

Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention



NEWSLETTER

The Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention

The Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention was established in July 2018, and I was pleased to welcome 13 South Australians from a variety of backgrounds to serve on the Council. These Council members, from all across South Australia, have devoted decades to helping those touched by suicide.

The Council (pictured below with Premier Steven Marshall) has been tasked with lowering the number of South Australians lost to suicide, working closely with the Suicide Prevention Networks set up in council areas across the State, the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist SA and organisations including Lifeline, Living Beyond Suicide, MOSH and Silent Ripples.



Welcome to the first newsletter from the Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention. I have been passionate about suicide prevention throughout my public service and, in April last year, was honoured to be appointed by the Hon Steven Marshall MP, Premier of South Australia, as his Advocate for Suicide Prevention. The tragedy of suicide claims far too many lives, highlighting the need to continue exploring ways to reduce our State's suicide rate. I look forward to continuing my work in this important area, with great support from many dedicated individuals and organisations across South Australia and beyond.

Karen McColl, Adviser, and Tanya Malins, Senior Project Officer, support me in my role as the Premier's Advocate. Karen was formerly an Adelaide Plains Councillor for eight years, coordinated an at-risk youth program and counselling business and also worked for 20 years in Senior Human Resources Management roles. Prior to joining our team Tanya worked as a Senior Project Officer in Executive and Governance Services for SA Health, as a Senior Project Officer in the Department for Child Protection and earlier as an Office Coordinator for the CEO of the Northern Adelaide Local Health Network.

Hon John Dawkins MLC

Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention

Members of the Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention

- **Ms Jill Chapman**, founder and Chairperson of Minimisation of Suicide Harm (MOSH) Australia
- **Ms Janet Kuys**, founder and coordinator of Silent Ripples, based in Murray Bridge
- **Mr Peter May**, founder of the Treasuring Life South East Suicide Prevention Network and Aboriginal Health Worker
- **Ms Tracey Wanganeen**, coordinator of StandBy Support After Suicide for Uniting Communities
- **Ms Chez Curnow**, Country SA PHN Assistant Manager for Suicide Prevention and Low Intensity Strategies
- **Ms Kelly Vincent**, former Member of the Legislative Council and advocate for people with disabilities
- **Mr Nathan Bolton**, former member of the Australian Defence Force and advocate for veterans' mental health
- **Mr Simon Schrapel AM**, CEO of Uniting Communities
- **Rev Peter Sandeman**, CEO of Anglicare SA
- **Dr Kate Gunn**, Research Fellow in Psychology and Rural Health
- **Ms Lee Martinez**, lecturer in mental health at UniSA's Whyalla campus
- **Dr Peter Tyllis**, former Chief Psychiatrist of SA, now in private practice in North Adelaide
- **Dr Seema Jain**, General Practitioner based in Elizabeth Grove



The Premier's Council at a meeting in the Old Chamber, Parliament House.

Issues Group on Suicide Prevention

The **Issues Group on Suicide Prevention**, chaired by Sam Duluk MP, Member for Waite, has been established with the inaugural meeting held in October 2018. The Group comprises 22 senior executives from each State government agency, who work collaboratively on mental health and wellbeing strategies, providing reports and recommendations to the Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention. The aim of the Issues Group is to increase the profile and reach of suicide prevention initiatives within the public sector (as the largest employer in South Australia), in relation to both clientele and staff.



The Issues Group in the Legislative Council chamber

The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, Erma Ranieri, is working with the Issues Group to provide a whole of government approach to mental health and wellbeing strategies, ensuring that agencies have the ability to share employee and consumer programs, ideas, information and statistics. The Premier's Council and Issues Group on Suicide Prevention both support initiatives and events held by the 34 local Suicide Prevention Networks operating across the state.

