
MEDIA STATEMENT

22 December 2020

SUICIDES DROP IN NEW SOUTH WALES BY 5% DURING THE PANDEMIC

Today, the New South Wales Government released data showing a 5% decrease in the number of lives lost to suicide between November 2019 and November 2020. This is the most significant reduction in lives lost to suicide in 10 years.

There were 853 lives lost to suicide in the 12 months to November 2019 and 807 lives lost in the 12 months to November 2020 – a reduction in 46 lives

Lifeline Australia Chairman, John Brogden, said today: “These are the most remarkable figures of the COVID- 19 pandemic. This is a moment to celebrate life.”

“Hundreds of thousands of Australians have reached out for help to Lifeline and other mental health services and got the help they needed when they needed it and stopped short of suicide.” He continued.

“I hope this is a turning point for mental health in Australia. People in need of help have been brave enough to get it during one of the most difficult times in memory.”

Lifeline’s calls have increased by 20% over the last year as the service supported bushfire affected communities and all Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Today’s data shows us that people have asked for help and got it when they needed it. As a result, we have seen a drop in the number of suicides in New South Wales.” Mr Brogden continued.

“Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy and our thoughts are with those who have lost a loved one this year. Today’s release must encourage us to continue to look for opportunities to keep people safe.

“A very important message is that people should keep calling Lifeline and keep getting help so we see these numbers continue to fall. We also need to encourage Australians to keep connecting with each other especially over the holiday period. If you think someone may be struggling, please continue to reach out to them to offer support.”

“The New South Wales Government has provided significant additional funding to Lifeline during 2020 which has allowed us to boost our services. We are very grateful to the Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Minister for Mental Health, Bronnie Taylor for this support.” Mr Brogden said.

To arrange an interview, please contact: media@lifeline.org.au or phone: 0408 407 376