



**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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### **\$4 million boost for suicide prevention research**

The Morrison Government is extending the National Suicide Prevention Research Fund with an additional \$4 million over two years, as part of our commitment to increase Australia's world leading research into suicide prevention and treatment.

In 2020, a total of 3,139 Australians died by suicide. While it represents a 5.4 per cent reduction in the number of suicides compared to 2019 and the lowest national suicide rate since 2016, suicide remained the leading cause of death among those aged 15-44. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to die by suicide at more than twice the rate of non-Indigenous people.

Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, said suicide has a devastating impact on individuals, families and communities.

“Our Government is fully committed to working towards zero suicides. Zero is the only acceptable target as it recognises the immense value of each and every life,” Minister Hunt said.

“Research into suicide prevention is a critical part of this effort – enabling us to find new and better approaches to reducing the number of Australians lost to suicide every year.”

The Suicide Prevention Research Fund was established by the Coalition Government in 2016 and is managed on behalf of the Government by Suicide Prevention Australia. Since its inception, it has supported over 50 projects, including more than 30 that have now successfully completed their work.

The additional \$4 million brings the Morrison Government's total investment in the Suicide Prevention Research Fund to \$20.5 million (2016–17 to 2023–24). It builds on considerable suicide prevention research funding delivered through the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, David Coleman, said that ongoing research is helping ensure the delivery of the most effective evidence-based programs and services in suicide prevention, such as those funded through the landmark \$2.3 billion *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan* announced in the 2021-22 Budget.

“Suicide prevention is one of the critical pillars of the *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan*. The Plan includes more than \$298 million in suicide prevention programs and initiatives,” Assistant Minister Coleman said.

“Importantly, this includes universal aftercare for those who have been discharged from hospital following a suicide attempt. This is something I am personally passionate about and am committed to seeing rolled out in every state and territory as soon as possible.”

The Plan also included \$61.6 million to expand the successful National Suicide Prevention and Leadership Support Program which supports services that work to reduce suicide deaths and suicidal behaviour, particularly in at-risk populations and communities.

In addition, \$12.8 million was provided for the establishment of a National Suicide Prevention Office which will work across governments and government agencies to address broader social factors that often contribute to suicide. This continues the Morrison Government’s significant work to reform the approach to suicide prevention demonstrated by initiatives such as the appointment of the first National Suicide Prevention Adviser, the establishment of the National Suicide and Self-harm Monitoring System, and the delivery of postvention supports for families and carers bereaved by suicide.

“While we have made considerable progress in the last few years, we know there is more to be done. The Morrison Government is committed to continuing to deliver world-leading suicide prevention initiatives to protect and save lives,” Assistant Minister Coleman said.

More information about the Fund, research grant and scholarship opportunities are available online – [www.suicidepreventionaust.org](http://www.suicidepreventionaust.org)

Anyone experiencing distress can also seek immediate advice and support through Lifeline (13 11 14), Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800), or the Government’s digital mental health gateway, Head to Health.

If you are concerned about suicide, living with someone who is considering suicide, or bereaved by suicide, the Suicide Call Back Service is available at 1300 659 467 or [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.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/>).

Australians needing support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic can access the Beyond Blue Coronavirus Wellbeing Support Service any time via telephone at 1800 512 348 or online at [coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au](http://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au)

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