

# Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network Meeting

Minutes: Launceston Meeting 14 November 2023

11:04am-1:05pm | Head to Health Launceston

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## 1. Welcome, acknowledgement of country and lived experience

Meeting opened at 11:04am by Mel Harback. Acknowledgement of Country and Lived Experience was provided, along with providing information on available supports.

**Present:** **Mel Harback** Relationships Australia Tasmania, **Kirsten Ritchie** Strike It Out, **Kelli-Ann Johnson** Stride Head to Health, **Al Brown** Department of Health, **Marcus McCrae** Department of Health, **Aaron Meldrum** Relationships Australia Tasmania, **Greg Wing** Simplot, **Darren McKay** Stride Head to Health, **Robert Alderson** Relationships Australia Tasmania, **Maree McCulley** Mental Health Lived Experience Tasmania, **Terry Purton** Primary Health Tasmania, **Sharon Corvinus-Jones** Kentish Regional Clinic, **Rebecca Reid** CORES, **Kylea Aldred** Relationships Australia Tasmania, **Callan Hume** Relationships Australia Tasmania, **Irene Mukiira** Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, **Mark Davis** Lived Experience Community Member, **Ben Hirst** Relationships Australia Tasmania, and **Jasmin Dunn** Relationships Australia Tasmania.

**Apologies:** **Julie Ryan** Carers Tasmania, **Danielle Wall** Community Member, **Andrew Mitchell** Scarlet Alliance

## 2. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Minutes were circulated at the meeting. Previous minutes were accepted as being true and correct.

### **3. Terms of reference for the network**

A copy of the terms of reference was provided to attendees at the meeting. It was pointed out that the terms of reference can be found on the TSPCN website: [https://suicideprevention.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/TSPCN-TOR\\_2023.pdf](https://suicideprevention.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/TSPCN-TOR_2023.pdf)

The terms of reference is a living document and attendees were directed to provide feedback either through using the QR code on agendas or by speaking with an Relationships Australia Tasmania staff member.

### **4. Meeting speakers**

#### **Kirsten Ritchie – Strike It Out**

Kirsten is the Founder and Public Officer at Strike It Out.

Strike it Out is a local not-for-profit organisation here in Tasmania supporting those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with basic necessities and care. They provide emergency support and food supplies for people from Wynyard through to Campbell Town. In addition to this they also assist people with the purchase of prescriptions, provide regular weekly meals in Launceston, provide short term emergency accommodation, provide mobile lockers for those on the street to store valuables in, provide showering facilities, and connect people to relevant services and support.

The services they have are continually growing as funds and people-power become available. They are working on an EOI for a women's sleep zone in Launceston and are in the middle of creating a mobile sleeping trailer with individual pods.

They have a storage shed at Launceston Storage Solutions that people can drop goods off too. They distribute these goods across the community so that they are available and accessible when needed.

Most people accessing support are highly stressed and agitated. Kirsten and the team of volunteers provide care when people are at their most vulnerable. They've created a culture of kindness and respect. They walk alongside people and let them know the community is here to help.

Kirsten is a phenomenal woman with a huge heart for helping others. At the meeting she shared her lived experience story and how she overcame

challenges to be able to support those in need in our local communities. Kirsten and the team recently won an award for Excellence in Community Service from the Launceston Chamber of Commerce.

To find out more about Strike it Out head to their website:

<https://www.strikeitout.com/>

### **Darren McKay – Stride Head to Health**

Head to Health is a safe and welcoming place for people to access mental health support and information. Anyone can walk through the door and no appointment is needed. Head to Health is open Monday to Friday 9am-9pm and on weekends from 10am-2pm.

Head to Health is targeted at adults aged 18+ and services are free. People seeking support are able to receive immediate care and most people are seen within 10 minutes of stepping through the door. Family and friends are also able to pop in and seek information and advice. Darren says it is very similar to the Peacock Centre model in this way. Head to Health have a lived experience workforce who are able to provide care, support and a listening ear. They also have family & carer peer support workers, care coordinators, and a mental health nurse available. The mental health nurse can diagnose and write prescriptions when needed.

Head to Health is also a hub for other services providing a wrap around support for individuals seeking help. Services who are keen to work out of the centre can contact Darren for more information.

Darren says that the thing that stands out most about Head to Health is the great team that work there. They all are caring, inclusive, responsive and know the available supports in the local community to guide people to if needed.

### **Marcus McCrae & Al Brown - Department of Health**

Marcus McCrae and Al Brown are both from the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate (MHADD) within the Department of Health. They shared that the TSPCN and its members plays a vital role in the Tasmanian suicide implementation plan.

Marcus presented and provided an opportunity for feedback on the Male Friendly Health Services Checklist. This is an action under the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023 – 2027 (TSPS) Implementation Plan One (action 3.3.1) and focuses on improving mental health outcomes for all Tasmanians, including men and boys.

TSPCN members were provided the opportunity to read the draft checklist and provide input on focus areas and considerations from members.

Key themes identified within the consultation were:

- Expand male focused language on how to engage with men and boys
- Additional member groups for consultation
- Include reference to defined evaluation criteria ahead of implementation
- A comprehensive checklist that will be helpful for service design

An updated checklist will be circulated to the TSPCN for further input at a later date, following further consultations in November 2023.

AI ran a consultation session to help inform the co-design of a new Distress Brief Support Service.

AI noted that the idea for a Distress Brief Support Service is an early intervention initiative aimed at people who are experiencing psychological distress but are not yet at crisis point.

Key themes identified within the session were:

- Key characteristics and skills of individuals working with people experiencing early signs of distress
- Types, impact and factors contributing to distress
- Potential key touch points for people experiencing early distress
- Reflections on the benefit of having a Distress Brief Support Service model in Tasmania

The group provided input on:

- Interest from TSPCN, TSPCN members and member organisations in participating in the co-design process.

- For the TSPCN to provide recommendations on additional stakeholders to participate in the co-design process.
- To obtain feedback on methods of participation that would effectively reach Tasmanians, particularly those who may not be able to participate in co-design as easily as others.

Feedback is still open to the TSPCN for comment – this can be found at [Distress Brief Support Brainstorming \(padlet.com\)](#) or alternatively by emailing Al Brown at [mhadd@health.tas.gov.au](mailto:mhadd@health.tas.gov.au)

## **5. General business & open discussion**

Ben gave a Life Awards and Forum Update.

**Life Awards** - Nominations for the 19th Annual Tasmanian LiFE Awards are now open. We would love for you to help us spread the word amongst your networks and consider who you could nominate (self-nominations are also warmly welcomed). Those nominated for an award will be invited to the award ceremony on Thursday, 21st March 2024, in Hobart.

Every nomination holds great significance in highlighting the valuable contributions made throughout Tasmania. Please support us in recognising and celebrating those doing work in this incredibly important space. More information and the nomination form can be found here:

<https://suicidepreventiontas.org.au/life-awards/>

**2024 Suicide Prevention Forum** - The Suicide Prevention Forum 2024 is coming to Hobart on Friday 22 March. The theme this year is Championing Change, with a focus on advocacy. It is shaping up to be another great day and we hope you can join us. To find out more information or to register:

<https://suicidepreventiontas.org.au/tspcn-forum/>

**6. Next meeting:** 20 February 2024 in the North-West, venue TBC.

**Meeting closed at 1:05pm. All were invited to stay on for lunch, networking, and a tour of Head to Health.**