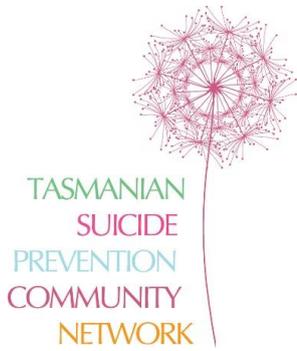


TASMANIAN SUICIDE PREVENTION FORUM

May 9, 2019

Everyone, Every Day, Everywhere





Suicide Prevention Forum

Everyone, Every Day, Everywhere

9 May 2019, 9:30-4pm

Blundstone Arena Function Centre, Hobart

9:00am Registration

9:30am Forum Opening

9:35am Welcome to Country

Dewayne Everettsmith

9:45am Minister's Address

Michael Ferguson, Minister for Health

10:00 am Suicide Prevention in Tasmania

Dr Aaron Groves, Chief Psychiatrist

10:30 am Engaging the Nation in Suicide Prevention

Thilini Perera, Lifeline Australia

11:00 am Recognition of Tasmanian LIFE Award Recipients

11:05 am Morning Tea

11:30 am Peer Support – An Overview

Bianca Childs, Mind Australia

12:00 pm Lived Experience & Peer Support – A Local Perspective

Elida Meadows

12:15 pm Peer Support – Next Steps Suicide Prevention Program

Rebecca Sng, Grand Pacific Health

1:00 pm Lunch and Networking

1:45 pm Peer Support – Online Forums

Dr Anthony McCosker, Swinburne University of Technology

2:30pm Afternoon Tea

3:00 pm Collaborative Community Model for Suicide Prevention

Dr Alex Hains, Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative

3: 45 pm Closing Address

Jonathan Leeming, Suicide Prevention Australia

If any of the sessions throughout the day raise concerns for you, please seek out one of the dedicated counsellors within the audience, who are available to assist.

Invited Speakers

Dr Aaron Groves

Dr Groves is a highly experienced psychiatrist. He has been a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists since 1991 and has held senior leadership roles for the past 25 years.

Dr Groves commenced as Tasmania's Chief Psychiatrist in November 2017. Prior to commencing in the role Dr Groves held senior leadership and clinical positions in South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland including the statutory role of Chief Psychiatrist.

Dr Groves was Director of Mental Health Policy in South Australia from 2015 to 2017 in which capacity he oversaw the introduction of a state-wide program to retrain all mental health staff in suicide mitigation and the introduction of trauma informed practice.

From 2005 until 2012 Dr Groves was responsible for the Mental Health program for Queensland prior to which time he was head of the Western Australian Mental Health program.



Thilini Perera, Lifeline Australia Ltd.



Thilini Perera is an accomplished corporate governance professional. She is the Executive Director of Governance and Company Secretary at Lifeline Australia Ltd. Thilini is a legal practitioner of the ACT Supreme Court, and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In her Executive role at Lifeline Australia, Thilini oversees all matters pertaining to governance, risk and compliance. She is also responsible for supporting Lifeline Australia Members to deliver frontline service through the provision of Member services. Thilini is committed to Lifeline's vision of an Australia free of suicide and is passionate about empowering and assisting local Lifeline Centres around Australia to support communities to be suicide safe.

Thilini will be speaking about her vision for suicide prevention and the importance of engaging a whole of community response.

Bianca Childs, Peer Practice Advisor, Mind Australia

Bianca Childs is both the Peer Practice Advisor and the Coordinator of the Centre of Excellence in Peer Support at Mind Australia Limited. Bianca has 15 years' experience in the mental health lived experience workforce in both the Public and NGO sectors. Bianca has qualifications in Consumer Engagement, Training and Assessment, and in Mental Health Peer Work and is studying a graduate diploma in Careers Education and Development.

Bianca will be delivering a presentation on peer support.



