

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Finocchiaro to the Minister for Health:

**Local strategies for improved mental health literacy**

1. What funding has been allocated for the development of local strategies to improve mental health literacy in communities?
2. Please identify which communities and which programs have been specifically funded in this area, how much and when and whether the funding is ongoing or one-off.
3. What are the details of those strategies which have been funded?
4. What evaluation have you put in place to ensure the funding has been directed appropriately?

- 1. What funding has been allocated for the development of local strategies to improve mental health literacy in communities?**

The Northern Territory Government, Department of Health (DoH) provides funding to several non-government organisations to deliver training to improve mental health literacy throughout the Northern Territory.

- 2. Please identify which communities and which programs have been specifically funded in this area, how much and when and whether the funding is ongoing or one-off.**

The table below details funding for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention focused activities. All grants are funded for five years, generally until 2022, unless they are currently being negotiated, or are in receipt of a one off community grant funding activity.

Location	Name of Organisation	Service or Awareness Training Provided	Recurrent Annual Funding Allocated (Ex GST)
Darwin and Palmerston	OzHelp	Tradies Tune Up Program – Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness Program	\$25 595
Central Australia	Lifeline Central Australia Inc	Central Australian Suicide Intervention and Awareness Training – ASIST workshops, general safeTALK workshops and the	\$429 235

<b>Location</b>	<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Service or Awareness Training Provided</b>	<b>Recurrent Annual Funding Allocated (Ex GST)</b>
		safeTALK in schools workshops, Mental Health First Aid	
Central Australia	Mental Health Association of Central Australia	Mental Health and Life Promotions – Suicide Story Workshops	\$80 000
Top End	Anglicare Northern Territory	Suicide Intervention and Awareness Training – ASIST workshops	\$317 048
NT Wide	Beyond Blue	Mental Health Promotions	\$42 048
NT Wide	Mates in Construction (Qld and NT) Ltd	Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness Program	\$80 000
NT Wide	Rainbow Territory	Indigenous LGBTQI + inclusive practices in mental health and suicide prevention workshops	\$80 000
NT Wide	National Rugby League limited	National Rugby League State of Mind Grassroots Program - mental health and suicide prevention awareness program	\$25 000
Central Australia	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	Employment of a part time psychologist providing outreach services - Santa Teresa.  Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Employment of an Aboriginal Family Support Worker- Alice Springs	\$195 000
NT Wide	Various individual grassroots organisations – successful applicants in annual grants round (22 in 2018-19 funding round)	Suicide Prevention Focused Community Grants - various initiatives from support groups, to education and promotion activities – one-off funding up to \$10,000 ea	\$200 000
<b>Total:</b>			<b>\$1 473 926</b>

### **3. What are the details of those strategies which have been funded?**

The following is an overview of some specific training activities that have been funded to increase mental health literacy.

#### **Mental Health First Aid**

Mental Health First Aid is a training program that teaches members of the public how to help a person developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. Like traditional first aid, Mental Health First Aid does not teach people to treat or diagnose mental health or substance use conditions. Instead, the training teaches people how to offer initial support until appropriate professional help is received or until the crisis resolves. While first aid for physical health crises is a familiar notion in developed countries, conventional first aid training has not generally incorporated mental health problems.

#### **SafeTALK**

SafeTALK is a half-day alertness workshop that prepares anyone over the age of 15, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. Most people with thoughts of suicide don't truly want to die, but are struggling with the pain in their lives. Through their words and actions, they invite help to stay alive. safeTALK-trained helpers can recognise these invitations and take action by connecting them with life-saving intervention resources, such as caregivers trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).

Lifeline Central Australia has worked closely with LivingWorks Education Australia to adapt the safeTALK model to engage youth in a school environment. This model has been implemented in three high schools in Alice Springs. The resource and evaluation of this adaption can be found on the Suicide Prevention Australia's Suicide prevention Hub, An online resource to support sharing and learning of evaluated suicide prevention initiatives.

#### **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**

In ASIST, people learn to apply a suicide intervention model. It helps caregivers recognise when someone may be at risk of suicide. It then explores how to connect with them in ways that understand and clarify that risk, increase their immediate safety and link them with further help.

#### **Suicide Story**

Suicide Story is a suicide prevention program created for use in Aboriginal communities by Aboriginal people who live and work in remote Aboriginal communities. The Program uses cultural practices to guide participants through the process of understanding suicide and reducing stigma so that participants can effectively identify and respond to the signs of suicide risk. Suicide Story uses local and culturally specific approaches to suicide prevention respecting the unique needs and issues within each community.

### **4. What evaluation have you put in place to ensure the funding has been directed appropriately?**

DoH has initiated a committee of funding agencies (Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Cross Agency Funders Exchange) which provides a forum that

supports sharing of information around primary health commissioning intentions, service planning and actual funding allocations amongst funders and the evaluation of current investment.

Regular reporting and performance management of investment occurs through the grant management reporting and monitoring system. Regular monitoring of suicide rates in the Northern Territory assists to identify if these interventions are having an impact.