Initiatives of the Premier's Advocate and Council on Suicide Prevention

Connecting with People Training

So far this year our office has hosted three **'Connecting with People'** training sessions, the first for members of the Premier's Council and Issues Group, and the second two for Parliamentary and Ministerial staff from across parties as well as state public servants. These sessions, held in February and May 2019, welcomed many participants including state politicians Hon Terry Stephens MLC, Hon Irene Pnevmatikos MLC and Hon Geoff Brock, Member for Frome, as well as the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement, Dr Roger Thomas. The training sessions were run by staff from the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist SA.

The sessions aim to promote empathy and to challenge the stigma associated with mental health and suicide by helping participants develop their understanding of the causes and warning signs of stress, anxiety and depression. Participants learn how to communicate with someone experiencing emotional distress, which was particularly valuable for Parliamentary staff who may have these challenging conversations with constituents, with no formal training.



Connecting with People Training for the Premier's Council and Issues Group on Suicide Prevention.



Hon John Dawkins presenting at the Connecting with People training for staff and public servants.



National Communications Charter

The Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention members signed the **Life in Mind National Communications Charter**. Developed by Everymind, the document is a guiding resource about communication around mental health and suicide prevention. The Charter promotes communication which principally does no harm, and works to increase help-seeking and help-offering behaviour.

As signatories to the Charter, the Council has pledged to encourage consistent, person-centred and respectful language, and support efforts to promote appropriate help services when mental illness or suicide is referenced in the media. Premier Marshall has also signed the Charter in support. If you would like information on how you or your organisation can become signatories to the Charter, we encourage you to contact our office.

Save Our Mates Wellbeing Roadshow



On 19 February 2019, John spoke at the **Save Our Mates Wellbeing Roadshow** in Port Pirie. The Roadshows took place on the Yorke Peninsula, Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla throughout February and March 2019, featuring speakers who share inspiring stories of overcoming personal mental health challenges. John Dawkins is pictured with (from left to right) Joe Williams, Chez Curnow, Anthony Hart and Mayor Leon Stephens.

The Roadshows are focused on breaking down stigma and opening up discussions around the mental health of youth, men of all ages and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will be great to see the establishment of a Suicide Prevention Network in the Port Pirie Regional Council area in the near future.

Ski for Life

It was a privilege for John to launch the 2019 Ski for Life event at Sturt Reserve, Murray Bridge as participants headed off on their 450km river journey to Renmark over the course of the March long weekend. In its seventh year Ski for Life raises awareness and funds for mental health and suicide prevention in local communities, many of which are visited along the way.

The event has grown every year and is supported by many hardworking individuals, including Ski for Life founder Bill Stockman, Tracey Wanganeen from StandBy Support After Suicide and Janet Kuys from Silent Ripples in Murray Bridge.



SA Committee of SPA



The newly constituted SA Committee of Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA), as well as other locally based SPA members, visited Parliament House for their inaugural meeting and afternoon tea. Members elected Tessa Colliver of SOS Yorkes Suicide Prevention Network as Chair of the new committee. SPA members (pictured left) are looking forward to exploring ways to improve services in mental health and suicide prevention for South Australia through the newly appointed State Committee. Karen McColl represents the Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention on this Committee.

Rosefield Community Shed

John and Karen were invited to tour the Rosefield Community Shed on March 12. This excellent community group recently moved into their new facility at Wayville Showgrounds with the support of the Royal Agricultural & Horticultural Society and David Pisoni, Member for Unley.



Karoonda Farm Fair

On 5 April John Dawkins and staff attended the annual Karoonda Farm Fair. This was another example of the work of the Issues Group on Suicide Prevention. Staff from John's office and volunteers from surrounding Suicide Prevention Networks worked in collaboration with the Department of Environment & Water at the Natural Resources site, and the Family & Business Scouts for dry conditions from PIRSA.

Lots of engaging conversations were had with the community around suicide prevention, while handing out Staying Safe packs and other useful resources.



South East Field Days

The 41st Annual South East Field Days, held by the Lucindale Lions Club from 15-16 March 2019, was a great success, seeing over 25,000 people in attendance. As a result of work by the Issues Group on Suicide Prevention, important material about suicide awareness and prevention, postvention and mental wellbeing were displayed at the stalls of Primary Industries and Regional Development, SA Police and Natural Resources Management, as well as at the stall of Tony Pasin, Member for Barker.



