

Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network Meeting

Minutes: Devonport Meeting 19 February 2026

Devonport Medicare Mental Health Centre | 12pm – 2pm

1. Welcome, acknowledgement of country and lived experience

Meeting opened at 12:05pm by Michael Kelly.

Acknowledgement of Country and Lived Experience provided along with a recommendation for the TAC App – Palawa Kani to explore names/places/pronunciations: [Download the app on Google Play - palawa kani.](#)

Acknowledgement of the recent passing of Sharon Corvinus-Jones, LGBTQIA+ community leader, advocate and trainer for inclusive statewide suicide prevention programs, CEO of Kentish Regional Clinic, and valued member of the TSPCN. The Network intends to recognise Sharon's contributions in a meaningful way and is working in collaboration with their colleagues and loved ones to honour their memory.

- Community member in attendance shared that a CORES Fundraiser event will be held on 28 February 2026 at the St. Luke's Building in Launceston.

Present:

Michael Kelly (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Tina Hale (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Amy Dettmer (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Elaine Devlin (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Loryn Silbernagel (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Chris Dutton (*Beyond Blue*), Greg Wing (*Beyond Blue*), Puspa Sherlock (*Mental Health Family & Friends*), Isabella Sherlock (*Mental Health Family & Friends*), Cameille Boland (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Georgia Dobbie (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Daniel West (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Lee Whitely (*Rural Alive and Well*), Amanda Raitken (*Mental Health Council of Tasmania*), Emma Fitzpatrick (*Department of Health*), Brad Saunders (*Department of Health*), Catherine Chapple (*Department of Health*), Verity Quill (*Women's Legal Tasmania*), Kyle Moyle (*Open Arms*), Joseph Yost (*Open Arms*), Cindy Walker (*Open Arms*), Alex Morse (*Creative*

Therapies/Exhale Community Choir), Jenny Mountley (Exhale Community Choir), Peter Harvey (Frontier Services), James Johnstone (Anglicare 'Wayback'), Brad Smith (Anglicare 'Wayback), Gayle Carroll (StandBy), Laura Johnsom OAM (THEIRS), Greg Smith (Men Care Too), Chris Edwards (Pharmacy Guild of Tasmania), Mark Davis, Shannan Maciejewski (Devonport Medicare Mental Health Centre), Jen [sic] (Stride), Allison [sic] (Stride).

Apologies:

Hon. Bridget Archer (*Parliament of Tasmania*), Christina Medhurst (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Jasmin Dunn (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Louise Madden (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Ruby Uffelman (*Relationships Australia Tasmania*), Amelia Bird (*Stride*), Sarah Clews, Petra De Kleijn (*Access EAP*), Deborah Emmett (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Bonita Evans (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Amy Moles (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Sarena Nisbet (*Rural Health Tasmania*), Laura Grattidge (*Live4Life*), Jayden Greenfield (*Department of Children, Education, and Young People*), Susan Hutton (*Department of Children, Education, and Young People*), Tracey Martin-Cole (*Psychology Café*).

2. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held 29 October 2025

29 October 2025 minutes were circulated at the meeting. Previous minutes were accepted as being true and correct.

3. Meeting speakers

- **Shannan Maciejewski** – Devonport Medicare Mental Health Centre

Bio: *Community Engagement Coordinator for the newly opened Devonport Medical Mental Health Centre. The Centre provides a safe and welcoming place for anyone to access immediate mental health support and to connect with other services for ongoing care.*

Presentation notes: Lived Experience peer workers are a major part of the care model and Tony Read, lived experience peer worker @ DMMHS, gave support for today's presentation.

Acknowledgement of Country, Lived Experience and the voices from community members in attendance that have long advocated for this service.

Motto: “Today. Tomorrow. One day at a time.” Designed to be a warm and inclusive space – Lived Experience Peer Workers integral part of the service delivery, voluntary – people come when they are ready.

