



NT HEALTH

# Northern Territory Suicide Prevention

Strategic Framework  
**2018-2023**

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Progress Report Four  
(2022)**



# Summary

Preventing suicide requires work in a wide range of areas. Our plans to prevent suicide must include increasing whole of community awareness alongside targeted initiatives for people who are most at risk of suicide.

Information in this progress report is organised under three priority areas:

- 1** Stronger community awareness and capacity.
- 2** Improved system integration, coordination and accessibility.
- 3** Focused support for vulnerable groups and a stronger evidence base.

# NT Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework (2018-2023) Implementation Plan

## Top achievements 2021-2022

### 1. Community Suicide Prevention Grants:

To date over \$1.22 million worth of community suicide prevention grants have funded 161 projects across 2018-2022.

In 2022-23, 30 grants were awarded, with \$222,750,000 for community suicide prevention programs and activities. This grants round was supported with a \$150,000 contribution from the NT Primary Health Network (NTPHN).

Examples of current community grant projects include:

- a. *In Celebration Of Being Alive 2022-23 - UMNT Inc - Top End*
- b. *Steps to Awareness - Council Of Australian Veterans Inc - Top End*
- c. *FFNT - NT Suicide Prevention Community Grant Football Federation Northern Territory - Top End*
- d. *Suicide prevention week with Volleyball Nepalese Association for Northern Territory (NANT) - Top End*
- e. *Suicide Story in Bagot Community - Danila Dilba -Top End*
- f. *Community Suicide Intervention Skills Workshop - West Daly Regional Council - West Daly*
- g. *Rhythm2Recovery Program St Joseph's College - Tammy Taylor - Big Rivers*
- h. *Women's Wellbeing Camp - Saltwater and Desert - Galiwin'ku Women's Space Inc - East Arnhem*
- i. *Finding Voice, Connecting With Feelings - Richard Van De Veerdonk - West Arnhem*
- j. *Narrative Ideas for Life-Saving In the Desert - Michelle Bates and Community Elders - Central Australia*
- k. *Angangkere Tyerrtye Mwerre (Wellbeing) Workshop - Akeyulerre Aboriginal Corporation Central Australia*



## 2. Funded training for staff and community members:

Targeted training for community members and health and social care staff in supporting vulnerable people expands the capacity of the community to respond wherever the need is.

### Territorians trained in suicide prevention in the past 12 months



Central  
Australia &  
Barkly

**425**

Top End

**460**

Other Regions

**578**

## 3. Community Action Planning (CAP) - a regional systems-based multi-intervention approach to preventing suicide

This work includes identifying community planning groups and networks across the NT and support for the development of community action plans (CAPs). CAP stakeholders in the NT include:

- Community suicide prevention grant recipients
- Aboriginal community controlled health services (ACCHS)
- Regional community service workforces
- Cross-sector service agency workforces
- Community members

Providing this opportunity for people to come together have resulted in shared ideas, learnings and resources and enhanced partnership opportunities leading to activities focused on:

- Developing suicide prevention collaboration networks
- Developing expertise in suicide prevention practice and activity
- Increasing and improving strategies to raise suicide prevention awareness in the community
- Increasing the profile of Aboriginal suicide prevention activity
- Improving the dissemination of research and information across regional networks
- Developing community profiles and activity readiness assessments.
- Developing community flow charts that identify natural helpers, and linkage with relevant agency contacts.



## Other key initiatives

2021-2022 has also seen a number of key reform documents released, including the Australian Prime Ministers National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Report in December 2020. Whole of Government approaches embed suicide prevention outcomes within non-health systems and improved coordination between governments.

The Mental Health and Suicide Prevention bilateral agreement includes:

- *NT Universal Aftercare* service model for people who present to hospital following suicide attempt or crisis will be offered follow up and reconnection supports.
- Expansion of StandBy Support After Suicide Program to ensure all people in the Northern Territory can access its services for those bereaved or impacted by suicide.
  - » Co-design processes are occurring with the understanding to support the provision of bereavement support services accessible to all regional populations of the NT
- Initiatives announced in the 2021-22 Federal Budget which aim to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and suicide prevention outcomes continue to progress, including:
  - » Establishing the first national 24/7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Line (13 YARN). A comprehensive co-design process to inform the service was undertaken with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 13 YARN commenced operation in March 2022, and will be nationally launched in the second half of 2022.
  - » Working in partnership with the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to establish a community-led regional suicide prevention and aftercare service network, and Indigenous mental health first aid training across the country – now referred to as the Culture Care Connect Program.

### CASE STUDY

*Suicide Prevention Funded Services Example*

#### **NT Universal Aftercare service**

The NT Universal Aftercare service is a new initiative around the best practice management of presentations for suicidal behaviour and is focused on supporting people who have attempted suicide by providing psychosocial and social-emotional wellbeing, non-clinical follow-up support through outreach services with primarily face to face contact. This service is a partnership between NT Hospitals, specialist mental health services and Non-clinical community focused support providers that connect referred clients to relevant services and social supports.

Whole of Government approaches and jurisdictional service integration improvements are the driving concepts behind the expansion of an NT Universal Aftercare service model by integration into the NT Health system for people who present to hospital following suicide attempt or crisis will potentially see every Territorian receive follow up following discharge from hospital. This will address specific needs of cohorts that may require more tailored approaches to suicide prevention





# Progress by goals and actions

## GOAL 1

**Building stronger communities that have increased capacity to respond to and prevent suicidal behaviours through raising awareness and reducing stigma.**

### Actions

- 1.1 Promote online and face-to-face prevention and awareness services and resources.
- 1.2 Increase accessibility to prevention, intervention and postvention initiatives being delivered in all sectors.
- 1.3 Identify and promote opportunities for training and awareness raising in the community and workplaces.
- 1.4 Promote and support resilience building for individuals, carers and communities through community level activities.



## COMPLETED

### Online training

NT Health ongoing support for the 2022 Lifeline Australia / National Mental Health Academy delivery of free online Suicide Prevention Summit conference for allied health professionals covering a comprehensive suite of suicide prevention resources for children/youth, Indigenous, lived experience, evidence-based approaches, counselling and access to technology.

[Mental Health Academy: Suicide prevention](#)

### NT Health website

Updated NT Health Suicide Prevention Information and Support website

- A comprehensive list of the NT suicide prevention community grants projects funded since grants commenced in 2018.
- A monitoring and evaluation toolkit including a tool to guide the measurement of participant journeys

- A list of NT suicide prevention training providers
- Information about online, telephone and face-to-face bereavement support.

### Online promotional resources

Dissemination and promotion of links for Beyond Blue Heads Up suite of mental health resources and WorkSafe Australia's *People at work tool* mentally Healthy Work places resources and tools.

### Cross-sector linkage and facilitation

NT Health suicide prevention team have worked with funded contractors to identify, promote and facilitate local connections, resources and support pathways for NGO community referrals and contracted training in remote and rural NT communities. For example; working with NIAA-funded Mental Health First Aid providers to identify and connect training to priority communities.

## ONGOING

### Online and face-to-face prevention and awareness services and resources

A range of placed-based community information access, awareness and help-seeking campaigns have been supported to develop as they emerge in various settings including

- Media promotion including targeted radio announcements, podcasts, and community education campaigns.
- Increasing use of technology-based suicide prevention initiatives and access to online help and support services including clinician Suicide Risk Assessment Training

- Promoting uptake of the Mental Health Professional On-line Development (MHPOD) training on suicide awareness and risk assessment.
- Exploring development, maintenance and marketing of an online portal of resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and workers.





## Suicide prevention services

NT Health funds a range of non-government service providers including \$1.925 million for the delivery of NT-wide evidence-based suicide prevention activities, grants and training workshops including ASIST, SafeTalk and Mental Health First Aid.

### Examples of funded training and awareness activities include

#### Anglicare (Top End) and Lifeline (Central Australia, Barkly) ASIST Training

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is a two-day skills-based workshop that helps equip people for 'suicide first-aid'. The focus is on increasing the ability of 'key responders' to promote the immediate safety of someone who may be at risk of suicide and link them to appropriate professional services.

#### Mates in Construction (MIC)

MATES in Construction is jointly funded by NT Health, the NTPHN and the relevant industries. MIC is an evidence-based workplace suicide prevention model developed to reduce high suicide rates in the construction industry and includes:

- Establishing a crisis intervention network
- Resource development
- Training, education and workforce capacity building

### NT Community Suicide Prevention Grants

To date over \$1.22 million worth of community suicide prevention grants have funded 161 projects across 2018-2022.

In 2022, this grants round was supported with a \$150,000 contribution from the NT Primary Health Network (NTPHN).

In 2020-21 30 grants were awarded – with \$222,750,000 for community suicide prevention programs and activities.

These community grants will continue aimed at locally-led activities and projects across the Northern Territory.

### CASE STUDY

#### *Suicide Prevention Funded Services Example*

#### Mates in Construction (MIC)

Between 2001 and 2015 a total of 256 employed men died by suicide in the NT, of these 25% were construction workers. Suicide rates in the NT construction industry between 2013-15 were 45/100,000 compared to a national average of 22/100,000 – more than twice the national average for construction workers (Maheen & Milner, 2017).

Mates in Construction (MIC) is an evidence-based workplace suicide prevention model, developed to reduce high suicide rates in the construction industry (Heller, Hawgood, & De Leo, 2007; Maheen & Milner, 2017). The program applies a systematic approach aligning with the full spectrum of the LIFE Framework and has been recognized by several state and National Awards. In 2018, in response to a “whole of government” approach to suicide prevention in the Northern Territory, MATES in Construction proposed a project joint funded by the Northern Territory Government, Northern Territory PHN (NTPHN) and the relevant industries. The program was expanded to the Northern Territory. (MIC) includes:

- Establishing a crisis intervention network to support individuals engaging with existing services
- Resource development – modifying for small businesses and rural remote sites to the Northern Territory and culturally acceptable delivery.
- Training, education and workforce capacity building to mirror safety structures onsite and engage all the workforce in providing a mentally safer and healthier workplace.

