A plan to reduce rates of suicide and self-harm in the Territory

10 April 2015

The Northern Territory Government today released the *NT Suicide Prevention Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018* in an attempt to reduce the rates of suicide and impacts of self-harm.

“It is clear that suicide prevention and intervention requires a sustained effort and it will require an innovative and coordinated approach to make a difference,” Minister for Health John Elferink said.

“We already have some fantastic services in the Northern Territory, both Government and non-Government, and we can take a more improved and coordinated approach to tap into these.”

The Plan details six key areas of action:

- Deliver targeted suicide prevention activities
- Build strength and resilience in individuals and families
- Improve wellbeing and resilience of communities
- Coordinate approaches to suicide prevention
- Improve the evidence base and dissemination of information
- Implement high standards and quality in suicide prevention

On average, 40 people take their own lives in the Territory each year, of these, over half are Indigenous males, the Action Plan states.

“Fortunately, over the last eight years, suicide in the Northern Territory has been decreasing, however more must be done to address this tragic issue,” Mr Elferink said.

“The Northern Territory Government today announced it will commit to an additional $3 million per annum from 2015-16 to enhance mental health services in the NT. This enhancement will assist in the implementation of the NT Suicide Prevention Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018 and improvement of the overall mental health system.”
“This is part of a solid plan to build capacity in the mental health sector and offer individuals the support they need,” Mr Elferink said.

The whole-of-Government Action Plan also details ways in which to build suicide resilience including through sport and recreation, schools and family groups.

The Action Plan has been informed by several former Northern Territory and Commonwealth reports and reviews including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy that was released in 2013.


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