

Media release



Thursday, 30 January, 2020

Beyond Blue welcomes Commonwealth suicide prevention funding

Beyond Blue has welcomed the Commonwealth's \$64 million investment in suicide prevention, including \$7 million over two years towards suicide aftercare and the expansion of The Way Back Support Service.

The Way Back supports people after they've been discharged from hospital following a suicidal crisis.

Originally developed by Beyond Blue, The Way Back is delivered in partnership with Primary Health Networks, referring hospitals and local service providers.

Since its rollout began in 2014, more than 3600 people have been referred across nine Way Back sites around the Northern Territory, NSW, ACT, Queensland and Victoria.

Trained coordinators work with people to develop a personalised safety plan, link them to appropriate health and community supports and connect them with clinical care as required.

Beyond Blue Chair The Hon Julia Gillard AC commended the Commonwealth's early response to Christine Morgan's first report to the Prime Minister on a refreshed approach to suicide prevention that truly listens and responds to people's needs and experiences.

"People who have previously attempted suicide are especially vulnerable to further attempts so it's vital we offer immediate, empathetic support after they've left hospital, ensuring that support reflects their realities and the environment in which they live," Ms Gillard said.

"We look forward to partnering with the Commonwealth, States and Territories, PHNs and service providers in expanding The Way Back nationally over the coming years."

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said The Way Back, which supports people for three months after a suicide attempt, was helping people in suicidal crisis feel less distressed.

"Early research suggests The Way Back is making a difference to people during this critical time by sitting alongside them, guiding them towards the right support and empowering them to stay safe," Ms Harman said.

"People who have used the service are telling us it's helped to ease their distress, feel more connected and more in control of the major life issues that contributed to their suicide attempt,

"It gives people practical life support as well as connecting them to services. This is important because suicide can be as much about major life stresses, for example, those relating to housing, poverty, financial and relationship pressures, as it can be about mental health challenges,

"We look forward to seeing the initial advice from National Suicide Prevention Adviser Christine Morgan and offering further input on this important subject."

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

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