



26 March 2021

Latest suicide figures signal a worrying trend off the back of series of disasters

NSW suicide deaths data released today highlights the need for immediate action to address distress in our community and future-proof against disasters.

According to the NSW Suicide Monitoring and Data Management System there have been 104 suspected or confirmed suicide deaths reported in NSW from 1 January to 31 January 2021. This is significantly more than the number of deaths reported within the same period in 2019 (75) or 2020 (81).

Suicide Prevention Australia, CEO, Nieves Murray said, "Any increase in deaths by suicide is a tragedy. The ripple affect across families, workplaces and communities is unfathomable.

"The past year has presented many trying circumstances across NSW communities including droughts, bushfires and COVID-19. This has increased risk factors for suicide such as financial distress and unemployment.

"We know that natural disasters elevate distress levels both immediately and also longer term as communities rebuild.

"Today's figures are a stark alarm bell that must be heard by our governments both at a state and federal level.

"Investment in suicide prevention services and programs must continue to be a priority so that our communities can be protected during these unprecedented times.

"Protective measures put in place by governments across Australia are having an impact. These measures include the NSW Government's significant investment in scaling up mental health and suicide prevention services. In addition, critical financial supports have acted as suicide prevention interventions such as a moratorium on evictions, coupled with the Federal Government's support for JobKeeper, JobSeeker, and subsidised telehealth services.

"Concerningly, on 31 March we will see many of these crucial financial supports cease to exist.

Support. Collaborate. Advocate.

Suicide Prevention Australia is the peak body for suicide prevention in Australia. We work to build a stronger suicide prevention sector, a more aware and engaged community, and a more effective regulatory and funding environment. Together we can achieve our shared vision of a world without suicide.



“Our worry is that if any of these protective measures are reduced or removed the flow on affects will be dire.

“On a more positive note, let’s not forget the launch of the NSW Suicide Monitoring and Data Management System last year marked a significant milestone in suicide prevention. Access to accurate, reliable and rapid information about every suicide and suspected suicide has the potential to save lives.

Suicide Prevention Australia has been advocating for this Register in New South Wales, which follows the Suicide Registers already in place in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania.

“Quick access to data means that suicide prevention organisations will be better equipped to deliver services and programs that make a difference to those in distress and most importantly save lives,” said Ms Murray.

To get help 24/7, phone Lifeline on 13 11 14 or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, phone 000 for emergency services.

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Help to report about suicide safely is available online: Go to www.mindframe-media.info

About Suicide Prevention Australia

Suicide Prevention Australia is the national peak body and we’ve been providing support for Australia’s suicide prevention sector for more than 25 years. We support and advocate for our members to drive continual improvement in suicide prevention policy, programs and services. Our reach is broad, including member organisations, governments, businesses, researchers, practitioners and those with lived experience. We are focused on an integrated approach to suicide prevention encompassing mental health, social, economic and community factors. We believe that through collaborative effort and shared purpose, we can achieve our vision of a world without suicide.

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