This program is also aligned with the key messages of the NT Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework, and provides needed interventions for a workforce that we know is vulnerable and needs evidence-based support. An initial two-year service plan has allowed for a more effective decision to be made regarding the funding future of this program. In the first year of the service, 1,500 individuals were involved in the program and 244 individuals received workshop training in the MIC program.

## Community Action Planning (CAP) - a regional systems-based multi- intervention approach to preventing suicide

Includes identifying established community planning groups and networks in each region and supporting the development of community action plans (CAPs). There has been a marked increase in the reach and effectiveness of community awareness and support services. Development of a Community Action Planning (CAP) focus group activity and evaluation guide has been completed

Providing an opportunity for people to come together has resulted in shared ideas, learnings and resources and enhanced partnership opportunities. These will lead to future activities focused on:

- Developing suicide prevention collaboration Networks
- Developing expertise in suicide prevention practice and activity
- Increasing and improving strategies to raise suicide prevention awareness in the community
- Improving the dissemination of research and information across regional networks
- Supporting developing community profiles and activity readiness assessments.
- Supporting development of community flow charts that identify natural helpers, and linkage with relevant agency contacts.

## Activities undertaken to progress Community Action Planning (CAP)

In 2021-2022, the NT Health Suicide Prevention Team in partnership with AMSANT Workforce Support Unit delivered focus group discussions on community suicide prevention in the NT including planning as an Intervention; factors, cultural concepts and protective factors in successful remote NT Community Working Groups.

## Community Action Planning (CAP) Forums 2021-2022

Community forums or focus groups were delivered to support community action planning for activities related to suicide prevention across NT regions

### Alice Springs

May – June 2022

- Three Suicide Prevention Focus Group workshops provided an opportunity for focused discussions and shared ideas, learnings and resources and enhanced partnership opportunities. These will lead to future activities focused on:
  - » Developing suicide prevention collaboration Networks
  - » Developing expertise in relevant in suicide prevention practice and activity
  - » Increasing and improving strategies to raise suicide prevention awareness in the community

### Tennant Creek

October 2021

- Key regional stakeholders met to discuss the commencement and progress of cross-sector suicide prevention initiatives in Tennant Creek and the Barkly region to:
  - » Ensure sound partnerships are established to enable effective community collaboration and
  - » Progressing collaborative and informed approaches to suicide prevention implementation in the Barkly
  - » A roundtable Suicide Prevention Focus Group workshop was held to discuss key issues and relevant models of suicide prevention activities for Tennant Creek and Barkly community settings.



## East Arnhem Region

September 2022

- NT Health is further supporting the related East Arnhem Aboriginal Resource Development Service (ARDS) project focusing on youth and intergenerational relationships and Yolŋu-led mediation (ṇapungawuy) processes, involving Yolŋu facilitators working with people in complex situations including family violence, with Yolŋu and Balanda facilitators trained in mediation and social work-related approaches from both cultures.

## Big Rivers Region

February 2022

- This forum was convened by Wurli Wurlinjang Health service and was attended by operational and community service management as well as a range of support staff from the regions three Aboriginal Health services aswell as community member attendance.

## Darwin / Palmerston Region

Darwin and Palmerston Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Network (DPATSIN)

- DPATSIN are a network collective who meet monthly to mobilize group planning efforts, to support other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention efforts.
- Six focus group sessions supported through this group.
- The membership has a reputation for being knowledgeable, reliable and supportive. Comprising of community members and frontline workers including those with lived experience of suicide creating cross-sector partnerships that improve trust, knowledge sharing and capacity building.

### CASE STUDY

*Suicide Prevention Funded Services Example*

#### **The Darwin and Palmerston Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Network**

Network collective who meet monthly to mobilize group planning efforts, to support other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention efforts.

Designed to bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders & representatives of relevant organisations and groups who provide contribution to this space. The membership has a reputation for being knowledgeable, reliable and supportive.

Comprising of community members and frontline workers including those with lived experience of suicide creating cross-sector partnerships that improve trust, knowledge sharing and capacity building and provide knowledge and cultural safety to new initiative.

Highlights the importance in understanding the community and local services in context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention delivery and support. The network provides a focused and collective voice bringing services closer to need and works to break down silos in operations, duplications.

## Darwin City Council

October 2021

A Suicide Prevention Focus Group workshop was convened in Darwin to discuss key issues and models of suicide prevention activities relevant for Darwin communities and the work interface of Darwin City Council community development staff.

## Litchfield Council

### March 2022 - ongoing

- In collaboration with the Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet (CMC), NT Health has hosted discussions with Litchfield Council to discuss suicide prevention training for 100 per cent of its staff i.e. to potentially be the first Council in Australia to achieve 100 per cent of all staff. NT Health presented a package of training in conjunction with Mates in Construction to benefit staff awareness and to understand and intervene with people who may either be distressed or going through a crisis.
- MATES in Construction (through their NT coordinator and Litchfield Citizen of the Year 2021, Matthew Hull) and have agreed to offer this training for all Litchfield council staff in General Awareness Training, Connector and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.
- This training will aim to produce a blanket effect of suicide prevention awareness across the Shire as council staff have wide coverage - especially incorporating Litchfield Shires "hidden" high risk groups including not-for-profits and Ex-Service Organisation Veterans groups.
- Development of suicide prevention awareness resources beyond this training and into a sustainable promotional future to be discussed as a strengthening complementary initiative to training.

### NT forums

- Two substantial regional community forums for suicide prevention have been undertaken by community organisations in 2021/2022 as follows;
  - » Mental Health Association of Central Australia (MHACA) Life Promotion Network's Suicide Prevention Forum 1-2 June 2022 and;
  - » Sabrina's Reach 4Life *World Suicide Prevention Day* Forum 10 Sept 2021.

### World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) events 10 Sept 2022

- Rotary Club of Litchfield - Suicide prevention awareness campaign in Litchfield Municipality
  - » Info Awareness stalls at Fred's Pass Rural Markets.

- » Info Awareness stall Coolalinga Central Shopping Centre on WSPD
- » Free sausage sizzle outside Woolworths Coolalinga Supermarket
- Sabrina's Reach 4Life - WSPD Breakfast Forum - 9 September Tracy Village, Darwin
- Come Talk With Me - WSPD Event - "Come Walk With Me" - Goyder Square, Palmerston
- Creating Hope Through Action - Mparntwe WSPD event 9 September - Council Chamber Lawns, Alice Springs

### GRANTS AWARDED

*Suicide Prevention Community Grants Examples*

#### **Rotary Club Litchfield/Palmerston**

Awarded \$5,000 to facilitate a project equip the male population aged 40 years and over in rural areas with mental health and suicide awareness literacy skills. Engagement stall during World Suicide Prevention Day supported by agencies to raise suicide prevention awareness in the community. Create community strength-based resources to help people become aware and increase help-seeking strategies.



## National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) Sites

Funded by the Australian Government via Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NTPHN), the Greater Darwin Indigenous community was identified as a trial site and allocated \$5 million over five years (2016-2022) to plan and implement a tailored approach to suicide prevention needs and includes:

- NT Health strategic input includes Working Group and Steering Committee support for the funding of Indigenous organisation and activities to access trial funds.
- Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of effective engagement strategies for Indigenous services, including support for the transition of leadership for the trial to Danila Dilba Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Service.



- Whilst the trial ended in July 2022, the Strengthening our Spirits (SOS) Community Action Plan is being supported to underpin ongoing funded activity with a wider regional scope than the original Darwin Trial.

## Development of monitoring and evaluation

A How to Guide/Toolkit for community-focused suicide prevention activities: In conjunction with PriceWaterhouseCoopers Indigenous Consulting (PIC) and Thamarrurr Development Corporation (TDC) Men's shed in Wadeye, a monitoring and evaluation How to Guide/Toolkit has been developed for community groups to utilise for building the capacity to share their stories. The How to Guide/Toolkit is available on the NTG Suicide Prevention Community Grants web page and is also designed to enhance community project management processes and support reflection on suicide prevention activities.

- Supporting the development and implementation of best-practice guidelines for establishing suicide support groups.
- Developing appropriate support services for those affected when someone close to them makes a suicide attempt.
- NT Health provides ongoing oversight, monitoring and care continuity for the critical Coronial notifications process. This process activates services for next of kin bereavement supports;

The Commonwealth and the Northern Territory agreed to co-fund appropriate bereavement supports to ensure all people in the Northern Territory can access services for those bereaved or impacted by suicide, this includes;

1. Standby Support After Suicide Program which provides face to face and telephone support, information and referrals and locally tailored community awareness and training workshops.
2. An Aboriginal provider of culturally responsive emotional and practical support to bereaved families and individuals impacted by suicide or other traumatic loss.

### GRANTS AWARDED

*Suicide Prevention Community Grants Examples*

#### **Thamarrurr Development Corporation**

Will facilitate a program in the West Daly region that will afford a high risk priority group the opportunity to connect to land, cultural stories and the highlight the importance of family. This enables the effectiveness of suicide prevention practices being applied in a culturally safe environment under the supervision and guidance of traditional owners. Grant funding to support the program delivery and purchase of any items that are required for the yarning mentoring sessions.



