PREVENTING SUICIDE IN RURAL AND REMOTE WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Injury Control Council of Western Australia has implemented multi-level suicide prevention programs across rural Western Australia (WA) since 2005. Our work focuses on building resilience at a community and individual level and is funded by the Australian Government via the National Suicide Prevention Strategy (NSPS). Working groups in each community developed Action Plans based on the following objectives. (1) Advocate to improve access to services (2) develop local strategies to assist people to connect with their community. (3) Develop resilience building strategies and provide suicide prevention training. (4) Increase community awareness of suicide and knowledge of referral and support services. This approach has not only focused community action on these objectives, but has also initiated many innovative and collaborative activities between various sectors within the region. Some examples are Working with SW Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS), the WA Country Health Service-South West and other stakeholders to ensure culturally secure services for Indigenous clients New cross-sector networking groups established. Training delivered in partnership with Ministerial Council for Suicide Prevention (MCSP), Lifeline WA, health and education sectors, SWAMS and Gay and Lesbian Community Services Training and resilience building sessions based on Ros Snyders visual tool The Map of Loss. Received sponsorship for community events to promote messages for the WA Mental Health promotion campaign – Act, Belong Commit Working with high risk groups such as prisons. This work has evolved significantly since the initial research phase in 2005 and our success was nationally recognised in September 2009 by receiving an Award from Suicide Prevention Australia.