Invited Speakers

Elida Meadows



Elida has a background in historical research and community development. She is the Tasmanian carer representative on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum and represented Tasmanian carers on the Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHiMA). Elida worked with the Tasmanian Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Directorate on the Rethink Mental Health project planning and facilitating 11 consultations, mostly with consumers and carers. She represents the Forum on several national committees including the Mental Health Information Strategy Standing Committee (MHISSC), the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Plans Mental Health Expert Reference Panel and the Fifth Plan Technical Advisory Group.

Elida has a Masters by Research from UNSW and has conducted research in a number of areas including history and heritage, mental health, alcohol and other drugs, and epilepsy. She currently works in policy and research for the Drug Education Network, Tasmania. Elida is from southern Italian descent and identifies as both a carer and a consumer.

Rebecca Sng, Grand Pacific Health

Dr Rebecca Sng is a clinical psychologist (AHPRA) and clinical family therapist (AAFT) with a specialty in child abuse and neglect. In 2017, Rebecca was a Churchill Fellow and in 2019 she was awarded the Centre for Social Impact Scholarship to study an MBA in Social Impact at the University of NSW. Rebecca currently manages the Primary Mental Health services of Grand Pacific Health, a not-for-profit covering most of south-eastern NSW. In this role she manages several service streams including suicide prevention.



Rebecca will be sharing with us her experiences in implementing the Next Steps Suicide Aftercare program

(Grand Pacific Health). Next Steps accepts referrals for people who have presented at Emergency Departments with an attempt or at significant risk of an attempted suicide. Together with their loved ones, the person meets with a mental health clinician and peer worker for a planning session. The Aftercare Plan is then supported by frequent contact with a trained peer worker for up to 12 weeks. The clinician and peer worker meet regularly to act as the support team and the team meets regularly with the consumer for reviews of the plan.

Rebecca's presentation aims to share the many learnings from the Next Steps program. This will be relevant to all those involved in the suicide prevention field, from service planners to those interested in becoming peer workers.

Invited Speakers

Dr Anthony McCosker, Swinburne University of Technology



Anthony McCosker is an Associate Professor in Media and Communications in the Faculty of Health, Arts and Design, and Deputy Director of the Social Innovation Research Institute. His research addresses digital inclusion and participation, and the impacts and uses of social media and new communication technologies, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing. Current research also addresses the social issues related to automated visual technologies, and the need for community led approaches to data and analytics.

In partnership with *beyondblue*, Anthony has examined how online communities can help address suicide by facilitating peer-to-peer social support. His research explores the need to multiply the safe zones for talking about suicidal thoughts online, but also addresses the problems of disconnection and silence that present challenges for both clinical *and* digitally mediated responses to suicide. While digital technology can help to overcome many of the barriers to help seeking and support for people dealing with suicidal thoughts, we need to know what works, and why - and equally, what aspects of the digital environment to avoid.

Anthony's presentation will examine peer and community basis in mental health support and the boundaries and barriers to affective support. Anthony will focus on the unique role of community champions, and why they matter to suicide prevention that is community and peer-based. The research helps us to rethink and update what we understand about 'social support' and can provide some options for related programs and services to take on.

Dr Alex Hains, Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative

Dr Alex Hains is the Regional Manager for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative – a multi-sectorial group working together to implement an evidence-based systems approach to suicide prevention. He is also an Honorary Fellow with the University of Wollongong and a Research Affiliate with the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute. He has previously worked clinically, specialising in working with people with complex trauma, psychosis and personality disorders. Alex has also developed and managed several mental health programs working with young people, families, and children.

The Collaborative was established in 2015 to tackle the Illawarra Shoalhaven regions high rates of suicide. The Collaborative consists of representatives of more than 40 significant organisations, as well as lived experience advocates.

Alex will share with us his experience in fostering a whole of community, collaborative approach to suicide prevention.



