



# Launceston Council Suicide Prevention & Wellbeing Community Action Plan 2022-2023

SUPPORTED BY



*Relationships Australia*  
TASMANIA



City of  
**LAUNCESTON**

Tasmanian  
Government

**CAP Coordinator**

Name	
Email	
Phone	

## Need help?

If you are having thoughts of suicide or supporting someone with thoughts of suicide, please seek help.

In the first instance you should contact your general practitioner (GP).

In an emergency call 000 or go to an emergency department.

However, if this is not possible, please contact one of the services below.

## National 24/7 Crisis Services

### Lifeline

13 11 14 | [www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help](http://www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help)

### Suicide Call Back Service

1300 659 467 |  
[www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

### Mensline Australia

1300 78 99 78 | [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

### Kids Helpline

1800 55 1800 | [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

### QLife

1800 184 527 | [www.qlife.org.au](http://www.qlife.org.au)

# Acknowledgements

## Acknowledgement of Country

This community action plan respectfully acknowledges that the land on which the City of Launceston rests, the land on which we work and live, is at the heart of the Stoney Creek peoples to the Therrernotepanner, Panniher and Leterrmairrener clans.

The Stoney Creek peoples lived along the riverways in harmony with the seasons for several thousand generations, and today they are remembered as the traditional owners of this land.

We celebrate the stories, culture and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Elders of all communities who also work and live on this land.

## Acknowledgement of Lived Experience

We respectfully acknowledge the individual and collective experiences of those with a living or lived experience, including those who have attempted and those bereaved by suicide.

We recognize their contributions at all levels and value the courage of those who share their unique experiences for the purposes of education, support, connection and ongoing suicide prevention.

The voices of people with a lived experience of suicide has been essential in the development of the Community Action Plan. These voices are a valued contribution to the ongoing body of work in suicide prevention.

## What is a CAP?

A Community Action Plan (CAP) is a practical plan that communities develop together to safely build supports to prevent and reduce suicide. These plans are established around the specific needs of each target group and are aligned with the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy (2016-2020).

The Tasmanian Government funded Relationships Australia Tasmania to provide community recovery support following the COVID-19 Pandemic. The specific goal of this initiative was to support engagement with the Local Government Association of Tasmania and local councils statewide to deliver mental health and suicide prevention initiatives for the community. Specific initiative goals included:

- Engaging with, or establishing, local suicide prevention networks,
- Working with the networks to support the development and implementation of the CAP based on the identified needs and strengths present,
- Support local networks to evaluate the progress and achievements of the CAP.

This initiative provides local councils up to \$5000 each to develop and implement the actions covered in the CAP.



## Region and People

The City of Launceston is an expanse of manmade and wild green spaces, linked by historically iconic streets and modern architecture. A magical interweave of new and old, tradition and innovation. Our economy is driven through construction, manufacturing and retail but at the heart, our city is our people. This blended environment is home to a multicultural community of artists, pioneers, gastronomes, farmers, professionals and dreamers. All looking for ways to connect and support one another.

The City of Launceston has an established Suicide Prevention Working Group whom have been consulting and collaborating on suicide prevention projects throughout Launceston since 2019. The Working Group was brought together to assist City of Launceston in their delivery of relevant projects within the National Suicide Prevention Trial.

Most of the Working Group members are involved on a voluntary basis, in addition to their primary workload/ occupation. Its members draw from Lived Experience peoples, community groups such as Kentish Regional Clinic and The Men's Table, through to larger organisations such as Wellways, Anglicare, Migrant Resource Centre, Neighborhood Houses, Head to Health and local law enforcement. Despite the changes in membership of the Working Group since its inception, a number of core members continue to convene regularly to support the trial activities.

The City of Launceston recognises that when services and communities work together to develop and use an agreed long term approach, it is more likely to lead to a sustainable reduction in suicide and self-harm. And as such, discussions began late 2021 with Relationships Australia, Tasmania, regarding the development of a council facilitated CAP to address the needs and gaps identified within the municipality. The plan is built on working towards the support of prevention and reduction of suicide within the Launceston community.

## Consultation

In meetings with the Launceston Suicide Prevention Working Group, it was identified that barbers are often placed into the role of "accidental counsellors". Accidental counsellors refer to those who are in people-centric professions, where the likelihood of mental health and personal disclosures are increased. People in these positions engage in difficult conversations and often provide emotional support.

Males have been identified as a high risk group in experiencing suicidality, and the working group recognised the need to provide training to barbers around Launceston in order to support them in having these conversations safely, and supplying appropriate referral information. Along with training, the group also identified the need to develop discrete resource packs to provide a hardcopy of support services information, which barbers could supply when needed.

The idea, termed "Barbers for Life", was presented to barbers across Launceston and was received positively, with keen interest to receive training and resources to support them in this space. The City of Launceston will support this initiative through providing assistance with resource pack creation, printing and dissemination.

It was also acknowledged that initiatives similar to Barbers for Life would be greatly beneficial to roll out across other professions which also act as accidental counsellors, such as hairdressers and tattoo artists. Due to the high rates of male suicide seen across Tasmania, it was agreed that Barbers for Life would be a great first step to support suicide prevention in the Launceston municipality, and can inform future initiatives with other professions.

