  
Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial

## Why a Suicide Prevention Trial in the Kimberley?

The Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial is helping to develop a model of suicide prevention that meets the unique and culturally sensitive needs of the region's Aboriginal communities.

The Australian Government chose the Kimberley as one of 12 national Suicide Prevention Trial Sites. This is due to the tragic over-representation of suicide in Aboriginal communities such as the Kimberley, where the age-adjusted rate of suicide is more than six times the national average.

## Who is the Trial focusing on?

The Aboriginal community, with a specific focus on young people.

## Which communities are involved?

The trial covers the entire Kimberley region with nine sites chosen to develop local community-led responses.

Broome, Bidjandanga, Dampier Peninsula, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Wyndham and Balgo.

## Who else is involved?

Community groups, federal, state and local governments, GPs, health professionals and community health workers, all of whom are essential to tackling suicide in the region.

## How is the Trial being run and by whom?

The Trial is guided by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP).

A strong cultural framework underpins all its activities. Community decision making on suicide prevention strategies in local communities is a priority.

The Trial is community driven through representation on the Working Group which is co-chaired by the Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt and Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) Chief Operating Officer, Rob McPhee.

It is supported by WA Primary Health Alliance, Country WA PHN, in partnership with KAMS, who are coordinating on-the-ground activities.

## How much is being spent and how?

The Australian Government has allocated \$4 million to the Trial to date, most of which will be used for community activities identified in community action plans. Other activities include community consultations, cultural mapping, training for health professionals, awareness campaigns, data collection, workforce and an evaluation.

## How long is the Trial and how will it be evaluated?

It began in mid-2017 and ends in June 2021. Planning was completed in December 2017 and implementation began in January 2018. The University of Melbourne is evaluating the Trial as part of a national evaluation. A local evaluation to better understand outcomes for the Kimberley will also be conducted.



### What has happened or is underway?

- Consulted and collaborated with community, government, health, social services and education sectors.
- Appointed the KAMS project trial coordinator to oversee community consultations and action plans.
- Signed a memorandum of understanding between WA Primary Health Alliance and WA Country Health Service to ensure collaboration, coordination and optimisation of results in suicide prevention and postvention.
- Appointed Prof. Pat Dudgeon, UWA Centre for Best Practice in Aboriginal Suicide Prevention, as the Trial's data group chair.
- Finalised an operational plan.
- Appointed the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre, and completed cultural mapping across the region to inform the Trial's multiagency approach to providing tools and systems to address mental health and suicide prevention.
- Completed a campaign during the end of year holiday period to help people who might be struggling to access support.
- Training for GPs and other health providers in suicide prevention and postvention.
- Recruiting community champions to support communities to develop and implement suicide prevention action plans.
- Developed and are implementing community action plans.
- Employed community liaison officers in seven communities to support community goals.
- Commenced a regional process to implement a No Wrong Door approach to mental health and social and emotional wellbeing services.
- Ran the Yawartja Liyan equine therapy program targeting disengaged, high risk youth to build self-esteem and personal confidence. This included training 10 Kimberley Aboriginal people as Equine Assisted Learning Practitioners.
- Implementing a cultural security framework across Kimberley mental health services to provide best practice, culturally safe care.
- Implementing a self harm protocol across Kimberley clinics, schools and service providers to ensure access to appropriate care.
- Launched the Kimberley Postvention Service in partnership with KAMS, Thirrili, and United Synergies.
- Undertaking a self-harm and suicide data audit to examine risk factors, and support ongoing prevention programs.
- Implemented the Wirnan Creative Project as a result of cultural mapping undertaken, bringing together five Kimberley Art Centres to collaborate and share the diversity and richness of Aboriginal art, language, and identity.
- Providing regular gatekeeper training to the nine sites, including Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid, ASIST, SafeTALK and Youth Mental Health First Aid.
- Delivered the Kimberley Empowerment Healing and Leadership Program in Broome, Bidyadanga, Kununurra and Derby.

## Key community activities

### Empowered Young Leaders

- Supported the Empowered Young Leaders Project with two Empowered Young Leaders forums held.
- The Empowered Young Leaders released a powerful report and Collective Impact Statement summarising the forums, and the recommendations of young Kimberley people, to improve social and emotional wellbeing outcomes.
- The Empowered Young Leaders undertook a Youth Leadership exchange to New Zealand, were involved in the co-facilitation and leadership in the WA Statement of Intent consultation workshops, and have representation on the District Leadership Group, and the Children and Young People Priority Working Group.

### Balgo

- Undertaken the Balgo Suicide Prevention Music program, producing life affirming songs in local languages, strengthening traditional language practice, and increasing the uptake of the men's health program.
- Restoration of the Balgo community gym to engage young people in it's use.
- Brought 80 women together from across the Katjungka region, to compete in the inaugural Balgo Women's Football Carnival in partnership with Garnduwa.

### Bidyadanga

- Development of a traditional healers model to compliment western mental health clinical models.
- Implemented suicide prevention talks and activities with local sporting teams, and in the Kids After School Program.
- Implemented a school holiday youth camp to explore protective behaviours and suicide prevention activities.

### Broome

- Undertook the "Start the TALK, Take the WALK Again Suicide" community healing and life promotion event, and numerous other family events, to bring the community together.
- Established a Social and Emotional Wellbeing basketball team linking lived experience ambassadors and mentors with young people.
- Developing resources to be used across community, and to support lived experience consultations in Broome.

### Derby

- Held traditional healing and bush medicine activities with significant uptake of healing sessions.
- Created life-affirming and locally designed sporting uniforms representing all teams coming together in unity when it comes to mental health.
- Held life promotion song writing workshops.

### Fitzroy Crossing

- Ran "The Best You Can Be (Mad Bastards) healing program" on country activities with Elders in the Kurlku Desert.
- Partnership between the Men's Outreach Aboriginal Corporation and the Fitzroy Crossing Rangers, with a focus on future on-country activities.

### Halls Creek

- Progressed the Lilman Saints family football camp supporting men and their families to undertake on country activities, SEWB information sessions and suicide prevention education.
- Organised the Halls Creek Expo to promote service providers to the community, answering the community's questions - "who is here to help, and what do they do?"
- Held meetings with Jaru elders on teaching cultural healing.



## Key community activities

### Kununurra

- Delivered suicide prevention presentations at community events and facilities, including the Gawooleng Yawoodeng women's refuge.
- Facilitated connecting activities for young women with older women, to connect to country and culture, and to provide information, education, and guidance on social and emotional wellbeing.

### Wyndham

- Connecting police and key service providers into work with community members.
- Establishing help-seeking messages with young leaders and the local school, to develop culturally secure murals within the school grounds.
- Held the Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Camp at Home Valley River Camp, facilitating discussions and raising awareness of the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community.

### Wot Na Wot Kine Media Campaign

The Wot Na Wot Kine campaign, encourages young people to talk to someone they trust, to share their hard times.

Wot Na Wot Kine ran on social media, spotify, GWN7, 7MATE and 7TWO television channels, and Goolarri radio.

The campaign was well received, with more than 70,000 video views and 420,000 campaign impressions on social media alone.



## More information

Contact Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service Ltd.

9194 3200  
[exementalhealth@kamsc.org.au](mailto:exementalhealth@kamsc.org.au)