Tasmanian LiFE Award Nominees 2019

Outstanding Contribution LiFE Award

Proudly sponsored by



Bree Klerck

Bree is a Project Officer at the Mental Health Council of Tasmania and played an integral part in establishing the Tasmanian Communications Charter.

Debbie King

Debbie is an advocate and leader for Suicide Prevention in the North West community. Debbie has harnessed the support of many, and significant funds to create a space of reflection in her community.

Tanya Stephenson

Tania established the Grief Recovery Program as a way to give back after the overwhelming support she received following the loss of her own family members.

Joint - Winner – Mark Davis

Mark contributes to various co-design and policy matters concerning both mental health and suicide on an on-going basis and is an active member of both the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network and Flourish. Mark aims for around 20 hrs per week as a volunteer on-line peer support worker with Beyond Blue and is a member of the Beyond Blue Speaker's Bureau.

Joint - Winner – Len Blair

Len has been involved with the Ulverstone Neighbourhood House and the Ulverstone Community Shed for 6 years where he has helped to strengthen the community and provided support for those in challenging situations or at risk of social isolation. Len has promoted positive mental health messages at various community events and expos including the Ulverstone Beyond Blue Gala Dinner. Through his many actions, Len has become a recognisable community champion for mental health and social inclusion.

Tasmanian LiFE Award Nominees 2019

Communities in Action for Suicide Prevention LiFE Award

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Rural Alive and Well (RAW)

This year RAW celebrates a decade of providing support to rural Tasmania. RAW has grown into a highly regarded community based mental health and suicide prevention service.

Retired Police Association Tasmania

The Retired Police Association of Tasmania have developed an action plan to increase support for police once they have finished active service.

Burnie Rugby Club

The Burnie Rugby Club have worked to create a welcoming and inclusive environment following the loss of key members of their club.

Winner – Channel Men’s Shed Inc

Over the last 6 years the organisation has provided a place for both men and women to come together and form friendships and support each other and their community. The Shed has provided many retired people, with purpose and companionship and supports those who are unemployed, helping them to gain confidence and seek supports. The Shed has taken a pro-active approach to supporting health and mental health and in collaboration with local service providers has hosted annual health check days for the past 3 years

Best Practice in Suicide Prevention in a Workplace LiFE Award

Proudly sponsored by



Tasmanian Building Group Apprentice Scheme

For the past 10 years the Tasmanian Building Group Apprentice Scheme have ensured that all their Tasmanian apprentices have access to suicide prevention training.

Tasmanian LiFE Award Nominees 2019

Anytime Fitness

Anytime fitness has taken a pro-active approach to suicide prevention by increasing awareness within their clubs and creating a supportive environment that welcomes all into the fitness family.

Winner – Ambulance Tasmania

Ambulance Tasmania have embarked on a significant cultural change program which is directly aimed supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their staff and volunteers. Key initiatives have included peer-support program and organisational upskilling via the connecting with people approach. The impact of this approach has directly influenced a change in the attitudes, beliefs and conversations within Ambulance Tasmania about mental health and wellbeing.

Outstanding Contribution by a Young Person/s LiFE Award

Proudly sponsored by



Mitch Gittus

Mitch is an advocate for mental health and suicide prevention. In 2018 he road a bike from Stanley to Hobart in a single day to raise awareness about suicide.

The Tasmanian University Medical Students Society

Following the loss of 3 students to suicide, the Tasmanian University Medical Students Society decided to do it's best to ensure this never happens again by raising student's awareness of mental health and suicide prevention.

Winner - The Hutchins School

In 2019, 80 senior school students aim be trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. This student-led initiative fills an important need for young people to feel adequately prepared to support their friends dealing with mental health issues. Students report that they have the courage to engage in genuine conversations with friends about how they are travelling, particularly when they notice a change in their demeanour. Work over the last few years has contributed to a normalising of these conversations.

For more information about the Tasmanian LiFE Awards please visit

http://suicidepreventiontas.org.au/life_awards/life_awards