

Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network

Terms of Reference



1 Background

The Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network (TSPCN) has been established to ensure broad-based statewide community engagement on suicide prevention as well as advocacy to, and collaboration with, the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee to achieve the best outcomes for Tasmanians in the area of suicide prevention. The network will participate in the identification of ready communities and facilitate the development of community action plans to prevent suicide.

In 1993, the Tasmanian Government established the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee (TSPC) in response to growing national and state concern about the high rate of suicide among youth. The scope was broadened beyond youth to a whole of population approach to suicide prevention. The TSPC committed to adhere to the framework underpinning the National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2000 – 2006 which is based on the LIFE Framework (Living is for Everyone).

In December 2010, the Minister for Health released the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010 – 2014. The new Strategy outlined a new role and function for the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee.

In February 2011, the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee agreed to examine the new role and function of the TSPC as outlined in the Strategy and review how the current membership meets the skill and knowledge mix required to execute this new role and function. The membership also agreed to determine a better strategy to engage with the broader Tasmanian community regarding suicide activity and factors which may impact suicide prevention.

Following this review, the TSPC agreed to decrease the membership of the government based Committee and increase community engagement through the establishment of a community based Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network (TSPCN).

This approach to governance, leadership and community engagement was endorsed by the Suicide Prevention Strategy oversight committee, the Tasmanian Inter Agency Working Group for Mental Health at its meeting of 31 August 2011 and was endorsed by the Minister for Health in September 2011. A request for proposal seeking a provider to establish the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network was undertaken in early 2012 with the successful organisation, Relationships Australia (Tasmania) entering into a two year agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on 1 July 2012.



The work of the TSPCN is guided by the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010 – 2014 and in particular by the expected outcomes of the strategy which are :

- That communities that understand suicide issues, can articulate the way it is a problem for their community, and have a range of strategies they can use to address the problem for which they have a genuine capacity;
- Community based and other primary prevention resources work in a co-ordinated, efficient and effective way to help communities deal with suicide prevention;
- Government and community sector services work collaboratively to respond effectively at a secondary prevention level to the needs of specific individuals whose help seeking has been facilitated by their community, family or themselves;
- Primary care service providers can recognise persons at risk of suicide and can take appropriate treatment or referral actions;
- Government and other services effectively reduce suicide of high risk individuals who present to or have been in acute care; and
- A community acts to ensure the 'professional inclusion' of all of its suicide prevention resources.

2 Purpose

While Tasmanians have long been concerned about the growing impact of suicide in the community, opportunities to influence decision making and to share experiences have been limited. The establishment of a new community network is a strong move towards embracing the views and actions of all Tasmanians interested in or affected by suicide.

To this end, The TSPCN has been established to provide a platform for members to come together to discuss and advance issues of concern relating to suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention. The underpinning principles of the TSPCN is that suicide prevention is everybody's business and that strong resilient communities that are able to understand and speak about suicide issues will also have the capacity to address the problem.

The TSPCN will seek to identify gaps in services and supports and collaboratively work to advocate for these gaps to be filled by member agencies, organizations, bodies and groups.

Where the TSPCN identifies needs that cannot be fulfilled within the resources of the member agencies, organizations, bodies and groups, the TSPCN will make recommendations to the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee.

3 Key Functions

Key functions of the TSPCN are to

- 3.1 Share local knowledge and experience related to suicide prevention, intervention and postvention
- 3.2 Provide input where appropriate to community action plans that have the capacity to reduce the rate and impact of suicide
- 3.3 Support the mapping of existing services and supports for Tasmanian communities
- 3.4 Identify key issues within the Tasmanian community for action
- 3.5 Identify needs and gaps in suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention service provision.
- 3.6 Communicate identified suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention issues and community need to the TSPC
- 3.7 Provide input and or advice as requested to the TSPC.
- 3.8 Support the hosting of an annual Suicide Prevention Forum
- 3.9 Support the delivery of the annual Tasmanian Life Awards
- 3.10 Provide input into the LGBTI action plan for suicide prevention in Tasmania

4 Membership

Membership of the TSPCN is drawn from community, non government organizations and agencies, service clubs, local government and State government throughout all regions of the State.

Membership is open to any Tasmanian individual or representative of an organization or statutory body who has in an interest in working towards reducing suicide in Tasmania.

The TSPCN aims to grow the membership and ensure that all aspects of community have a voice on the TSPCN. Members and organizations may be invited to join the TSPCN where there is an identified benefit to both parties to ensure all relevant communities are represented.

5 Management of the TSPCN

The TSPCN shall be managed by a host community sector organization with the host organization providing secretariat functions and Chair position. The host organizations responsibilities include:

- Chairing the TSPCN
- Reporting to the TSPC on behalf of the TSPCN
- Advancing issues, concerns and requests to the TSPC for discussion and action
- Providing the TSPCN secretariat role

As agreed to by the TSPCN membership sub committees or working groups may be established for specific activities and or projects.

6 Meeting times

- 6.1 The TSPCN will meet a minimum of six times a year.
- 6.2 The meetings will be held in the North, South and North West of the State
- 6.3 Assistance from Members of the TSPCN may be requested to host meetings

7 Resourcing

Resourcing of the TSPCN is the responsibility of the host non government organization. However, in the spirit of collaboration resourcing may be sought from members of the TSPCN to host meetings, support community action plans and to assist with the annual LIFE Awards and Suicide Prevention Forum. There is no binding obligation on Members of the TSPCN to provide resources. Resources may also be sought from the TSPC to support community action plans and the activities of the TSPCN.

8 TSPCN Representation

Views, opinions, advice and recommendations of the TSPCN are to be communicated to external parties by the Chair or his or her appointed representative.

9 Relationship Australia Tasmania's Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of Relationships Australia Tasmania include

- Reporting to the TSPC on behalf of the TSPCN
- Advancing issues, concerns and request to the TSPC for discussion and action
- Resourcing of the Project Facilitator and the LGBTI Project Officer

10 TSPCN Member Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of members of the TSPCN are to

- Provide a commitment to attend meetings
- Contribute information and ideas to the TSPCN Work collaboratively and creatively within the network to advance the objectives of TSPCN and the TSPCN Action Plan
- Respect the views and opinions of Members of the TSPCN
- Respect and support decisions made by the TSPCN
- Not to represent the TSPCN unless authorized to do so