

Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network Meeting

Minutes: Devonport Meeting 12 February 2025

1pm – 3pm | Meercroft Park Pavilion

1. Welcome, acknowledgement of country and lived experience

Meeting opened at 1pm by Mel Harback. Acknowledgement of Country and Lived Experience was provided, along with providing information on available supports.

Present: Trista Abbott (New Mornings), Annie Anderson (Community Representative), Trudi Wilson (Community Representative), Carol Beaumont (Rural Health Tas), Gayle Caroll (Standby Support After Suicide), Sharon Corvinus-Jones (Kentish Regional Clinic), Libby Dobson (Welcome Cultural Services), Jasmin Dunn (Relationships Australia), Chantelle French (St. Vincent de Paul), Sarah Hedditch (St. Vincent de Paul), Dillon Goss (Dillon's Run Around Tasmania), Ali Grossmith (Community Representative), Mel Harback (Relationships Australia), Ben Hughes (The Listening Projects), Louise Madden (Relationships Australia), Ivy Mart (Dillon's Run Around Tasmania), Anita Morris (Anglicare), Annette Rockliff (CLS Tas), Kat Rose (Health Consumers Tasmania), Loryn Silbernagel (Relationships Australia), Kim Singleton (ARL), Tamara Speed (Relationships Australia), Bec Wilkins (YFCC)

Apologies: Maree McCulley, Annette Dawes, Jodie Saville, Dr. Michael Kelly, Laura Johnson, Julie Bredenhof, Thomas Wickert

2. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held 28 October 2024

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

3. Meeting speakers

Dillon Goss – Dillon's Run Around Tasmania

- Dillon Goss from Dillon's Run Around Tasmania

In November 2024 across the span of 21 days Dillon ran 1,300km to raise awareness for mental health and funds in support of SPEAK UP Stay ChatTY.

Dillon shared a photo presentation of his run, reflecting on some of the highlights and challenges he experienced.

Dillon spoke about how his own experiences with mental health challenges motivated him to want to raise awareness for mental health, break the stigma, support the work of SPEAK UP Stay ChatTY, and encourage others to speak out about their own struggles. Dillon uses exercise and running as an outlet and as a form of meditation and credits this, along with seeking help, as a key element of managing his mental health struggles.

Dillon noted that his partner, Ivy, gave him enormous support in the lead up to, and for the duration of his run.

Dillon shared that he felt overwhelmed by the support of family, friends and community on Day 1 of the run as he prepared to leave from the Devonport Bluff. Dillon had the support of close friends who ran with him on that first day, including his great mate, Dylan Moore, who Dillon credits as a huge support for him. Dillon also acknowledged the support of his mentor, Adam Jeffrey.

A highlight for Dillon was receiving a message of support from accomplished endurance athlete David Goggins.

Dillon was challenged by injury 6 days into the run but was determined to complete his journey. Dillon persevered and managed his injury with the support of his team. Dillon reflected that this showed him how quickly life can change and that his was a parallel with how poor mental health can impact people.

Dillon spoke about spending time with communities who showed up to support him including posing for photos, playing football with kids, sharing his story and listening to others. Dillon shared that the support he received from communities showed him that his journey was about more than a run.

Dillon invited special people to run the last 10kms of his 1300km journey with him on the final day. Dylan noted the outstanding support he received from Tasmania Police and expressed his gratitude for this. Dillon also acknowledged the support of his sponsors.

Dillon shared that when he crossed the finish line it was a feeling he can't describe. Excitement, bliss. Gratitude.

More information about Dillon's Run can be found here: [Dillon's Run | Dillon's Run Around Tasmania](#)

Q&A:

“How do we get more men involved?”

Dillon acknowledged that this is a hard question to answer as men are more afraid to put it out there.

“What's next?”

Dillon has a few ideas, needs to get his body right first.

Gayle Carroll - Standby Support After Suicide

Gayle is the Northern Outreach Worker with StandBy Support After Suicide. Gayle and her team support anyone who has been bereaved or impacted by suicide at any stage in their life. Gayle has worked with Standby for 8 years and provides support services across the north of Tasmania.

Gayle shared a nationally circulated video titled ‘What is Standby?’

Gayle shared that Standby supports anyone who has been bereaved or impacted by suicide including individuals, families, friends, witnesses, first responders and service providers, schools, workplaces and community groups.