## NT sports clubs

Wellbeing planning and activities has been undertaken within sporting clubs during 2022. Some of the clubs who have initiated wellbeing framework planning and activities include;

- Football Federation NT
- Waratah Football Club
- Daly River Buffaloes Football Club
- Darwin Brothers Rugby League Club
- Darwin Dragons Rugby Union Club
- NT Rugby (Governing Body for NT Rugby union)
- Darwin Off-Road Cyclists Inc.
- Pioneers Football Club in Alice Springs

## Postvention and bereavement support services

- A review of NT postvention response systems including policy development, referrals processes and supports structures



## GRANTS AWARDED

*Suicide Prevention Community Grants Examples*

### **Darwin Dragons Ruby Union club**

Awarded \$10,000 to coordinate a Suicide Prevention Awareness round the delivery of suicide prevention training to identify wellbeing champions within each NTRU club (including the referee's committee). Community event to involve specialist from TeamHEALTH, headspace, Catholic Care etc. to build increased knowledge and awareness of suicide factors within targeted cohort, apply effective suicide prevention practices and create community capacity.

## Media guidelines

Agencies continue to work in partnership to develop collaborative approaches with media towards promotion of media reporting guidelines;

- Promote and support Mindframe national reporting guidelines for responsible reporting of suicide across a range of media including print, broadcasting, television, film, radio, drama, the Internet and social media.
- Promote positive mental health stories and media releases from multiple agencies.
- Provide education, support and feedback for the media and those working with the media about culturally sensitive reporting. This includes local news outlets and appropriate terms to use.
- Promoting safe and responsible messaging as a continuing area of emphasis in suicide prevention.
- Report inappropriate media coverage to SANE Media Guideline and Stigma Watch Authority.



## GRANTS AWARDED

*Suicide Prevention Community Grants Examples*

### **Brothers Rugby League Club**

A sporting group with a reputation for being inclusive and family orientated. BRLC has been awarded funding to build off successful previous projects. This has demonstrated a commitment from BRLC to integrate health programs throughout the club, encouraging positive mental health and wellbeing messages. This particular project will involve a cultural wellbeing camp which will promote spiritual & cultural development as the catalyst for healing, wellbeing & growth. Supported with strong partnerships, and the event will be family orientated.





## GOAL 2

**Informed, inclusive services that provide timely, integrated, compassionate and culturally safe responses that meet the diverse needs of people across the NT.**

### **Actions**

- 2.1 Agency collaboration to ensure service coordination, aligned with system reforms.
- 2.2 Establish an online platform covering all of NT.
- 2.3 Develop and improve coordination and analysis of relevant NT data to inform ongoing prevention activities and enable innovative service responses.
- 2.4 A clear public policy across government that supports suicide prevention.



## COMPLETED

### External review of suicide prevention responses in Top End region undertaken in 2021

To assist Top End Region evaluate service capacity, capability, models of care and to assist NT health care service to provide better preventative and interventional care to people at risk of suicide.

Future actions underway in 2022 include;

- Implementation and evaluation of systems, processes and interventions to reduce the risk of suicide for people presenting to hospital or health settings and being discharged from mental health inpatient services.
- Improved responsiveness to, and management of, suicide risk by primary care services through the implementation of co-designed after care services.

### Suicide prevention / community resilience coordinators

NTPHN and the NT Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Working Group have committed to supporting SEWB socio-cultural position funds for Suicide Prevention or Community Resilience Coordinator positions within ACCHS, NT Government Primary Health Centres or other NGO agencies where need is identified. Eligible agencies who re-purpose SEWB positions to suicide prevention or community resilience co-ordinators may contribute to a reduction in suicide and suicidal behaviour in regions by:

- Improving safety, effectiveness and access to local services for people at risk of suicide and their families.
- Strengthening relationships and structures to support collaboration across local agencies involved in suicide prevention.
- Developing and implementing an integrated and evidence-based regional suicide prevention community action plans.
- Ensuring needs within local communities are being adequately addressed.

## ONGOING

### Joint regional planning towards integrated mental health and suicide prevention services in the NT

NT Health contributed to the completion of a joint NT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Regional Plan (Foundation Plan) which endeavours to;

- Address identified gaps, deliver on regional priorities, and drive evidence-based service
- Integrate mental health and suicide prevention services and pathways for people with, or at risk of mental illness or suicidec

- Set out collaboration and integration opportunities to meet short and long-term mental health and suicide prevention objectives identified across the NT

The next steps of this planning initiative is underway in 2022 with NT Health partners from the Northern Territory PHN (NTPHN), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) and National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). The key objectives of this planning is to:

- Establish governance structure aligned to strengthen our health system



- » Leading to a more efficient and effective use of resources, improved system response and better health outcomes
- Complete current investment mapping to stepped care
  - » Single joint regional plan, from which funders then commission local services is better than the current arrangement where funders procure services independently, without coordination or collaboration;
- Develop proposals for three year horizon of change
  - » Joint regional plans and commissioning would cover mental health (across the spectrum of need), suicide prevention (using a multi-element approach)
- Establish action plans for each identified region
  - » A phased approach for the implementation of joint regional planning and commissioning, including an initial trial.
- NT wide planning for workforce
  - » Primary healthcare education, training and workforce development – build the general practice / primary care workforce of the future.

## Collaborative practices across clinical and non-clinical, social and justice services towards integrated models of suicide prevention, intervention and postvention services

### The Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA):

The agreement and implementation plan has three aims to be delivered over the seven year agreement;

1. Reduce offending and imprisonment of Aboriginal Territorians
2. Engage and support Aboriginal leadership
3. Improve justice responses and services for Aboriginal Territorians.

The Aboriginal Justice Agreement acknowledges the underlying cause of crime in the NT and contributing factors that brings Aboriginal people in contact with the criminal justice system. Aboriginal people make up 85 per cent of prison populations in the NT with almost every child in youth detention being

Aboriginal. Many Aboriginal people are in jail for fines or low level offending. In order to undertake this work a whole of government approach is crucial.

### Closing the Gap (CtG) Framework

A new agreement was signed in July 2020 when Aboriginal people were for the first time signatories to CtG (also signed by the highest levels of government).

The new CtG National agreement contains four new priority reform areas:

- Formal partnerships and shared decision making (having Aboriginal people involved in policy and programs – five main policy areas including Social and Emotional Wellbeing - currently not yet stood up)
- Building the ACCHO sector
- Transforming government organisations (ensuring we have adequate skills to serve all Territorians)
- Shared access to data and information at the regional levels

This includes;

- 17 new socio-economic targets
- Two new targets currently under negotiation
- Productivity commission measuring jurisdictional progress against targets – dashboard available online
- Emphasised suicide prevention in Target 14; Outcome 14
  - » People enjoy healthy levels of social and emotional wellbeing
  - » Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people towards zero

Aboriginal Affairs Strategy (AAS): 'Everyone Together' launch March 2020

- Ten focus areas, incorporating 67 measures, and 21 initiatives
- Recently reviewed gaps with edited version to be finalised soon
- AAS aligns with CtG targets – includes:
  - » Targets to increase the level of grief counselling trauma informed services to Aboriginal Territorians

- » Increase access to targeted suicide awareness training.

Two new measures are

- Reduction in hospitalisation for suicide attempts of self-harm
- Reduction in suicide in general for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### **Department of Education counsellors and Headspace schools (Be You)**

NT Health undertakes cross agency meetings with the Department of Education counsellor management and Headspace schools representative staff. The focus of these meetings include:

- Student protective and risk reducing planning / activity / efforts
- Whole of care environment approaches
- Specific suicide prevention planning efforts
- Information sharing pathways across the Health and Education Nexus

### **Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC)**

Independent statutory office that is responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children (Children’s Commissioners Act (2013)).

The Commissioner has six core functions which include:

- Dealing with complaints about services provided to children.
- Undertaking investigations or inquiries related to systemic issues impacting on the care and protection of vulnerable children.
- Monitoring the response of Territory Families to allegations of the abuse of children while they are in out-of-home care.
- Promoting an understanding of and informing public discussion about the rights, interests and wellbeing of vulnerable children.
- Monitoring the administration of the Care and Protection of Children Act as far as it relates to vulnerable children.

### **Cross-agency development of data sharing protocols**

In response to a number of critical incidents where high school students have presented to Top End Mental Health Service (TEMHS), mental health clinicians have met with the Department of Education to ensure communication channels and data-sharing pathways exist for safety planning for aged children. This initiative aims to strengthen the structural and care environment for school-aged children. This project has entered review stage 2021 – 2022 and is being expanded across all NT regional mental health services and Department of Education counselling service sites.

### **NT suicide prevention peak body**

Following the 2021 release of National Suicide Prevention Advisers Final Report and numerous representations from various stakeholders, NT Health hosted coordinated regional meetings with a range of agencies and organisations, CEOs and associated representatives to discuss and gather stakeholder perspectives on a collaborative umbrella, peak or alliance mechanisms for suicide prevention in the NT. Key themes included:

- Alignment with existing regional models and regional governance structures
- Bi-directional flow of ground up information from community networks informing resources and support required.
- A collaborative network representative of a “peak” organisation.

As no consensus model was agreed, NT Health continues to host discussions in 2022 on the potential for an overarching network, collaborative structure or ‘peak body’ to bring together people working in suicide prevention in the NT.

## Office for Commissioning of Public Employment (OCPE) NT Public Sector (NTPS) Mental Health in the Workplace framework

In October 2021, the Commissioner for Public Employment launched the Mentally Healthy Workplaces Framework for the NTPS that will set out enterprise wide actions and implementation mechanisms as well as mechanisms for grass roots support and action for all elements of a mentally healthy workplace. In August 2022, the implementation planning phase began to action initiatives across NTPS agencies.

