

2 June 2014

## **beyondblue launches practical support service for people in the Northern Territory who have attempted suicide**

NT Chief Minister Adam Giles and *beyondblue* Chairman Jeff Kennett will today launch The Way Back Support Service (NT), a service funded by the Movember Foundation, the Australian Hotels Association NT and *beyondblue* for people in the Northern Territory who have tried to take their lives.

The Northern Territory has the highest suicide rate in Australia, with 18.1 suicides per 100,000, compared to the national average of 10.8 per 100,000. Men account for 85 per cent of suicides in the Northern Territory, compared to 75 per cent nationally.

The Way Back Support Service (NT) is a unique service implemented by Anglicare NT, where people who have attempted suicide will be referred from the Royal Darwin Hospital and assigned a support worker to help them in their recovery. The support worker will reach out to the person and check on their safety, remind them of appointments and where necessary, make arrangements for transport to ensure the person continues to receive help after being discharged from hospital.

"If someone has attempted suicide, we know there is a big risk factor for another suicide attempt and the first three months are critical in their recovery. More than half of people who have tried to kill themselves leave hospital and don't get any support or follow-up treatment and, disturbingly, between 15 and 25 per cent will attempt suicide again. We hope this support service will save lives," Mr Kennett said.

"This service will provide people who've attempted suicide with practical support to help them through this difficult period and ensure they get the right information, guidance and follow-up treatment."

Around 100 people are admitted to the Royal Darwin Hospital each year following a suicide attempt, and the hospital estimates between six and 10 people present to their Emergency Department voicing suicidal thoughts each day.

Mr Giles will attend the launch this morning, and said he is proud to be shining a light on this important issue in our community. "Suicide prevention is something this government takes very seriously. We have a problem in the Territory, we know it, and we are working to fix it," he said.

"This morning I was pleased to release our new discussion paper on suicide prevention which recognises the importance of programs that support people through their recovery."

The Way Back Support Service (NT) is a two-year trial that will cost around \$800,000, funded by The Movember Foundation, the Australian Hotels Association NT and *beyondblue*. It was established by Anglicare NT, following a tender process. Anglicare NT has a strong commitment to suicide prevention and experience in delivering support services.

The Movember Foundation's Jeremy Macvean, said The Way Back Support Service (NT) would provide an outreach service to people at a time when they are in critical need of support and continuing care.

"We are proud that funds raised by the Movember community have enabled this service to be available in the Northern Territory, which has the highest rate of suicide in the country," he said.

Anglicare NT CEO Dave Pugh said the support service would provide vital assistance to vulnerable people in the region, and ensure they were supported through their recovery.

*beyondblue* Support Service 1300 22 4636 or go to [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support) for email or live chat service.

**The Way Back Support Service (NT) Launch will be held at 11am-12pm, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, at Double Tree by Hilton, Lobby Lounge, 116 The Esplanade, Darwin.**



**Contact: *beyondblue***

**Anne Wright (03) 9810 6108, 0411 035 695**

**Julie Foster (03) 9810 6114, 0409 433 501**

*beyondblue*  
PO Box 6100 Hawthorn West VIC 3122  
*beyondblue* support service 1300 22 4636  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)