



# Media Release

19 November 2019

## New suicide support service for Darling Downs and West Moreton

Providing support for people in the weeks following a suicide attempt is crucial, and a new service is providing just that for those living in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

The Way Back Support Service, which officially launched today in Toowoomba, supports people in the critical weeks and months following a suicide attempt.

The service, designed by Beyond Blue and commissioned by the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, will be delivered by Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) in Toowoomba and Ipswich.

Once referred to the service, individuals are linked in with a trained support coordinator who provides them with practical advice and support about how to address the circumstances associated with their attempt.

Coordinators help their clients build a personalised suicide safety plan, link them to health and community services, and connect them with clinical care as needed.

The PHN continues to work with stakeholders in the region to develop services that meet community needs throughout the region.

**Beyond Blue Deputy CEO Susan Anderson** said The Way Back provided these and other vital supports over a three-month period.

"The Way Back addresses a significant gap in the current service system and easing a person's distress during this critical time by guiding them towards the right support and informing them about how to stay safe," Ms Anderson said.

"Coordinators provide people with practical support for improving their situation."

**Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN CEO Merrilyn Strohfeltd** said the PHN was pleased to be partnering with Beyond Blue and RFQ to deliver this vital service for the region.

"We recognise the critical need to ensure people can access individualised support following a suicide attempt and are supported to build long-term strategies and ongoing pathways to care," Ms Strohfeltd said.

**Richmond Fellowship Queensland CEO Kingsley Bedwell** said the program would create new opportunities to provide critical follow-up support and care.

"The first seven days after leaving hospital is a critical time for those at risk of suicide. Assertive follow-up and support for people, their family and loved ones will save lives," Mr Bedwell said.

"RFQ is grateful for the opportunity to bring its experience in the delivery of these critically important services in partnership with Beyond Blue, the PHN and the Hospital and Health Service."

**Federal Member for Groom, the Hon Dr John McVeigh** said, "It's great to see funding being invested into this critical area to support people following a suicide attempt and to ensure the individual has access to safe and appropriate care."

*Mental health professionals are available at the Beyond Blue Support Service via phone 24/7 on 1300 22 4636 or via [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support) for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).*

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