



Midwest Suicide Prevention Trial

Community Fact Sheet - February 2020

Why a Suicide Prevention Trial in the Midwest?

The Australian Government selected the Midwest region as one of 12 national Suicide Prevention Trial Sites due to an identified high suicide rate in the area, that has continued over an extended period.

The objective of the Suicide Prevention Trial Sites is to find the most effective approaches to suicide prevention for at-risk populations and share this knowledge across Australia.

Who is the Trial focusing on?

Men aged 25 – 54, especially farmers, fishers and fly in, fly out (FIFO) workers, and the Aboriginal community.

Which communities are involved?

Geraldton, Exmouth, Carnarvon, Gascoyne Junction, Denham, Meekatharra, Yalgoo, Mt Magnet, Mullewa, Northampton, Kalbarri, Dongara, Morawa, Mingenew, Perenjori, Three Springs, Carnamah and Coorow.

How is the Trial being run and by whom?

The Trial is supported by the WA Primary Health Alliance in partnership with the WA Country Health Service and the WA Mental Health Commission.

All activities are informed by the Alliance Against Depression, the world's best practice approach for the care of people with depression and in the prevention of suicide.

Local activities are guided by the Trial's Steering Committee and the Geraldton Suicide Prevention Action Group, with a strong focus on community level planning.

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 plans.

Other activities include community consultations, training for GPs and other health professionals, awareness campaigns, project management, workforce, data collection and an evaluation of the Trial.

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

The Trial began in mid-2017 and ends in June 2021. The planning phase was completed in December 2017 and the implementation phase began in January 2018.

The Trial is being evaluated on an ongoing basis by the University of Melbourne, as part of a national evaluation.



**WA Primary
Health Alliance**

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Who else is involved?

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

Other groups can become involved by contacting the Trial coordinator.

What has happened so far?

WAPHA has consulted and collaborated with community, government, health, social services and education sectors to inform and develop the plan for the Trial. Completed activities include:

- Training for more than 70 GPs and other primary healthcare providers in suicide prevention, postvention, anxiety and/or depression.
- Ran the Insidemymind.org.au campaign aimed at helping people to understand depression and identify symptoms, with 3,119,472 impressions.
- Supported grassroots promotion of suicide prevention and postvention.
- Contracted Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service to carry out yarning circles to develop community action plans in Aboriginal communities in the Gascoyne and Midwest/Murchison.
- Signed a memorandum of understanding with the WA Country Health Service to ensure collaboration, coordination and optimisation of results in suicide prevention and postvention.
- Provided Mindframe training for local media organisations to encourage responsible, accurate and sensitive representation of mental illness and suicide.
- 14 Mental Health First Aid courses have been completed throughout the Midwest with a total of 106 participants.
- 29 Question, Persuade, Refer Suicide Prevention trainings have been completed with a total of 202 participants.
- Supported community events such as the Hope Assistance Local Tradies visit to talk to tradies at workplaces and at sporting groups.
- Attended the annual Whale Shark Festival to talk about keeping mentally healthy, seeing more than 250 community members.
- Developed and distributed awareness coasters to most pub venues in the region.
- Co-launched the Checkmate Men's Mental Health Initiative at the Mingenew Midwest Expo.
- Supported the Chapman Valley Menshed Shinema project, a converted "drive-in" cinema bus bringing communities together to combat social isolation.
- Hosted the "Walk into the Light" dawn walk for World Suicide Prevention Day alongside Roses in the Ocean.
- Supported the annual Rotary Red Hat Day with the theme of "Lifting the Lid on Mental Health".



More Information

To learn more, contact the Midwest Trial Project Coordinator Jacki Ward on 0438 784 650 or jacki.ward@wapha.org.au

What is planned?

- Continuation of the Inside My Mind media campaign to raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with depression.
- Further Mental Health First Aid and Question Persuade Refer training for community members and health professionals in the region.
- Further activities in communities to raise awareness of depression and suicide and encourage men to look after their mental health.
- Grief and loss workshops for Aboriginal communities, conducted by Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Services.
- Tomorrow Man workshops exploring how men can look after themselves, their mates, and families, while carving out their own version of the Aussie man.
- A continuation of the Shinema project with the Chapman Valley Menshed, to visit more communities in 2020.
- Roses in the Ocean Voices of Insight speakers program for people with a lived experience of suicide who are interested and ready to share their story.
- Evaluation of the Trial.