Lastly, it was noted that there is a lack of social connection between those in accidental counsellor type professions, leading to limited support to those working in these professions.

## Community plans for building sustainability

Through providing training and resources to barbers across Launceston, more community members will be equipped with the skills and abilities to manage difficult conversations around mental health, and appropriately refer people to professional support. Ensuring that community members are trained in mental health support promotes safer communities, with increased awareness and reduced stigma. Through targeting barbers it is ensured that suicide prevention strategies are specifically addressing the identified risk group of males.

Barbers will be consulted regarding the efficacy of the training, and the uptake of resources. Future plans for sustainability and continuation of the action will be explored based off barber feedback, and community reception of the resource.



## Reporting and Promotion

Do you agree to have a three month check-in to provide an update on the implementation of the CAP?  Yes / No

Do you consent to information about the CAP being featured on the TSPCN website?  Yes / No

Are you happy to collaborate with similar CAPs in your region?  Yes / No

Are you willing to be interviewed about and/or present your CAP at a Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network (TSPCN) meeting?  Yes / No

Sign: ..... *Caralisa Farrell* ..... Date: *26/10/2022* .....

# Action Plan

**Effective From:** 1st November 2022

**Review Date:** 1st May 2023

## Action 1: Barbers for Life

### Creation of a support service information resource

<p><b>How will the CAP make a difference? (Outcomes)</b></p>	<p>This initiative will equip barbers with discrete resources on local and national support information to give to those who need them. This will support customers in crisis and provide appropriate information and encourage support seeking behaviour, as well as supporting barbers to feel more confident in their ability to manage being an "accidental counsellor", alleviating responsibility of care, and increase knowledge of supports available.</p> <p>This action will support the creation, printing and dissemination of the resource to participating barbers across the municipality.</p>
<p><b>How will this action lead to sustainable change?</b></p>	<p>As barbers have the capacity to reach a large proportion of society, this initiative will positively impact many people. Trained barbers will have the opportunity to have emotionally supportive conversations and encourage support seeking behaviour. Community awareness of support available will increase.</p>
<p><b>How will you know if the CAP has made a difference (Outcome Measures)</b></p>	<p>Feedback sought from barbers regarding confidence to support clients in need.</p> <p>Number of support resources handed out.</p>



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## Action 2: Viability of extending Barbers for Life

<p><b>How will the CAP make a difference? (Outcomes)</b></p>	<p>This action will work towards the future direction and extension of the Barbers for Life initiative to other occupations in "accidental counsellor" positions. Progressing this action will include assessment of the feedback gathered from the barber initiative, as well as internal and external consultation.</p> <p>Expanding this initiative will increase the community capacity and awareness to both talk about mental health in a progressive way, and support those in need.</p>
<p><b>How will this action lead to sustainable change?</b></p>	<p>Increasing community capacity to discuss mental health and normalise help seeking behaviour will reduce stigma around poor mental health, and create a safer community in which those needing help can feel supported. This action will help in determining which other professions have an increased likelihood in having difficult conversations surrounding mental health, as well as establishing the needs of these populations.</p> <p>In considering sustainability and practicality, this action will build on feedback from Action 1 and work to create an initiative that is actionable and welcomed by the professionals and community members targeted.</p>
<p><b>How will you know if the CAP has made a difference (Outcome Measures)</b></p>	<p>The reception of this initiative idea will inform whether this is needed and wanted in professions outside of barbers. This action will inform the viability of future actions which place focus on the identified professions, and assist in their development.</p>



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## Action 3: Connection Nights

**How will the CAP make a difference? (Outcomes)**

Through consultations it was also identified that there are little formal opportunities for those working in professions considered "accidental counsellors" to connect and network. The City of Launceston will support these events through organising and advertising the events across the municipality.

In supporting consistent "Connection Nights" those in these positions can provide support and understanding to each other, and build personal connections. This may be especially useful for those new to their profession who may not have had the opportunity to build an industry specific support network yet. This action places priority on supporting the all workers in these roles, and promoting the importance of social support.

**How will this action lead to sustainable change?**

In facilitating consistent Connection Nights, anyone working in these professions have the opportunity to talk to others who may experience similar situations, and increase people's support networks.

As Action 1 rolls out, these Connections Nights may also work to increase knowledge of the training and resources available to support themselves, their coworkers and clients in need.

These social events will also provide the opportunity to gather information to inform future support options and initiatives.

**How will you know if the CAP has made a difference (Outcome Measures)**

The impact and effectiveness of this action will be seen in the attendee numbers at the Connection Nights, and reception of the initiative in general. Further feedback can be gathered at these events to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the target community.



# Action Plan

This is a working document that can be added to, as community needs change, or new actions are developed.

Relationships Australia Tasmania are available to provide assistance in the future should changes be required.

We look forward to following up with you on the below dates:

- Three month check-in: 9 February 2023
- Six month review: 1 May 2023
- One year review: 1 November 2023