## Northern Territory Suicide Prevention Coordination Committee (NTSPCC)

The NTSPCC comprises senior representation from 17 government and non-government agencies who meet to monitor effective, linked-up suicide prevention services across different sectors and to put in place solutions to any identified gaps or problems with service delivery. Representation includes Northern Territory Government Departments, Australian Government Departments, Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NTPHN) and Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT).

## Examples of whole of government responses

### Child Youth and Family Services

Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC)

### Top End Region

In response to specific cases of attempted suicide by young people over the last 12 months, the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC) responded by collaborating with families and community services in navigating and advocating in the mental health space in Darwin. The office has taken a lead in one of the communities of most concern, and set up a community meeting to discuss a community response to the issue. Early consultations have been held and the first formal meeting is scheduled for July 2022 in the community.

## Office of Gender Equity and Diversity

Funding for a range of activities supporting health and wellbeing was provided through General Grants and International Women's Day Grants. Funded activities include:

- **STRIVE "Women pushing through boundaries"**

Workshops aimed at Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and First Nations women to improve mental health self-care, awareness and positive mental health exercises; addressing domestic, family or sexual violence and supports that are available; and supporting women in business.

- **Its Men's Time**

A Motivational and Enrichment Program about Multicultural Men's Health and Suicide Prevention: A series of workshops were held for men in Darwin and Palmerston from CALD communities to discuss motivation, issues that are impacting men's mental health and wellbeing and strategies to improve outcomes for these men.

- **International Men's Day**

A celebration of International Men's Day provided the opportunity for increased social connection for the men in the Wagait Shire. The purpose of the event was to bring men together, provide opportunity for intergenerational learning and promoting healthy and active lifestyles for men.

- **Pride Family Fair Day**

As part of Darwin Pride Festival – the Pride Family Fair Day, there were free event and activities including forums on:

- » 'Living Well' conducted by Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council and Headspace, and
- » 'Having Babies – diverse family groups' was a panel of queer parents who shared their journey into parenthood.
- » The day also had entertainment by an array of diverse local LGBTQI+ performers, a Pride Pooch competition, areas for communities to connect and family games and prizes for kids.

- **Youth Health Summit**

Funds supported the ability of young people from regional and remote areas to attend and contribute to the Youth Health Summit. The Summit enabled young people to co-design solutions for the key health and wellbeing issues they experience. One of the priorities that was focussed on was mental health and wellbeing.

- **Library Gender Representation Strategy**

To expand and diversify the library collection at Milkwood Steiner School by addressing gaps in representation in non-fiction history texts, with a focus on gender equity. Diversification of the collection is based on anti-oppressive principles, ensuring that Milkwood students can see themselves and their potential reflected in every aspect of the non-fiction collection. This included identifying with the collection's authors, illustrators, and the historical characters' voices. Authors of history and historical figures who are girls/women/female, LGBTIQ and gender diverse will be visible in the collection.

## **Office of Youth Affairs (OYA)**

- Regional Youth Services Program in Darwin, Palmerston, East Arnhem, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. It facilitates development, implementation and review of local Youth Action Plans (with a wellbeing focus) delivered through the partnership of Territory Families Housing and Communities and the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet.
- Youth Program Coordinators are based in Darwin, Palmerston, East Arnhem, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. They facilitate the collaborative and cooperative delivery of preventative and early intervention services across agencies and organisations to provide pro-social after hours activities for young people at risk.
- These initiatives, funded through the Regional Youth Services Program, include development of a local Youth Action Plan, funding activity programs that include mentoring and support for young people and a strong focus on trauma informed and culturally safe service delivery.

- Ensuring co-design is consistently used in efforts to strengthen Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and improve mental health. This underpins the Regional Youth Services Program through the participation of young people and their families in design and delivery of programs. The Regional Youth Services Program including the Regional Youth Activities Grants prioritise activity and support programs that are responsive to the level and complex needs of trauma, harm and powerlessness experienced by vulnerable young people.
- Regional Youth Action Plans are in place in Darwin, Palmerston, the Gove Peninsula and Homelands, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Alice Springs. The Plans are strategic planning tools for working with young Territorians at a local level to assist local representatives to work collectively in supporting young people's wellbeing and safety. These Plans, developed through engagement and actively listening to youth voices, support positive discussions in the community about young people, their priorities and what young people believe matters.

OYA funds programs for after-hours and holiday periods providing access for young people to engage, connect with others, reduce isolation and build relationships with mentors and workers that can support referral to additional services as needed. Youth Grants supported a range non-government organisations to deliver a range of wellbeing activities for young people including:

- **Night In - Girls' Empowerment Night**

Program event focussed on safe spaces for young women, empowerment, resilience, positive mental health, supporting each other, self-care, respecting self and others.

- **The Power of Visibility (Inspiring Future leaders)**

A series of workshops aimed at CALD Youth sharing with each other how they overcame challenges, supporting each other in discussions regarding leadership, motivation, self-esteem, setting and achieving goals, healthy lifestyle choices.

- **Darwin High School Wellbeing Week**

A week long program of health and wellbeing activities for the students such as yoga, meditation, juggling, mindfulness, physical fitness and strength.



- **Dance With Us**

Dance workshops facilitated by Indigenous dancers enabled young people attending the Youth Centre to participate in physical movement, collaboration and building confidence within themselves, performing for their families, learning about culture and demonstrating the possibility of creating a career in something you love.

- **Young Carers Become a DJ Workshop & Bowling Christmas Party**

Activities provided for young carers to learn new skills and develop their trust, confidence, self-esteem and cooperation in an interactive group environment as well as a Bowling Christmas activity to strengthen peer relationships among young carers.

- **Self-Love Workshop**

Workshops in Darwin and Alice Springs were designed to assist young people deepen their self-love, build self-worth, engage with and engage with others and to follow their aspirations.

- **Hidden Jewels (Building Self Awareness and self Esteem)**

Aimed at multicultural student's aged 12 – 20 years learning self-awareness, self-esteem, understanding the impact of social media and greater awareness of their own strengths and self-worth.

- **Strong & Resilient Youth**

A range of activities to encourage young people to explore their surroundings and to challenge themselves to go beyond their comfort zone.

- **Strong & Resilient Youth**

A youth event provided educative information and access to support services for LGBTQIA+ youths in the Northern Territory, in a fun and safe space seeking to contribute to boosting teenagers' self-confidence and self-esteem.

- **Breathe Circle Mindful Breathing Program for Youth**

A program in Alice Springs for youth between the ages of 11-15 years old. Breathe Circle workshops are interactive with a balance of practical exercises and information, including mindful breathing techniques, movement and sound practices working towards creating calm, focused learning environments for young people.

- **Do It in Darwin**

A program to improve social and emotional wellbeing of participants through engaging in a range of activities that introduce new skills. Each participant provided with a mentor to motivate engagement, assist them to overcome challenges and provide practical support.

- **Hoops 4 Health Academy**

Engaged young people through fitness program and a cultural component focussing on local flora and fauna during holiday periods. Focus of the program was on having fun whilst mentoring and empowering young people in a non-formal environment.

- **Identity, Belonging, Connection Yarning Through the Fire program**

A program for at risk young people aged 10-17 based around creating a strong foundational support network to develop strong community relationships while mentoring future young leaders through social and emotional growth.

- **Darwin Youth Holiday Program Youth Holiday program**

Young people were taught basic care and maintenance towards animals such as horses, while increasing positive relationships with mentors and other young people.

## **Office of Multicultural Affairs**

Funding supported the Emotional and Social Wellbeing for Migrants project that provides a culturally safe mental health support for migrants in the NT by applying a cultural safety model. It also deals with psycho-social issues of migrants, building therapeutic alliance and trust, making services inclusive and accessible, utilising quality interpreter services where available and developing participatory and collaborative partnerships with the migrant populations. The service can be accessed through a telehealth model or face to face consultation.

## **Youth Justice Programs**

Youth Justice Programs provided and coordinated training opportunities for suicide awareness and Youth Mental Health Awareness for externally funded providers.

Some of the programs listed in *Attachment A* were specifically tailored for youth justice program service providers to assist young people.

Seven non-government providers from remote and regional communities, Department of Education and TFHC staff from the Big Rivers Region attended the training. This activity also relates to Goal 3.

## NT wide services

In response to the coronial inquiry into the deaths of six young people from remote communities in the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory Multi Agency Community and Child Safety Framework was implemented in 2020/21. Multi Agency Community and Child Safety Teams (MACCST) commenced operation in 28 communities across the Northern Territory and provides for the Northern Territory Government, community service providers and the community to work together to improve information sharing, and the delivery of coordinated and holistic responses to children and families with multiple and complex needs.

Following a review of the Framework in December 2021, representatives from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments, peak organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations created an objective for the Framework: To strengthen how community leadership and services work together alongside families and embed accountability to community aspirations for their children and families so they are safe and thriving.

More than 90 consultations were held across the Northern Territory. The consultations have affirmed that the original intent of the Framework was sound. The model has been strengthened based on the thematic consultation findings as follows:

- Enhanced focus on the safety and wellbeing of children and in doing so,
  - » strengthening culturally secure practice in partnerships by identifying a set of principles that include enabling self-determination, listening to the voice of Aboriginal people and trauma informed practice. In addition, the model specifically create structured meetings where the insights and direction of Aboriginal leaders are heard to deliver culturally safe and responsive services specific to the needs and wishes of each community;
  - » stronger governance and local accountability - achieved through the direction from Aboriginal leaders in their communities and stronger regionalised governance by recommending

that Regional Coordination Groups become the local oversight body for the Partnership in their respective regions; and

- » enhanced clarity on how MACCSF connect with existing service delivery in communities.