Gayle advised that Standby is a 24/7 service. Clients can call 1300 727 247 and receive phone support, however the majority of the support work is face to face, and includes follow up check-ins for up to 2 years as needed. Gayle spoke about the role

not being a typical '9-5' job, with the objective being to meet people where they are, when they need support.

Standby have developed and workplace toolkit and run 'What Do I Say? What Do I do?' training sessions for the community.

Q&A

'Are there similar needs across communities impacted by suicide?'

- Need to have flexible, accessible support when they need it
- Space to talk
- Reducing stigma
- Feeling isolated is a really big issue

Kat Rose – The Right Place Central Coast

Kat is the Central Coast Community Connector with Health Consumers Tasmania. Kat oversees the Right Place. The Right Place is focussed on supporting the people in Tasmanian communities to find the services they need when they need them. Kat shared the following with the meeting cohort.

In 2022, Health Consumers Tasmania (HCT) commenced a two-year Tasmanian funded pilot project to support three regions including the Central Coast, in developing local place-based solutions to respond to the health and wellbeing of our community.

In June 2022, with the appointment of two Community Engagement Workers in the Central Coast, 29 Kitchen Table Conversations (KTC) were conducted with a total of 213 community members, out of which the following themes were revealed:

- Healthcare – access, quality and equity
- Mental health support
- Preventative health
- Social connections
- Information access

These themes were used to support the next co-design process – a five-hour workshop of 109 community members, service providers and businesses throughout the Central Coast. Out of these findings the Central Coast Voice for Health (CCVH) was formed with five members from the community, steering the action plan from both the KTC and community workshop.

The CCVH Steering Group oversees local working groups created from the findings. These are:

- It Takes a Village / Parents
- Community Connector Reference Group
- Healthy Minds
- Garden Growers
- Get Active

The community identified that service providers needed improved knowledge of what services are available in the local area, and consumers needed easy-to-understand information and assistance at their first point of enquiry.

In July 2023, the Community Connector Reference Group along with HCT, identified the need for a Connector Role, more particularly, the need for The Right Place (TRP).

The Right Place helps connect community members to services and support by building capacity of groups and businesses to help each other find the support they need.

Since its inception, The Right Place has expanded to other Local Government areas. The Right Place is now supported by Public Health Services helping our community to be more resilient and care for each other.

So far 60 businesses and community members have been trained in The Right Place, this includes electricians, school crossing people, community groups, counsellors and mediators and church organisations in Penguin.

One trained member of The Right Place was at church when a community member sat down beside her, the community member was depressed and having thoughts about suicide as they had just been diagnosed with a terminal illness, they asked the right place member if she knew of any supports in the local area, The Right Place member was able to refer this community member onto a service, this is something The Right Place member said they wouldn't have had the knowledge to do this before being trained in The Right Place. The community member was able to get the supports she needed and returned two weeks later to discuss with the right place member that she had never felt as at peace and happy as what she is now and thanked The Right Place member for supporting and directing her to supports, the community member passed away two weeks later and the family were so happy to know that the community member passed away with a clear and peaceful mind.

This is what The Right Place is about, it's about supporting the community, it's about saying 'yes, I can help you.' In a sense it's all about old school customer service, when everyone turned up to the milk bar to see who was best to talk to about things

As a The Right Place member we offer ongoing support to anyone who is a right place member, we have joined with Lifeline Tasmania so if any of our The Right Place members need to talk to anybody about something they have found distressing, Lifeline Tasmania is available. We also offer training in anything Mental Health, this is to support our members and the community.

Caitlin Saunders – Principle Policy Officer - Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate

Caitlin Saunders is a new team member in the Mental Health Alcohol and Drug Directorate, job sharing the role with Jasmine Angus, both backfilling for Al Brown. Caitlin provided the following updates at the meeting:

- **Statewide Suicide Prevention Strategy** is now in implementation phase 2. The Tasmanian Centre for Mental Health Service Innovation (which is a collaboration between Utas and government) has done an **evaluation of phase 1**, and this is complete and a minute about this has just been signed-off by our deputy secretary, we are looking forward to sharing this broadly very shortly.
- **Implementation Plan 2** is in progress with 37 actions. Some examples of the work being done as part of this includes:
 - The scoping of a Suicide Prevention Act in Tasmania. Back in December there was a Premier's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention advisory council meeting, and they discussed a plan to scope a suicide prevention act, which would enshrine and safeguard the excellent work happening in this space, ensuring that government remains accountable for this work regardless of political change.
 - Finalising evaluation of the Safe Haven in Southern Tas.
 - Collating and progressing findings from work undertaken as part of implementation plan 1 to develop an Early Distress Support Service
 - Progressing work completed by The Centre to develop a suicide prevention evaluation framework for community initiatives – making it easier for people working in the community to plan and review suicide prevention training programs to determine best options for Tasmanian workforces and community.