Handing out 'Staying Safe' packs and other information on mental health at the PIRSA stand



Karen and Tanya with Nick McBride, Member for Mackillop and Kathy Galbraith

John Dawkins with Nick McBride, Member for Mackillop and Tony Pasin, Member for Barker



Youth Suicide Prevention Summit

The Youth Suicide Prevention Summit was held on 29 March at the Pullman Hotel in Adelaide. Over 100 people from government agencies, youth support organisations, members of both the Premier's Council and Issues Group on Suicide Prevention as well as youth with lived experience took part in the event, hosted by the Office of Chief Psychiatrist, SA Health.

Keynote speakers from both South Australia and interstate, including the Governor of South Australia - His Excellency Hieu van Le, the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention - Hon John Dawkins MLC and Chief Psychiatrist of South Australia - Dr John Brayley, provided valuable information and statistics on mental health and suicide, re-iterating the very important message that we still have a long way to go in reducing youth suicide rates. Youth speakers from Talk Out Loud also shared personal stories relating to their struggles with mental health and the journey through the recovery process.

The afternoon finished with those youth attending the summit being provided an opportunity to voice their concerns to a panel of experts around issues they faced when dealing with mental health services and providers, before the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Hon Stephen Wade MLC, closed the event.



A traditional welcome to country by Yuandamarra and Patricia Agius



Governor Hieu van Le spoke of the role of mental health in wider social issues



John Dawkins with youth members of the Talk Out Loud Suicide Prevention Network

Presentation at Barossa Council

On 13 May 2019 John spoke at a Suicide Prevention Network Information Forum hosted by the Barossa Council in Nurioopta. The event, facilitated by the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist, welcomed over 150 people to hear about local mental health initiatives and the process of establishing a Suicide Prevention Network in the Barossa Council region. Speakers included Mayor Bim Lange, Sue Raven from the White Dog Mental Health Group and Dan Eggleton, former president of the Tanunda Football Club.



The forum was an initiative resulting from a presentation to the Barossa Council made by John in February. In his presentation John spoke to elected members and staff about ways to break down the stigma around suicide and the potential for the establishment of a local Suicide Prevention Network.

Australian Rotary Health Event

On 15 May 2019, with support from MPs Irene Pnevmatikos, Geoff Brock, and Mark Parnell, John Dawkins MLC hosted a function in Parliament House showcasing the work of Australian Rotary Health. The organisation has a strong focus on mental health and is raising funds for research through the 'Lift the Lid on Mental Illness' campaign. The event featured guest speakers Barbara Wheatcroft, Director of Australian Rotary Health, and Joy Gillett OAM, CEO of Australian Rotary Health, and was attended by many Rotary members and MPs.



Suicide Prevention Network of Networks Forum

The Statewide Suicide Prevention 'Network of Networks' forum will be held at the Salvation Army Centre in Gawler on Wednesday 29 May 2019. The forum provides all Suicide Prevention Networks across SA with a valuable opportunity to share ideas and expertise, receive up-to-date information and education, and learn from one another to bring potential new initiatives into their regions.

The forum will feature presentations on topics including postvention and post suicide attempt support, with important insight from individuals with lived experience. The forum is being coordinated by our office and will be hosted by the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist, SA Health. Outgoing Chair of Suicide Prevention Australia, Matthew Tukaki, will MC, and Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Hon Stephen Wade MLC, will open the event.

Postvention Conference

The **Australian Postvention Conference**, to be held in Sydney from 13-15 June 2019, will bring together people working in suicide bereavement support, police and emergency service personnel, and those who have lost loved ones to suicide. The Conference focuses on building hope through three main themes: encouraging resilience, incorporating lived experience and facilitating collaboration between stakeholders.

Suicide Prevention Australia Conference

The annual **Suicide Prevention Australia Conference** will be held in Melbourne from 22-25 July 2019. Stakeholders from a variety of fields in the suicide prevention and mental health sectors will come together with the goal of encouraging innovation, forward-thinking and diversity in programs and services to forge strategies for the meaningful reduction of suicides.