Whilst the review was in progress, MACCST continued to meet across the Northern Territory. The revised Framework has adopted the principles from the 10-Year Generational Strategy for Children and Families, including:

- Uphold and respect human rights
- Respect Aboriginal world views
- Listen to the voices of children, young people and families
- Respect diversity of communities
- Share responsibility, accountability and transparency
- Be trauma informed and healing informed
- Adopt strength based approaches

## Office of Disability

The NT Government is a joint partner in the funding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and provides significant annual contribution to the NDIS for the ongoing support for people with a disability. The Northern Territory data from May 2022, states there are 748 NDIS participants in the NT with psychosocial disability.

- The Northern Territory Disability Strategy 2022-2032 and the first three year Action Plan 2022-2025, were launched in August 2022.
- The NT Disability Strategy demonstrates the genuine commitment to an inclusive Territory where people with disabilities are valued, respected and can contribute to community, no matter where we live. There are five outcomes in total outlined in the 2022- 2025 Action Plan, each with its own set of priorities to achieve the outcomes include:
  - To ensure people with disabilities' rights and choices are protected and respected. Some priorities to achieve this outcome include empowering people with a disability to know their rights and have tools to exercise them. By strengthening informal advocacy networks and resources.

- Another outcome is to ensure that people with disabilities' health and wellbeing is supported. This is to be achieved through delivering disability confident, inclusive and accessible health services; increased access to health education and prevention supports; enhanced early identification of disability and referral to early intervention services; and support all services to work together to improve a person's health outcomes. A range of workforce professional development and training programs on these topics were delivered in 2021-22.

### **Workforce professional development and training programs**

Workforce professional development and training programs include delivery of suicide prevention and mental health awareness training. Courses include suicide prevention and cultural awareness to support staff and equip the workforce to improve service delivery for the clients of TFHC.

### **Educational settings**

Department of Education: Counselling Service

- Work collaboratively with Be You Education Consultant to promote a whole of community approach through the national Be You Framework that is available to and builds educator understanding of mental health.
- Work collaboratively with NT Headspace to offer Mental Health Education programs in 2022.
- Work collaboratively with Be You Clinical Lead (Headspace) to develop postvention planning in secondary schools.
- Work closely with Menzies to evaluate and implement AIMhi-Y, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support application which has been co-designed with students.
- Have completed Blackdog Institute 'Youth in Distress' training in 2021 and continue to train new counsellors in 2022 which includes suicide risk assessment and safety planning.

### **Police Services**

- Provide Mental Health First Aid (MFHA) training to first responder staff to assist in their preparedness for responding to calls for acute assistance from the public.
- Co-operative relationship between police and mental health service providers through the development and delivery of multi-agency care plans and operating protocols.
- Deployment of co-response model in partnership with St John Ambulance and Top End Mental Health Service based at Casuarina Police Station.
- Development of an early intervention health and well-being working group within PFES to drive better mental health strategic outcomes for our people.

### **Corrections facilities**

- All custodial staff and community corrections staff received training to diagnose, assess and manage risk. Trainee Correctional Officers (TCOs) attended the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid program.
- The Initial Risk Needs Assessment (IRNA) is completed by custodial reception staff and community corrections officers within their first 24 - 48 hours of release or an order being written by the court. At risk inmates can also be reported by any officer from primary health care staff at reception intake assessment up to initial health assessment or at any later stage during incarceration.
- At risk training is delivered during the TCOs and Senior Correctional Officer Program. Other sessions are delivered during the TCOs program which includes discussions with people from the Sentence Management Team, Forensic Mental Health and other areas in the Correctional Centres.
- NT Health Top End Region provided two full time psychologists for prisoner grief, loss, depression, stress, anxiety and trauma needs. This addressed a distinct gap in service provision that was previously identified as a recommendation from the coroner.

- The Elders Visiting Program aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal prisoners by maintaining links to community and culture whilst in prison. Elders visit communicate in language, keep prisoners and the community informed about prison processes and community business and conduct ceremonies where appropriate. The program also aims to improve the reintegration prospects of Aboriginal offenders by Elders talking with them about behaviours that led to their incarceration and discussing their pre and post-release plans, obligations and expectations upon returning to community.
- Visiting pastoral care services provided church services in Darwin Correctional Centre including the following denominations: Catholic, Anglican, Islamic, Uniting, Darwin Community Church.
- Visiting pastoral care provided church services in Alice Springs Correctional Centre including the following denominations: Catholic, Uniting, Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army, Desert Life Church, and the Lutheran Church.
- Prison Fellowship Australia provided volunteer mentors for pastoral care and religious services
- Black Dog institute (with the NTPHN) are providing advanced training in suicide prevention on Wednesday 10 August 2022 in Darwin, with TEMHAODS staff encouraged to attend.
- TEMHAODS staff will be in attendance at the Darwin Suicide Prevention Alliance meetings which are coordinated by Sabrina's Reach4Life. The alliance is a group of providers who work in the suicide prevention space. An upcoming breakfast and workshop will be held to observe World Suicide Prevention Day on 9 September 2022.
- Partnership with Head to Health, NT Police, St John's Ambulance and Community Managed Organisations such as Headspace, TeamHEALTH
- TEMHAODS have been facilitating cultural response and trauma-informed care training with external facilitators

## **NT Health Services – Top End Mental Health Alcohols and Other Drugs Service**

- NT Mental Health Line, Top End Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Services (TEMHAODS) share the printed materials about the NT Mental Health Line with multiple other agencies and stakeholders to improve the service awareness.
- TEMHSAOD have co-located with the Head to Health Centre to improve access and co-ordination of service. TEMHAODS continue to coordinate the postvention referral process to ensure individuals, families and carers are supported after a suicidal crisis
- TEMHAODS is promoting internal and external training to improve the skill set of the workforce to identify early warning signs and refer/intervene using the available resources.

## **NT Primary Health Network (NTPHN) Activity**

### **Community Suicide Prevention**

The organisations funded through NT PHN to deliver Community Suicide Prevention (CSP) are: CatholicCare NT, Mission Australia, AMSANT, Mates in Construction.

These organisations develop, promote, and deliver CSP services by:

- Delivering early intervention, crisis and follow up care, and postvention activities.
- Developing and promote suicide prevention resources
- Undertaking community development activities
- Delivering training and education to participants
- Delivering training, education, and workforce capacity building activities to relevant workforce sectors.

## Community Suicide Prevention (CSP)

NT PHN have continued to fund organisations under the CSP to ensure services are:

- Accessible to high-risk groups
- Informed by the people, who best represent the target group of the intended service or activity
- Evaluated to support evidence-informed approaches to suicide prevention, particularly in Aboriginal communities including the Disability Support Sector
- Evaluated to support evidence-informed approaches to suicide prevention, particularly in Aboriginal communities

These metrics are achieved by:

- Promoting partnerships, service integration and collaboration
- Building individual resilience and capacity for help seeking
- Promoting help seeking behaviours and positive lifestyle choices
- Promoting opportunities to enhance individual and community wellbeing
- Providing targeted suicide prevention strategies

## National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) Activities

NT PHN coordinated the implementation of the trial which focused on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the Greater Darwin region from 2018 to 2021. It engaged the community to inform and lead the design of a systems-based approach to suicide prevention.

This included the creation of the Strengthening Our Spirits (SOS) model to meet the needs and priorities of First Nations people in the Darwin region.

The Australian Government extended the National Suicide Prevention Trial through to 30 June 2022. NT PHN recommissioned selected activities that focused on:

- Young people through cultural healing and wellness youth camp programs.
- Building fathers' capacity in partnership with the community and key stakeholders.
- LGBTIQ+ suicide prevention awareness training for youth and their families.
- Dedicated culturally focused trauma informed workshops targeting mental health, child protection and youth justice workforce.
- Train-the-trainer sessions focussed on building the capacity of the sector to deal with pre and post suicide prevention approaches.
- Providing clinical evidence based, trauma informed practice and coordination of care/ aftercare to First Nations young people in greater Darwin.
- Commenced early development of a Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) cultural supervision practice framework.
- Community wellbeing and healing program through case managing First Nation individuals and families in partnership with Larrakia Nation.
- Development and implementation of an outcomes framework and data collection tools for the Strengthening Our Spirits (SOS) model.



## NT systems activity

- NT PHN continues to participate in the Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Working Group facilitated by AMSANT and attended by NT Health and ACCHS representatives. There is an ongoing commitment to funding and developing SEWB Socio-cultural positions to promote wellbeing in remote communities across the Northern Territory.
- A detailed evaluation into NT PHN's SEWB program was delivered by Menzies of Health Research in partnership with AMSANT, with recommendations currently being considered by NT PHN.
- NT PHN also commenced work on development of a Lived Experience Capability Framework which would inform internal and external activities.
- Annual updates to NT PHN's Needs Assessments includes Territory wide and place-based suicide data which contributes to ongoing evidence informed commissioning so that funds are directed to areas of identified need

AMSANT is funded through NT PHN to deliver Damulgurra - Culturally Responsive Trauma Informed Care (CRTIC) across the Northern Territory to its member services and NT Health remote clinics.

The program has been developed by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people and takes an organisational and systems level approach to trauma informed care. The team work with services to develop understanding and awareness of how trauma may be impacting any person accessing services, to identify trauma related signs and symptoms and to develop capacity to respond in ways that feel genuinely safe and supportive.

Trauma-informed care also acknowledges that staff members may carry a load of past trauma and supports development of self-awareness and people's ability to maintain personal stability and presence in order to best support themselves and their clients. AMSANT places cultural responsiveness at the centre of this approach.