- **LGBTIQA+ Health Action Plan.** Our team has participated in the formation of this Action Plan, and have committed to a number of actions that we will progress over the course of this year – we'll be able to provide more information and updates about this at the next meeting.
- **Online directory of wellbeing training programs for Tasmanian schools.** This project has been progressing well and that the online directory is expected to be available to be used by school in coming months, by around the middle of term 1 this year.
- We are also waiting for a final sign-off on the report to Tasmanian Government on the **Report to the Tasmanian Government on Suicide in Tasmania 2012-2020**. The data from these reports helps inform our work.
- **Rethink** Tasmania's strategic plan for mental health. The final 2024-25 Implementation Plan for Rethink has a focus on evaluation, and we have engaged the Tasmanian Centre for Mental Health Service Innovation to conduct an evaluation of Rethink.
- We are commencing planning for the next overarching mental health plan for Tasmania in collaboration with key stakeholders, and there will be consultation opportunities for stakeholders and the community in the coming months.

Following several questions from the group about the online directory of wellbeing training programs for schools, Caitlin provided the following updates to be included in the meeting minutes:

- All Tasmanian schools will have access to the Directory, including private and Catholic schools. ACER (Australian Council for Education Research) have consulted with high level representatives from Independent and Catholic schools, as well as DECYP representing the public schools.
- Schools and program providers can nominate a program for consideration for inclusion in the directory. There are inclusion/exclusion criteria for the programs that have been included, so inclusion of any newer programs would also be subject to these. The idea is that the Directory can keep growing/be updated as new programs are developed.
- We considered geographical gaps when we were conducting the survey asking schools what programs they currently used/what they wanted to see/would find helpful etc, and we were really pleased with the distribution of responses we got back. In terms of accessibility, we're not creating any new programs through this project so it won't help in that respect, however, the Directory will probably be useful in highlighting gaps for particular topic areas/regions. Additionally, some

programs that provide online/remote elements and resources to train the teacher in delivering particular content have been included, so there will be some remotely accessible programs, but in terms of comprehensive availability across the different topic areas and regions – it will depend on what exists out there.

4. General business & open discussion

- **2025 LiFE Awards and Suicide Prevention Forum** – The LiFE Awards are being held on March 12th in Launceston, followed by the Suicide Prevention Forum on March 13th. Tickets and registration here: [Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Forum 2025](#)
- **75 Conversations** - Mel Harback explained the 75 Conversations project. Relationships Australia are celebrating 75 years through conversations in 75 places across the state, aiming to create a Tasmania where every individual is valued, every relationship is nurtured, and every community thrives. Mel invited community members to answer 3 questions.
- **Central Coast Community Directory** – The Central Coast Community Directory is a one-stop resource to find service providers including local doctors, healthcare services, community groups, bin collection schedules and others. The Directory can be found here [Home - Central Coast Tasmania Directory](#).
- **CORES** – There are a number of training dates coming up. These dates can be found here [Upcoming Training | Kentish Regional Clinic](#)
- **Choose Life Services** – CLS have EAP and Professional Supervision available.
- **Exhale Community Choir** – Devonport Big Sing event coming up on April 12th featuring Clare Bowditch. Tickets are available here <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1325545>
- **Carol (Rural Health)** – Question carried over from The Right Place service update. Carol is seeking information about services or funding available to remove rubbish from unsafe home environments e.g. a ‘hoarding’ situation. Carol shared that the cost of professional rubbish removal prevents clients accessing these services. This can lead to homelessness when leases are terminated, and tenants are evicted. Some suggestions from the community were provided – emergency relief providers could provide vouchers for food/transport to offset the cost, possibility of a NILS loan, possible funding for NDIS clients. Carol is still seeking further suggestions and ideas to support these clients.

5. Next meeting: Our next meeting will be hosted **online** on Tuesday 27th May.

Registration information and times for this meeting will be confirmed closer to the date. Watch out for these details being emailed out, shared on socials, and the TSPCN website.

6. Meeting closed at 2.25pm