



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

The Hon. David Coleman MP
Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for
Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Suicide prevention grants to double, focus on at-risk groups

The Morrison Government is increasing suicide prevention grants to organisations across the country to help reduce Australia's suicide rate towards zero.

Through the National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program Grant Opportunity, \$114 million will be available for national projects that will raise awareness of the impact of suicide and support Australians who are at risk.

Specific vulnerable groups – including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, veterans, men, regional communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities – have been identified as the primary focus of the Grant Opportunity as these groups have higher rates of suicide than the general population.

Funding will be shared across various activity streams, including:

- Suicide prevention support for at risk populations and communities (\$64.5 million).
- Support for lived experience of suicide (\$6 million)
- Suicide prevention training (\$18 million)
- National leadership in suicide prevention (\$4.5 million)
- National leadership in suicide prevention research translation (\$3 million)
- National media and communications strategies (\$15 million)

Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, said suicide is a national tragedy, with 3,139 Australians taking their lives in 2020.

“One life lost to suicide is one too many,” Minister Hunt said.

“While we were pleased to see a 5.4 per cent reduction in the number of suicides in 2020, suicide remains a significant public health issue in Australia.

“Every suicide death has a devastating impact on families, friends and communities and that’s why we are deeply committed to driving the suicide rate towards zero.”

The National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program was launched in 2017 and to date, more than \$100 million has been awarded to eligible organisations.

As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Morrison Government committed to increasing the additional program funding from \$57 million to \$114 million to include additional activity streams related to lived experience and suicide prevention training, and to significantly expand support for vulnerable population groups.

At-risk populations and communities include, but are not limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, men, LGBTIQ+ people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, regional, rural and remote communities, veterans, and young people.

Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, David Coleman, said more than half of the available funding, \$64.5 million, is reserved for programs that reach our most at risk populations.

“We’re particularly interested to see applications that focus on populations and communities that are disproportionately impacted by suicide, such as men and boys and people in regional, rural and remote Australia,” Assistant Minister Coleman said.

“We know that men are three times more likely than women to take their life, but less likely to access mental health support. We also know that people in rural, regional and remote Australia have a much higher rate of suicide than people in metropolitan Australia.

“We also encourage applications for programs that will reach other at risk populations, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who die by suicide at more than double the national rate, and our LGBTIQ+ community who has the highest rates of both suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts in Australia.

“The support that will be provided through the National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program will be vitally important in helping to reduce the number of people we lose to suicide each year.”

Through the 2021-22 Budget, the Government is investing a record \$2.3 billion in the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan to deliver landmark reform in mental health support and treatment for Australians in need.

The Plan recognises Australians need a system that acts early to help people before mental health conditions and suicidal distress worsen, and that whole-of-government and whole-of-community changes are needed to deliver preventive, compassionate, and effective care.

The additional investments will take the annual federal health expenditure on mental health and suicide prevention to a historic record of \$6.5 billion this year alone.

The National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program is now open. Applications will close on 28 January 2022.

For more information and to view the Grant Opportunity Guidelines visit:
www.grants.gov.au.

Anyone experiencing distress can seek immediate advice and support through Lifeline (13 11 14), Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636), or the Government’s digital mental health gateway, Head to Health (www.headtohealth.gov.au). Young Australians needing support can access free services through Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800), their local headspace or online through eheadspace (<https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/>).

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