## National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

### Northern Territory Social and Emotional Wellbeing Activities

- In 2020-21 NIAA committed \$5.2m in the Northern Territory to provide social and emotional wellbeing counselling and support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities to 10 services, including:
  - » Anyinginyi Aboriginal Health Service
  - » Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation
  - » Danila Dilba Health Service
  - » Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter
  - » Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation
  - » Nganampa Health Council Inc (APY lands)
  - » Urapuntja Health Service Aboriginal Corporation
  - » Wurli-Wurlinjang Aboriginal Corporation
  - » Katherine West Health Board
  - » AMSANT – Workforce Development Support Unit

## National projects

### Indigenous Youth Connection to Culture (IYCC)

- On 9 February 2022, the Minister announced the successful applicants from the first round of the IYCC.
- Three applicants were in NT locations including:
  - » Nhulunbuy
  - » Alice Springs
  - » Numbulwar

- Agreements are currently being negotiated with all providers and once executed, implementation of the Community Plans will commence and continue until 30 June 2024.
- A second funding round opened on 17 January 2022 for the three remaining IYCC sites, which included Borroloola. This was completed by mid-2022.
- An evaluation of IYCC has recently commenced.

### **Indigenous Mental Health First Aid Training**

- The National Wellbeing Alliance (NWA), the new provider for delivery of Indigenous Mental Health First Aid Training (IMHFAT), has commenced delivering training frontline workers and communities.
- NWA have commenced a co-design process with Thirrili, Mental Health First Aid Australia and other stakeholders to assess community need, map existing services and timeframes for the delivery of IMHFAT.
- Planned training to be delivered in the NT for the following communities: Wadeye, Gunbalanya, Numbulwar, Gapuwiyak, Groote Eylandt, Maningrida, Beswick, Milingimbi, Yuendumu, Elliott, Kalkarindji and Barunga.

### **Healing Foundation**

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation continue to be funded through the IAS to support community-based healing initiatives that address the traumatic legacy of past governments' policies.

### **AIHW Data Project**

- The project is being delivered by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and will contribute to a better understanding of the risk factors in different parts of the country.
- The new data will help identify the underlying factors that lead to Indigenous suicides, as well as complement and inform current national mental health and suicide data priority initiatives being led by AIHW, including the National Suicide and Self Harm Monitoring System.
- The project consists of four inter related projects to build an evidence base that maps suicide

prevalence over time by age and sex, analyses suicide risks, examines the availability of services as well as investigating different data collections to see how they can be enhanced and what more they can be telling us about other related risk factors.

- The monitoring and mapping of prevention information will help focus the Government's efforts on where investments can make the biggest difference.

## **Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care**

### **The National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement**

- The National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement, signed by the Commonwealth and all state and territory Treasurers, came into effect on 8 March 2022. The National Agreement and associated bilateral schedules set out the shared intention of all governments to work in partnership to improve the mental health of all Australians.
- The National Agreement commits the Commonwealth and states and territories to improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for a range of priority population groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes working with communities, organisations and businesses to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, and access to, and experience with, mental health and wellbeing services and supports.
- Further, the National Agreement requires the Commonwealth and states and territories to monitor its progress against the National Agreement on Closing the Gap commitments, including Outcome 14 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing), and Target 14 (Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards zero).

## **National Closing the Gap Social and Emotional Wellbeing (Mental Health) Policy Partnership**

- To implement actions under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap) Priority Reform One there has been a strong, concerted effort over the last 18 months to establish policy and place-based partnerships which aim to establish a joined up approach to support genuine partnership and shared decision-making between the Coalition of the Peaks Organisations and governments at all levels.
- The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (Mental Health) Policy Partnership (SEWB Policy Partnership) will be established in 2022. The SEWB Policy Partnership will work with all governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to drive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led outcomes in social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention. This will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve the highest attainable standard of social and emotional wellbeing, improve mental health outcomes and reduce suicide rates (Outcome 14 of the National Agreement).
- The SEWB Policy Partnership will be co-chaired by Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. To support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to engage in the partnership and to build governance and policy development functions, the Commonwealth committed \$8.6 million over three years from the 2022–23 Federal Budget.

## **The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**

- The Commonwealth, through the Department of Health and Aged Care, is continuing its investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention leadership, including:
  - » Providing \$6.1 million over three years to Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia as the national peak organisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention

- » Providing \$1 million to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience Centre (auspiced through the Black Dog Institute) to support the inclusion of people with lived experience in the co-design, implementation and evaluation of suicide prevention activity
- The Commonwealth, through the Department of Health and Aged Care, is working with Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia (Gayaa Dhuwi) to revise the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013-23. Gayaa Dhuwi is working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to refresh the strategy which will aim to reduce the devastating and disproportionate impact of suicide and mental ill-health on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities.

## **The National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing**

- Gayaa Dhuwi has been engaged to provide advice to the Commonwealth on social and emotional wellbeing, and implementation of the National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing (Framework). To inform this advice, Gayaa Dhuwi are delivering stakeholder gatherings on social and emotional wellbeing. Two gatherings have been held, with the third scheduled for the third quarter of 2022. Gayaa Dhuwi will provide further advice to the Commonwealth in 2022.

## The Centre for Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISPS)

- CBPATSISPS aims to reduce the causes, prevalence and impact of suicide on Indigenous individuals, families and communities, by identifying, translating and promoting the adoption of best practice in Indigenous specific suicide prevention activity, including what is found in emerging national and international research. In June 2021, CBPATSISPS released its online Manual of Resources in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention to help communities and professionals quickly identify culturally responsive materials to support their work.
- CBPATSISPS will receive a further \$3 million under the National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program over the period 2022-23 to 2024-25 to support their ongoing work.

## Social Settings Department of Social Services

### NT focused programs

- \$1.4 million for Early Intervention for Children, Young People and their Families (EICYPF)
- \$1.6 million for Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS)
- Delivered by Team Health in the Top End Region
  - » Community Mental Health, Early Intervention for Children, Young People and their Families (\$51,3506)
  - » Family Mental Health Support Services (\$61,8529)
- Delivered by Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation in the Central Australia Region
  - » Financial Wellbeing and Capability including Emergency Relief
  - » Early Intervention Families programs e.g. Communities for children, family and relationship services, child and parenting, budget based funding.

### National focused programs

- \$1.1 billion package which boosts mental health services, domestic violence support, Medicare assistance for people at home and emergency food relief.
- \$45.7 million to extend Individual Placement and Support Trial extended for two years to help improve job outcomes for young Australians with mental illness - Darwin and Alice Springs and to;
  - » Develop a new National Disability Employment Strategy which will consider a diverse range of barriers to work for people with physical, neurological and intellectual disability as well as mental health issues.
- Medicare support at home – whole of population telehealth
- \$150 million in domestic violence supports funding to support Australians experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence due to the fallout from coronavirus.
- \$74 million in mental health funding to support the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians; digital mental health portal, Head to Health [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au); information and guidance on how to maintain good mental health during the coronavirus pandemic and in self-isolation, how to support children and loved ones, and how to access further mental health services and care.
- \$200 million in relief services provided to vulnerable Australians and to support charities and other community organisations which provide emergency and food relief as demand surges as a result of coronavirus.

## Defence and veterans settings

- Open Arms within the NT continues to offer a suite of suicide intervention and mental health literacy workshops to the broader veteran community, including those members of the community who provide support, and those who are interested in the needs of veterans. Face to face groups include Mental Health First Aid (MHFA); Livingworks Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and Suicide Alertness for Everyone (SafeTalk). Open Arms also continues to offer the Livingworks online skills training program Suicide Prevention Start.
- Open Arms continues implementation of new a collaborative and prevention orientated risk assessment framework. This new framework is based upon the SafeSide Prevention model, which shifts away from a reliance upon risk prediction and categorical assessment, and incorporates an increased focus upon collaborative planning to enhance management of vulnerabilities that would otherwise increase risk. Open Arms continues to integrate lived-experience knowledge and practitioners into risk assessment and safety planning, through the implementation of SafeSide principles.
- Open Arms continues to collaborate closely with Australian Defence Forces personnel, including the Joint Health Unit, Army Personnel Support Unit, and Soldier Recovery Centre, to connect with Veterans who may experience increased vulnerabilities during their transition from Defence.
- Open Arms and the broader Department of Veterans Affairs continue collaboration with the lead agency, Mates 4 Mates, of the regional Veterans Wellbeing Centre. While the development of the Veterans Families Wellbeing Centre operational framework is ongoing, Open Arms anticipates a continuing collaboration as an anchor-service within the future Veterans and Families Wellbeing Centre hub.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) is committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of veterans and their families and recognises that good mental health is supported by whole of life wellbeing. DVA's Open Arms Veterans and Families Counselling, (Open Arms), supports improved mental health and wellbeing

outcomes, and reducing the risk of suicide. Open Arms works with veterans and their families across the Northern Territory providing mental health services in a stepped care model that incorporates focused psychological intervention, shared lived and living experience, group treatment and training, and care coordination.

- Open Arms continues integration of shared lived-experience and knowledge with practitioners across the suite of mental health services to inform, complement, and enhance clinical care.

## Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide

- On 19 April 2021, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (the Royal Commission) was established. <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/>
- The Royal Commission has committed to conducting hearings in Darwin from Monday 17 October 2022.
- The Royal Commission will be independent and supported by all state and territory governments.
- The Royal Commission will not be required to look into, or continue to examine, matters they are satisfied have already been dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.
- The Royal Commission may make findings as to the cause or manner of death in relation to a particular defence or veteran death by suicide to inform its inquiry, but is not required to.
- The Royal Commission will not have a coronial function, make formal coronial findings or conduct a coronial inquest. This is the role of a Coroner.
- The Royal Commission will hold hearings in Darwin during the week 17 October 2022.
- The Interim Report released on 11 August 2022 makes a number of recommendations for consideration across government, the ADF and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/interim-report>
- Eleven of the 13 recommendations are aligned with operational and administration practices within DVA. The remaining two recommendations are directed to the ADF.



