
MEDIA RELEASE
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6% increase in lives lost to suicide demands more funding urgently to reduce suicide in Australia. Nine Australians dying every day by suicide.

John Brogden, Chairman of Lifeline Australia, said today's release of the 2018-2019 cause of death data by the ABS revealing 3,318 lives were lost to suicide is a tragedy and demands more funding urgently from government, business and the community.

"Firstly, we remember the 3,318 Australians who died by suicide in 2018-2019 and the many people left behind who are learning to live a life without their loved ones. Every life lost is a tragedy that effects our families, our workplaces and communities. Today will be a difficult day for many. I want to remind anyone who is struggling, that Lifeline is here for you, please call us at any time on 13 11 14." He said.

"We need a whole of government, sector and community plan for suicide prevention to move fast towards an Australia free of suicide."

Mr Brogden said Lifeline welcomed the appointment of Christine Morgan as the Prime Minister's National Suicide Prevention Advisor in 2019 and expects a significant increase in funding and initiatives when her report is released next year.

Mr Brogden outlined five key areas Lifeline has identified as a priority to dramatically reduce the rate of lives lost to suicide in Australia with the top priority being the creation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support line:

"As today's release shows, we must speed up our action in all areas, but our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are doing it particularly tough. With more than twice the rate of lives lost compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts, the loss of life within our Indigenous communities is a national tragedy." Mr Brogden said.

Lifeline's five identified priority areas to reduce suicide.:

1. The creation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support line that is governed and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2. Increasing the capacity for peer support groups facilitated by clinicians for survivors of suicide.
3. Increased suicide prevention training within community.
4. Support services for those at-risk of suicide post discharge.
5. Appropriate facilities and responses for people experiencing suicidal behaviour and presenting to Emergency Departments.

Mr Brogden also called on the community to continue to work to connect with each other, especially as we move into a challenging holiday season.

"This year has been very tough for so many Australians. They have been turning to Lifeline more in 2020 than at any other time in our 57 year history. It is great that people are connecting with Lifeline, but it also serves as a reminder that there are many doing it tough and many are alone. This is particularly concerning as we move into the holiday season."

“I ask all Australians to never underestimate the power they have to make a positive difference in the lives of another person. If you know someone may be having a difficult time, if you know someone may be alone, please make a special effort to reach out to them. By checking in with someone to make sure they are doing ok, you are showing that you care and that can make all the difference. It is through connecting with others that we find the strength to hope.” Mr Brogden Said.

Lifeline is Australia’s leading suicide prevention service, operating the 13 11 14 telephone line within 40 centres around the nation. The service expects to respond to over one million requests for support this year, creating an average of 120 safety plans to keep a person experiencing suicidal ideation safe every day.

To donate to Lifeline, visit www.lifeline.org.au/donate To arrange an interview, please contact: media@lifeline.org.au or phone: 0408 407 376