- Shared personal experience of needing something after/more than a phone call when seeking support.
- Medicare Mental Health Centre established as a “No wrong door” – walk in service (18 years and above).
- Combination of peer-led recovery and clinical support.
- Not suitable for complex or severe cases but providing support up to the 6-month period in collaboration with other services to access immediate support.
- Launceston is the main centre BUT now Devonport, and recently opened Burnie Centre – Hobart centre coming soon (early 2026).
- Launceston service has extended hours – weekends, holidays, after hours available.
- Permanent Burnie location TBD (current location at SuperClinic).

Cost and accessibility: No cost, no appointments needed, no referrals needed – but warm referrals welcomed, no Mental Health Care Plan needed.

CORES visiting on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 to deliver Suicide Prevention training.

DMMHC welcomes collaboration with other major service providers to utilise their meeting rooms for presentations and gatherings such as TSPCN meetings.

Devonport hours (M-F, 10am-6pm)

Contact: @Devonport.MMHC@stride.com.au

- **Kyle Moyle** – Open Arms, Veterans & Families Counselling

Bio: Assistant Director of Lived Experience at Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, leading peer support and statewide mental health programs supporting veterans and families across Tasmania lived-experience leadership and collaboration.

Presentation notes: Service began in 1979 by a group of Vietnam veterans lobbying for access to care, re-branded in 2017 to Open Arms.

Kyle shares experience of how distress for veterans can sometimes show up in silence. Also highlights that Lived Experience is a known model for bridging experiences and developing safe, supportive and clinically safe services.

In the last census, 18,000 people in Tasmania identified as Veterans. Eligibility of partners increases this number to 30,000. Including children of Veterans increases this number to 60,000 – collectively amounting to 10-20% of Tasmanians that are eligible for Open Arms services. Family members can join group sessions, bereavement, etc. (ex-partners, co-parents). Service delivery = Duty of Care.

Veterans are a 'cagey mob' – may not self-disclose and some family members might not see themselves as eligible for services. Goal of Open Arms is to bring people along the journey to accessing services.

A safe, respectable question to ask during intake and initial interaction:

“Have you ever served in the ADF or are you a child of someone who has?”

It's important that if someone says yes, it opens up the conversation for referral pathways – deployments, family separation, at least 6 months out of the year away from home (impacts both the service member AND family). Trauma, moral injury, and family separation all contribute to guiding the conversation and understanding their background.

Veteran and Family Peer Network at Open Arms can help members IF you know their service status – so ASK.

Services:

1. Face-to-face individual, couple, or family counselling as well as Telehealth. Veterans tend to isolate – rely on community for referrals. Veteran peers, Family peer support groups (one-to-one capacity). Peer support is often casual, including home visits, local cafes, etc. Individualised programs and peer support help to guide goal-setting. Not fixing, assessing, BUT to walk alongside and build self-advocacy.
2. Clinical care coordination team (mental health social workers) help to reduce complexities – housing, food, immediate needs being met for short interventions prior to or simultaneously. 24/7 crisis line available.

3. Group Space – facilitator supported care teams to navigate shared spaces and likeminded people. Validating, normalising, building community.

Call to Action:

- Collaboration across services
- Warm referrals
- Advocacy (Ask the question!) + seek out guidance on how to talk to Veterans
- Utilise a “Peer first, Peer last” model for outreach
- Quick referral forms available but take all kinds of referrals to reduce barriers. Even “written on a chicken nugget.”

- **Brad Saunders and Catherine Chapple** – Department of Health

Bio(s): *Suicide Prevention Project Officers at the Department of Health, Public Health division working closely with the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing on the priorities and Implementation Plan(s) for the 2023-2027 Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy.*

Presentation notes:

Cathy - Mental Health Nurse, >30 years in clinical services and strategic policy/service delivery – ensuring that community engagement translates into tangible services.

- Suicide Prevention team has transitioned under the Public Health Services branch.
- June-October 2022 community consultation was undertaken to build the TSPS (x5 Priority areas identified under the strategy
- Currently working on finalising TSPS implementation Plan #3 – draft ready for release within the next week (will go out x4 weeks for public consultation – call for input and feedback will go out on the DoH website): [Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-2027 | Tasmanian Department of Health](#).