- There are no recommendations in the Interim Report which directly impact on state or territory governments.
- On 11 August 2022, the Interim Report was provided to Minister Kirby's office. All NT ex-serving organisations and key stakeholders in the NT veterans' community.
- On 17 August, officers from the Royal Commission and Department of Veterans Affairs provided a briefing to members of the Northern Territory Veterans Affairs Ministerial Advisory Council (NTVAMAC).
- The Royal Commission Final Report is due to be tabled in June 2024.
- On 21 September 2022 an NT ESO Round Table will be held to receive briefing from Dept. of Veterans Affairs and the Royal Commission
- Further NT ESO Round Table – Royal Commission are scheduled for March 2023; September 2023 and March 2024, unless otherwise required.

## Governance, Oversight and Coordination Department of Chief Minister & Cabinet

Regional Network responses:

### Top End region

#### Greater Darwin

- The Palmerston Youth Activity Grant delivered through a partnership with the Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities' Regional Youth Service Program supports wellbeing, inclusive safe and fun activities that support young people in Palmerston to participate in a range of activities.
  - » These activities promote connections with adults and mentors and referral to services and resources as needed. The activities engage with young people who are 'at risk' and who have barriers to accessing programs.
  - » They provide a preventative, early intervention level of support and connection to assist young people with help seeking behaviour (reasons like public stigma, lack of trust in available resources, or severity of symptoms, all influence help-seeking behaviours.
- Additionally, adolescents are more likely to talk to their friends when experiencing symptoms of poor mental health).
- The Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association has supported headspace staff to deliver a weekly 3x3 session. The Youth Drop In Sports program will engage with this service during the establishment phase, in readiness for the Palmerston site opening this year. Headspace will be a welcome referral base to support early intervention and access to acute services as required for young people at risk of suicide.

### Tiwi Islands

- CatholicCare -Taking Action to Tackle Suicide (TATS) funding approx. \$270,000 p/a - attend and provide community education and counselling around the health risks (MH Nurse employed)
- Australian Red Cross self-fund initiatives around Harm Minimisation including support for highly successful Tiwi Family Dynamic Model (traditional skin group governance model)
- Top End Health Services (TEHS) Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Team - provide alcohol and other drugs resources and work with Tiwi Island communities to develop workshops and community education programs.
- National Indigenous Postvention Service (Thirrili Ltd) – NIAA funded National service (\$15 million over 3 years). This service provides community education services and support to community members by referring families to support services located in Darwin. They also work with communities to identify the underlying issues that lead to suicide and can prepare and support a community plan to put in place suicide prevention responses
- Mental Health First Aid Training – NIAA funded delivery of the Indigenous Mental Health First Aid training in 2021-2024 (\$15 million over three years). The National Wellbeing Alliance Pty Ltd was selected as the national provider following a competitive grants process.
- Top End Mental Health Services (TEMHS) – Remote MH Team

- Clinical psychologists Ruth and John Rudge work remotely on the Tiwi Islands via video link based in clinics. They have previously worked on the Islands from 2008-2016 and have extensive local knowledge.
- Until June 2022, Wurrumiyanga MACCST meeting co-chaired by DCMC. This includes data aggregation.

### Big Rivers region

- Katherine School Holidays Program: delivered through a partnership with the Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities' Regional Youth Service Program coordinates the funding of activities:
  - » Providing safe and engaging environments for youth and young people to build confidence and healthy relationships.
- Staff and stakeholders participated in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).
- Kalano Youth Outreach Transport delivered through a partnership with the Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities' Regional Youth Service Program:
  - » Providing a safe environment and transport option for youth, and brief case management intervention.
  - » Regional Sporting Activities: supporting participation in regional sporting competitions and building healthy relationships:
  - » Garrak Bombers Sporting Association.

### Barkly region

- Barkly Youth Service Provider Network:
  - » CM&C/TFHaC Representation
- Barkly Regional Deal Trauma Informed Care initiative:
  - » Supporting development of Trauma Treatment Model

### East Arnhem region

- Anglicare NT provides safeTALK and ASIST training across the region, this data is collected through TESIAT and LivingWorks Australia.

### Central Australia region

- Alice Springs Town Camps have identified health/mental health as an area to work on through their LDM agreement
- Alice Springs Youth Programs Coordinator participated in the Remote Youth Mental Health Group facilitated by NPYWC and membership of the Life Promotions Network facilitated by Mental Health Association of Central Australia. Planning World Suicide Prevention Day event in September 2022. Working to engage Cattleman's Association.
- Better Bodies funded for \$19,800 to deliver an annual holiday program in Alice Springs. The six week program provided over the 2021/22 summer holidays focused on self-esteem building, fitness, nutritional eating and strengthening mental health and endurance. The program engaged a diverse cohort of 10-17 year olds including at-risk youth. The program had 563 attendances over the delivery period.
- Member participation in the Central Australian Life Promotion Network.
- The Alice Springs Local Action Group has identified the need for the establishment of a Youth Mental Health Outreach Service to be incorporated in the next Mparntwe/Alice Springs Youth Action Plan.



## CASE STUDY

*Suicide Prevention Funded Services Example*

### Central Australia Suicide Prevention Training Program (CASPTP)

The Central Australia Suicide Prevention Training (CASPT) Program is a new service set up in 2022 to increase the Central Australian and Barkly regions population's protective factors through education and promotion of awareness, literacy and intervention that can help to prevent escalating distress and the incidence of suicide behaviours in the community. The Mental Health Association of Australia was the successful open tender applicant to deliver this service from 2022-2027. Reducing stigma, improving literacy and encouraging organisations and community member awareness to recognise the signs of distress and crises and learn the skills needed to intervene and support these situations both reduces pressure on health and crisis services and supports a community where people learn the critical skills for potentially life-saving or life changing actions needed to address suicide behaviours. The CASPT aims to deliver culturally appropriate training that develops awareness and knowledge around strategies for improving suicide awareness, improving an individual's resilience, and that develops a community's capacity to respond to suicide ideation in Central Australian Region of the Northern Territory.

- Mapping of suicide prevalence among Indigenous Australians
- Contribution of risk factors to suicidal behaviours
- Relationship between suicide and service provision
- Investigating and enhancing Indigenous information in suicide relevant data sets.

This project will help the Australian Government to more effectively target suicide prevention initiatives and services to communities and individuals most at risk. It also complements other current national mental health and suicide prevention data initiatives led by AIHW, including the development of the National Suicide and Self-Harm Monitoring System.

Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (AIHW) suicide and self harm data monitoring system working group. NT Health has participated as an ongoing working group member of the National Suicide and Self-harm Monitoring System established as part of a national effort to address suicide and self-harm in Australia. The system has been set up to improve the quality, accessibility and timeliness of data on deaths by suicide and on self-harming and suicidal behaviours.

### Data Collection – A Whole of Government Approach: NT Suicide Behaviours Data Collection System Proposal

Following a 2019 Stakeholders Workshop to discuss benefits and opportunities of an NT system for the collection and coordination of information on suicide and self-harm, NT Health and AMSANT have partnered to develop a joint project proposal for the establishment of an NT Suicide behaviours data monitoring system (including multi-agency data input, an appropriate governance structure and set of scoping requirements) to inform suicide prevention interventions and activity in a meaningful and contextualised way. This collaborative approach is geared towards developing a data surveillance system to monitor rates of self-harm and suicide behaviours rather than focusing on a suicide deaths register. The relatively small numbers of deaths in the NT belie the behaviours associated with suicide behaviours such as ideations, attempts and myriad risk factors

### Other NT suicide prevention system initiatives underway:

#### Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (AIHW) Suicide Prevention Data Project

The National Indigenous Suicide Prevention Data Project has been funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) and is being undertaken by AIHW. The Project has four interrelated components:

and thus surveillance of these precursory factors was viewed by this vast range of stakeholders as an appropriate preventative approach for the NT.

- This project endeavours to improve the quality and consistency of national and regional suicide data to support building the evidence base, including collecting relevant data and case studies about suicide behaviours; ideations, deaths, attempts and self-harm as an important part of measuring the success and impact of suicide prevention activities.
- Improved data collection would provide insight into the 'who, what and how' of suicide in a particular region or group (e.g. young people) and improve provision of wrap-around prevention and postvention support
- Surveillance data would draw on what is known about high suicide behaviour rates by age, gender, ethnicity, and/or life circumstance in order to help inform prevention and appropriate responses.

### **Service mapping of regional community postvention service responses**

When a cluster of suicides occurs or where a strong indication that a cluster may form, NT Health will provide service mapping and coordination for community postvention service responses. This includes providing information, ensuring a co-ordinated approach, supporting training, and assisting with longer-term suicide prevention planning.

### **NT Regional Youth Coordinators**

A series of regional youth action plans exist in the NT. NT Health collaborates with regional youth coordinators to ensure a focus on regional suicide prevention planning and implementation as outlined in the NT Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework Implementation Plan. The NT Health Suicide Prevention team continues these connections to strengthen cross sector collaboration for suicide prevention action planning through contribution to suicide prevention systems understanding at the NT Regional youth coordinators forum in September 2021.

### **Promotion of National Communications Charter**

The National Communications Charter (The Charter) is a guide and resource for the way people in the mental health and suicide prevention sectors, government, business and community members talk about mental health and suicide prevention. It is a formal commitment to working together and developing better structures and processes for collaboration to reduce stigma and promote help-seeking behaviour. Everyone has a role to play in reducing stigma around mental ill-health and suicide while also promoting help-seeking behaviour through The Charter's guiding principles and messages.