Contact

The Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention is based at SA Health. If there is anything that our office may be able to assist with, don't hesitate to contact us via these details:

Tel (08) 8226 6029 | Fax (08) 8212 7075

karen.mccoll@sa.gov.au or

john.dawkins@sa.gov.au

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Connecting with People Training is provided by SA Health in communities across SA in collaboration with the South Australian Suicide Prevention Networks (SPNs) which are aligned to their respective Local Government regions. If you are interested in becoming involved with your local SPN or if there is no Network in your region and you would like to find out about SPN development timelines or to register interest for your area, please contact the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist at: Health.OCPsuicidePrevention@sa.gov.au or by phone on 8226 1091.

South Australian Suicide Prevention Network Contacts		
Cleve and Districts Mental Health and Wellbeing Group	District Council of Cleve	tederin@bigpond.com
Coorong Conversations Matter (3 SPNs Parks, Lakes and Mallee)	Coorong District Council	JBarrie@coorong.sa.gov.au
Cowell Wellbeing Group SPN	Franklin Harbour District Council	cowellwellbeinggroupspn@gmail.com
Crossroad Connections	Adelaide Plains Council	adelaideplainsspn@gmail.com
Empowering Lower Eyre	District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula	john.treloar@bigpond.com
Every Life Matters	City of Salisbury	everylifematterssalisbury@gmail.com
Far West SPN	District Council of Ceduna	homeimp@hotmail.com
Gawler Suicide Prevention Community Group	Town of Gawler	codydaviestv@gmail.com
Kimba Mental Health and Wellbeing Group	District Council of Kimba	admin@lienerteng.com.au
Let's Talk Onkaparinga SPN	City of Onkaparinga	letstalkonkaparinga@gmail.com
Lincoln Alive! Port Lincoln SPN	City of Port Lincoln	spn.portlincoln@gmail.com
Marion SPN	City of Marion	marionadelaidespn@gmail.com
Mid Murray Caring Connected Communities	Mid Murray Council	Graham.jenke@gmail.com
Mid North SPN	Northern Areas Council	stacey@activ8.net.au
Mount Barker SPN	Mount Barker District Council	badgertristan@gmail.com
Mount Gambier and Districts SPN	City of Mount Gambier	ingrid@skylight.org.au
Murray Bridge Suicide Prevention Community Network	Rural City of Murray Bridge	tcmsmith@internode.on.net
Naracoorte, Lucindale and Districts SPN	Naracoorte Lucindale Council	kathryn.galbraith@sa.gov.au
Out of the Blue SPN	City of Mitcham	ootbcommittee@gmail.com
Playford SPN	City of Playford	LNorsworthy@playford.sa.gov.au
Port Adelaide SPN	Port Adelaide Enfield	portadelaidespn@gmail.com
Riverland Community SPN	Loxton Waikerie, Berri Barmera & Renmark Paringa Councils	rcspnetwork@gmail.com
SILPAG	Port Augusta City Council	silpagnetwork@gmail.com
SOS Copper Coast SPN	Copper Coast Council	soscoppercoast@gmail.com
SPRING Peterborough SPN	District Council of Peterborough	springpeterboroughspn@gmail.com
Stamp Out Suicide Yorke Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula Council	sosyorkes@gmail.com
Strathalbyn SPN	Alexandrina Council	v_maher@hotmail.com
Streaky Bay SPN	District Council of Streaky Bay	zestholistichealing@outlook.com
Talk Out Loud	None - Youth based	mary@talkoutloud.com.au
Treasuring Life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SPN	None - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-based	Peter.May@sa.gov.au
Wattle Range SPN	Wattle Range Council	chivale@dodo.com.au
Western Adelaide SPN	City of Charles Sturt	lmccann@charlessturt.sa.gov.au
Whyalla SPN	City of Whyalla	chair@wspn.net.au
Victor Harbor SPN	City of Victor Harbor	sthcoastsuicidepreventionteam@gmail.com