

Our approach to Suicide Prevention

The evidence

An evidence review was conducted to inform the development of this Strategy (4, 7). It provided a comprehensive review of the up-to-date research, both published and underway, in the field of suicide prevention. Several areas worthy of consideration were identified which, taken together, provided support for the adoption of a multi-faceted approach. This included a combination of public health approaches, treatment approaches and community capacity building. The review also highlighted the need for rigorous research and evaluation, including economic effectiveness, to underpin ongoing strategic activity.

This Strategy prioritises approaches for which there is promising evidence and includes new approaches that align with reform occurring in Tasmania and nationally.

The Tasmanian Government has considered the existing and emerging evidence which underpins the actions, approaches and interventions included in this Strategy, including:

- ✓ Reducing access to means of suicide;
- ✓ Implementing guidelines relating to the reporting of suicide in the media;
- ✓ Training 'gatekeepers', including general practitioners, police, teachers and prison staff, to identify and support people at risk of suicide;
- ✓ Facilitating and increasing early access to treatment and referral pathways for people at risk of suicide;
- ✓ Delivering evidence based therapies to people at risk of suicide or experiencing mental ill-health, such as cognitive behavioural therapy;
- ✓ Providing postvention support to individuals and communities bereaved or affected by suicide; and
- ✓ Developing and implementing multi-modal interventions, that is, approaches that have more than one component, for example, education programs for community members combined with gatekeeper training and enhanced treatment and referral pathways.

Suicide is a public health issue that requires coordinated and combined efforts from all levels of government, health care systems, frontline health and community workers, workplaces, schools and other educational settings, community groups, the media, as well as individuals, families and communities. A focus on a broad range of interventions allows for activities to be targeted at populations and individuals. It can help people conceptualise different stages in the development of suicidal thoughts and behaviour from someone with no difficulties or non-specific problems or signs to a person exhibiting suicidal behaviour, as well as the impact of thoughts and suicidal behaviour on others.