Brad – Embedding National Communications Charter throughout the entire government (every agency within) – wholistic government approach to language/communication around suicide and mental health.

What is the National Communications Charter?

- Evidence informed document developed by EveryMind to provide consistency in language (x7 core principles developed)
- Used to have a Tasmanian Communications Charter – have now transitioned onto the National Charter (signed in June 2024) government commitment to consistency and access to basic suicide prevention resources (Action 1.4 of the TSPS)
- Priority now is ensuring that EVERY agency will sign the charter, resources are distributed and training modules embedded into onboarding in every Tasmanian government department. The team will be assessing government on their compliance (x16 agencies within scope).

EveryMind online learning modules: [The Charter learning modules - Life In Mind](#)

[National Communications Charter 2021.pdf](#)

Questions? Contact: sp.policy@health.tas.gov.au

- **Alex Morse & Jenny Mountney** – Exhale Community Choir

Bio: **Exhale Community Choir** is a community choir based in Devonport with 59 members who sing together weekly and perform at events such as the Devonport Jazz Weekend and Christmas Carols. Exhale Choir is led by a Registered Music Therapist, who promotes the many benefits of singing and has worked closely with Project Officers at Relationships Australia Tasmania to implement a Community Action Plan to promote positive mental health.

Presentation notes:

Alex - Registered music therapist

Jenny - East Devonport Child and Family Learning Centre Manager

In 2022 choir was founded out of COVID and collapse of another community choir – community outreach and requests for connection. Group has grown from a handful to now >60 members in the choir and 55 at almost every rehearsal. Exhale Junior Choir has started from last week.

Ethos: Music is not trivial to people's mental health – it is an important resource for pleasure, mental health, emotional regulation, and wellbeing.

“Experience of poverty and subsequent poverty of experience.” Lack of free experiences and spaces for people to enter.

Community Action Plan (CAP) experience – group was looking for funding, but also support to grow initiatives and responsibly refer people to services, etc. Met with Jas Dunn (Suicide Prevention Project Officer) who shared their eligibility and the process of undertaking a CAP:

- CAP helps to pool data for community priorities
- CAP pages shared with meeting
- CAP actions are unique to each community

Actions developed directly from the community priorities gathered in the consultation/survey of CAP (e.g., Actions 1, 2, 3). Community has seen the direct impact of building connection and developing digital literacy, choir focus on mental health and wellbeing. Also, CAP funds put towards hosting Claire Bowditch at the Paranapple Centre for a singing performance with Exhale Choir and support cards with motivational quotes + support service contact numbers on the back.

Alex plugs Creative Therapies Tasmania – only specialised music therapy clinic in Tasmania (supports neurodiverse music therapy practices). Space is very similar to an Occupational Therapy clinic. **Location: 130 Williams Street, Devonport, TAS, 7310.**

Introducing music therapy as an alternative practice for supporting mental health.

- Rivendell clinic
- Played a snippet from ‘Hard Days’ song – client who Alex worked with at Creative Therapies, prior ADF service member managing CPTSD.

4. General business & open discussion

- Tickets on sale for the 2026 Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Forum to be held on 19 March 2026 at the Crowne Plaza Hobart (110 Liverpool Street, Hobart, TAS).
 - Get your tickets here: [Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Forum 2026](#)

- Messages of Hope book is making its' way around the state, follow along on TSPCN socials to see where it's headed to next: [The Messages of Hope book | Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network \(TSPCN\)](#)
- Albie House is expanding statewide services and looking to welcome new volunteers to host Suicide Bereavement group sessions, particularly in Ulverstone.
 - Please get in contact with Amanda Cutherberthson if interested: amandac@reitas.com.au
- Attendees directed outside for a performance by Exhale Community Choir, singing "We shall be known" by MaMuse.

5. Next meeting: 14 May 2026 – Online via Zoom (12-1:30pm)

6. Meeting closed at 2:05pm