

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Minister for Community Sport

Minister for Youth

Acting Minister for Mental Health



Friday, 29 July 2022

CONSULTATION OPEN FOR NEW SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY

The Andrews Labor Government is expanding its suicide prevention response to further support at-risk Victorians – announcing that public consultation is now open for the new Suicide Prevention and Response Strategy.

The Labor Government is seeking community and sector input on its Suicide Prevention and Response Strategy – a recommendation from the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System.

The strategy aims to identify the many factors that can contribute to, and protect against, suicide. Last year, we lost 699 Victorians to suicide.

More than just statistics, each loss to suicide is a beloved family and community member. It affects people of all ages and backgrounds, individuals, families and friends, workplaces, schools and local communities. The Government is working hard to reduce the incidence and devastating impact in Victoria.

The strategy will increase the supports and early interventions available, including to individuals and groups who may be at higher risk of suicide, and build on the existing evidence base to expand strategies that are working well.

The Royal Commission recommended a suicide prevention strategy that places lived experience and support networks at the heart of the response, which is why the strategy will be developed alongside people who have lived experience of suicide and their families, carers, kin and supporters.

While we know that health and mental health responses to suicide risk are important, the consultation will also look at other settings where we can identify and respond to suicide risk. This includes community settings, schools, workplaces and housing and social services.

Ensuring the Suicide Prevention and Response Strategy will meet the needs of all Victorians, this consultation sits within a comprehensive, whole of government and community-wide approach – we know that no single action, service or treatment will work in isolation, and the needs of every Victorian in distress are different.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* is investing \$21 million in suicide prevention initiatives, including aftercare services and an 18-month pilot of a statewide peer call-back service for families, carers and supporters of people experiencing suicidal behaviour.

The Engage Victoria consultation is available at: engage.vic.gov.au/the-victorian-suicide-prevention-and-response-strategy

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Mental Health Ros Spence

“Suicide has a devastating impact on individuals, families and our community – we need to work together to fix the system and prevent devastating outcomes.”

“We’re listening to those on the front line as we reform our suicide prevention and response – with Victorians with lived experience and their families at the heart of this work.”

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