

Media Release

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HOPE PROGRAM STRENGTHENS SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS

On World Suicide Prevention Day, the Allan Labor Government is highlighting the importance of early, compassionate support for Victorians experiencing suicidal distress.

New figures show more than 14,500 Victorians have been supported through the Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement (HOPE) program.

The HOPE program provides up to three months support after a suicide attempt, crisis or self-harm – with outreach workers supporting individuals and their families through this critical time when the risk of suicide is highest.

Since it began as a trial in 2017 at six sites, the program has now expanded to 40 locations across Victoria, including specialist child and youth services at Monash Children's Hospital, Alfred Health and the Royal Children's Hospital.

Across the program, there have been more than 377,000 service contacts delivered by clinicians, wellbeing workers and peer workers with lived experience – ensuring Victorians and their families are supported through recovery, connection and care in their local community.

Independent evaluations of the adult and youth HOPE programs were completed in 2024 and showed the program is delivering strong results – including improved health and wellbeing, strengthened social connections and reduced rates of self-harm and re-presentation at hospital.

The HOPE program's referral process has been expanded so more people in need can access their local HOPE service without attending a hospital emergency department.

The program is jointly supported by the Commonwealth Government through the bilateral schedule on mental health and suicide prevention.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"Every life lost to suicide is one too many – and programs like HOPE are vital in supporting people through recovery."

"A suicide attempt has a profound impact on a person, their loved ones, friends and our communities – which is why we provide three months of dedicated support to help create a strong path to recovery."

Quote attributable to State Suicide Prevention and Response Adviser Bailey Nation-Ingle

"The days and weeks following a suicidal crisis can be some of the most difficult in a person's life, and the HOPE program provides compassionate, person-centred care so no one has to navigate that time alone."

If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636.