## GOAL 3

**Focused and evidence informed support for the most vulnerable groups of people.**

### **Actions**

- 3.1 Promote local training opportunities for staff providing services to priority groups.
- 3.2 Identify the relevant priority groups to inform professional development needs across the region.
- 3.3 Embed professional development in workplaces to facilitate a culturally safe and trauma informed approach to engaging individuals and communities.



## COMPLETED

### Priority groups identification and ongoing lived experience inclusion to inform the implementation of the NT Action Plan include:

- Men
- Youth
- Older people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- LGBTIQ+ People
- People in rural and remote communities
- People experiencing mental illness
- People who have previously attempted suicide or engage in self-harm
- People bereaved by suicide
- Migrant and refugee communities
- Current and former Australian Defence Force personnel
- People in custody.

### Funded training for staff working with priority groups

Targeted training for health and social care staff in supporting vulnerable people, especially those in primary health care services:

- Mental Health Association of Central Australia (MHACA) Suicide Prevention Training Program - Central Australia and Barkly
- Lifeline's Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) - Central Australia and Barkly
- Anglicare's Top End Suicide Intervention and Awareness Training - Top End
- Mental Health Association of Central Australia (MHACA) Life Promotion Program Training - Central Australia
- Mates in Construction Ltd - Mental Health, Suicide Prevention Awareness Program - NT wide

## ONGOING

### Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services – Aboriginal Medical Services NT (AMSANT)

#### Trauma Informed Care Program Damulgurra

- The Trauma Informed Care Program Damulgurra, funded primarily through the NTPHN, contributes to suicide prevention in the Northern Territory. The main activity through the National Suicide Prevention Trial is due to end in June 2023. Three face to face workshops have

been undertaken with stakeholders, NT Police, Territory Families (which included assisted living support CASPA), Danila Dilba and Stolen Generation. These workshops focused on suicide prevention through a trauma informed lens led to an extension of the trial and three more workshops planned for early 2023. The aim is to broaden the participants to include NGOs and other services that directly work with ACCHOS to deliver services to the community to ensure everyone is on the same trauma informed page of suicide prevention.

- Damulgurra is currently being reviewed in a research project called Culturally Responsive Trauma Informed Care with Australian Aboriginal Congress Health Service. The aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of embedding trauma informed care within the service from top to bottom. A meeting with Congress in mid-August was used to inform the next steps including a plan for workforce support and development.

### **Suicide Story Aboriginal Suicide Prevention and community development training program**

- Suicide Story, a program that is part of the SEWB Team, have completed a fourth Suicide Story training with a new cohort in Palmerston. The cohort was drawn from across the NT and included both ACCHS and community members.
- The Suicide Story Train the Trainer program was delivered in Darwin with around 36 participants, with two new facilitators identified through this work who are being mentored and supported by Senior Facilitators.
- A workshop in the Katherine and Borroloola Region is now planned for September 2022. Demand for training is growing with around 11 communities across the NT currently seeking both Suicide Story and Train the Trainer workshops.
- Both the Trauma Informed Care Program - Damulgurra and Suicide Story are working towards supporting staff and communities with online learning. The SEWB Team have engaged with MOODLE and are starting to transition resources and materials to this online setting, which is expected to launch with an early version of materials by the end of 2022 ready for broad access in 2023.
- Both Suicide Story and Damulgurra take a community controlled approach to our programs. The first being consultation. The Suicide Story Aboriginal Advisory Committee (SSAAG) provides governance, leadership and consistent advice to the program coordinator and the larger facilitation group. A program will not be run unless the SSAAG has approved the activity.
- Similarly, Damulgurra depends on cultural advisors in several locations to reflect the diverse cultural authorities of Aboriginal communities. Content development and processes for

delivering workshops are shown to advisors and appropriate permissions granted to use and share cultural material. Intellectual property is at the forefront of the discussion and lineage of content/activities are always acknowledged in publications and workshops.

- Materials from both these programs are designed to equip participants with the knowledge of safe practice to engage with community and hopefully reduce the risk of suicidal behaviour. It also supports front line workers to have enough safety within themselves to adequately engage in their work.
- Suicide Story completed an evaluation with the support of John Guenther at Batchelor Institute. This publication has been accepted by an Evaluation Journal for publication.
- Systemically the programs support the big picture visions of stakeholders and funders and provide a collaborative approach to the roll out of programs. This is evidenced by the increased request these programs to be delivered in remote communities and urban centres across government and non-government agencies in addition to the Aboriginal community controlled sector.

### **Mapping and promotion of training opportunities and services across various agencies**

Support for the increased provision of frontline workers training in suicide prevention, awareness and skills programs includes;

- Training on acute mental health and alcohol and drug presentations is provided to Royal Darwin Hospital Emergency Department in line with Way Back Support Program.
- GP and frontline staff mental health and suicide risk assessment training led by NT PHN, NTG NT Health, AG NT Health and DSS
- Support training of all Community Corrections staff in suicide prevention awareness programs and mental health awareness training.
- Training for primary health care staff and hospital emergency departments e.g. doctors, nurses and allied health staff including Shared Suicide Risk Assessment Guidelines and training for clinicians.

- Promote access pathways for mental health and critical care services.
- Promote uptake of the Mental Health Professional On-line Development (MHPOD) training on suicide awareness and risk assessment for mental health professionals.
- Promote the benefit of suicide awareness training to frontline workers across NTG.
- StandBy Response Service to provide Suicide Bereavement Training to staff responding to incidents as well as individuals/families/support workers.
- Promote annual on-line refresher training for all NT Police personnel in relation to custody risks. This includes the identification of at-risk people at the assessment stage and consequent reference to medical support and further evaluation.
- Training programs to support better LGBTQIA+ inclusive practices.
- Support culturally-safe, trauma-informed peer group and/or community suicide prevention initiatives
- Support shared training and resource development to assist foster and kinship carers, to understand and respond to the mental health needs of children and young people.
- Explore self-harm prevention tools and training packages that can be targeted at NT communities.
- Prison In-Reach program to explore options for the inclusion of self-harm prevention education in their Relapse Prevention Group to support clients who are at risk of self-harm.
- Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the suicide prevention and wellbeing workforce strengthened.

### **In-language resources development and distribution project**

NT Health NT-wide investment includes \$385,000 for the in-language resources and campaign project for the development and distribution of a suite of NT Indigenous language suicide prevention and wellbeing resources across eight regional agencies in approximately 15 of the most widely spoken NT

languages. Some of the NT organisations supported in this partnership include:

- Tennant Creek Mob Aboriginal Corporation - Barkly languages
- Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation - Kriol languages
- West Arnhem Regional Council Arrernte languages - West Arnhem languages
- Wanta Aboriginal Corporation - Warlpiri languages
- Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation - Murin Patha languages
- Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Aboriginal Corporation - Yolngu Matha languages
- NPY Woman's Council - NPY languages
- Akeyulerre Aboriginal Corporation - Arrernte languages

### **Top End Region Health Service Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Team:**

#### **Men's Healthy Life Style Program - suicide prevention and awareness health promotion module**

NT Health collaborated with the Top End Region Health Service Community Development Office to develop a remote community suicide prevention health promotion module. The compiled modules are to be integrated across NT health services employing the interrelated themes of cultural respect and resilience.

#### **Partnership with AMSANT workforce support unit for suicide prevention workforce development in ACCHS**

A collaborative partnership has developed between NT Health and AMSANT supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led and facilitated workforce development training. The development of this model broadly aims to increase the suicide prevention skills in the NT workforce in addition to more focused suicide prevention skills development in ACCHS SEWB teams.



## Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) multicultural suicide prevention projects in the NT

- In Celebration Of Being Alive 2022-23 - UMNT Inc
- FFNT - NT Suicide Prevention Community Grant Football Federation Northern Territory
- Suicide Prevention Week with Volleyball Nepalese Association for Northern Territory (NANT)
- NT Momineen - Community Mental Health Awareness Month
- Rebecca Forrest - Men's Health and Wellbeing initiatives

## Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTQIA+) community suicide prevention NT projects include:

- Indigenist - Indigenous LGBTQI Inclusive Practice Workshops - NT Wide
- Rainbow Territory - NT LGBTQIA+ community human rights advocacy group- NT wide
- The Gap - Youth and Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation - Central Australia
- Headspace Consortium - Darwin
- NT AIDS and Hepatitis Council (NTAHC) - NT wide
- Tiwi Strong Women: Watering the Tree of Life

## Culturally-secure partnerships that embed resources into practice:

- Partnerships between mainstream specialist mental health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing services and community organisations continue to be maintained and strengthened. This included a NT Health suicide prevention team partnership with AMSANT SEWB workforce support unit to support the suicide prevention workforce and professional development in suicide prevention activity.

- Culturally appropriate community activities to engage youth, build cultural strengths, leadership, life skills and social competencies are provided.
- Co-designed programs and services that are underpinned by the level of complexity of trauma, harm and powerlessness. Responses are tailored to improve and reflect the diversity, and try to lessen the harm and grief for Aboriginal people.
- Support of SEWB initiatives e.g. trauma-informed education.
- Culturally safe peer support group and individual mentoring training.

## Development of the 10-year Gaaya Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration Implementation Plan 2022

The Gaaya Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration promotes, develops and advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and community-controlled leadership in mental health and suicide prevention. This includes the transitioning of services and funds to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers as preferred default providers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. *About the Plan*

The Implementation Plan promotes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership across all parts of the Australian mental health system to achieve the highest attainable standard of social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, and suicide prevention outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Plan encourages Australian mental health services and clinicians to recognise and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts of SEWB and healing as effective treatment strategies to improve mental health outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

# Northern Territory Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework **2018-2023**

Progress Report Four

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