

KENTISH REGIONAL CLINIC INC

Trading as



CORES™

COmmunity Response to Eliminating Suicide

Community Network

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History and Overview:

The Community Response to Eliminating Suicide (CORES) training program was developed in the rural community of Kentish, in Tasmania and has been operating since 2003 within Tasmania. It was developed by the community with 'Lived Experience' people being an important part of the development. Volunteer Peer Workers were trained to deliver the one-day course and this provided sustainability of the program. Simultaneously, a CORES Network was set up in each target area, driven by those volunteer Peer Workers who engaged local service providers to support the Network. In 2007 Kentish Regional Clinic Inc. was formed to manage the CORES program and it was at this time the program became national.

In 2008, the first training took place in the Shire of Burdekin, north Queensland, with the Burdekin and Hinchinbrook Networks established in 2009. A Coordinator was employed in 2011 and the following Networks were established: Innisfail, Charters Towers, McKinlay/Cloncurry, Whitsundays, Central Queensland, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast, Townsville and Palm Island. Over 4000 people have been trained in Queensland.

Networks have also been established in Riverland, South Australia and Hay, New South Wales.

Purpose of the Training:

The training is designed to provide individuals and communities with the essential skills and resources required to identify and respond to a person at risk of suicide.

Aims:

- Recognise the warning signs of suicide
- Support the person at risk to develop their own safety plan and access the appropriate services
- Promote help-seeking behaviour before a crisis occurs
- Every participant in the training has the opportunity to look at their own stresses and struggles in life and develop their own self-care strategies and safety plan

Benefits for Organisations:

- Helps reduce turnover and absenteeism by increasing employee morale
- Helps reduce workplace injuries through creating a culture of care
- Develops a sense of community in the workplace
- Reduces the rates of suicide and encourages early help-seeking behaviour

Broader Benefits: (Individual & Community)

- Recognises suicide as a social health issue, helping reduce the stigma associated with suicide
- Helps facilitate an open discussion on a topic many consider an uncomfortable topic
- Encourages communities to become supportive, healthy and well-connected
- Increases engagement with local community networks who have knowledge and linkages to communities and families who have experienced suicide
- Improves knowledge within communities of the impact of suicidal thoughts and suicide in their local community
- Strengthens local social networks

- Normalises help-seeking behaviour
- The skills learned in the training are transferrable to other areas of life

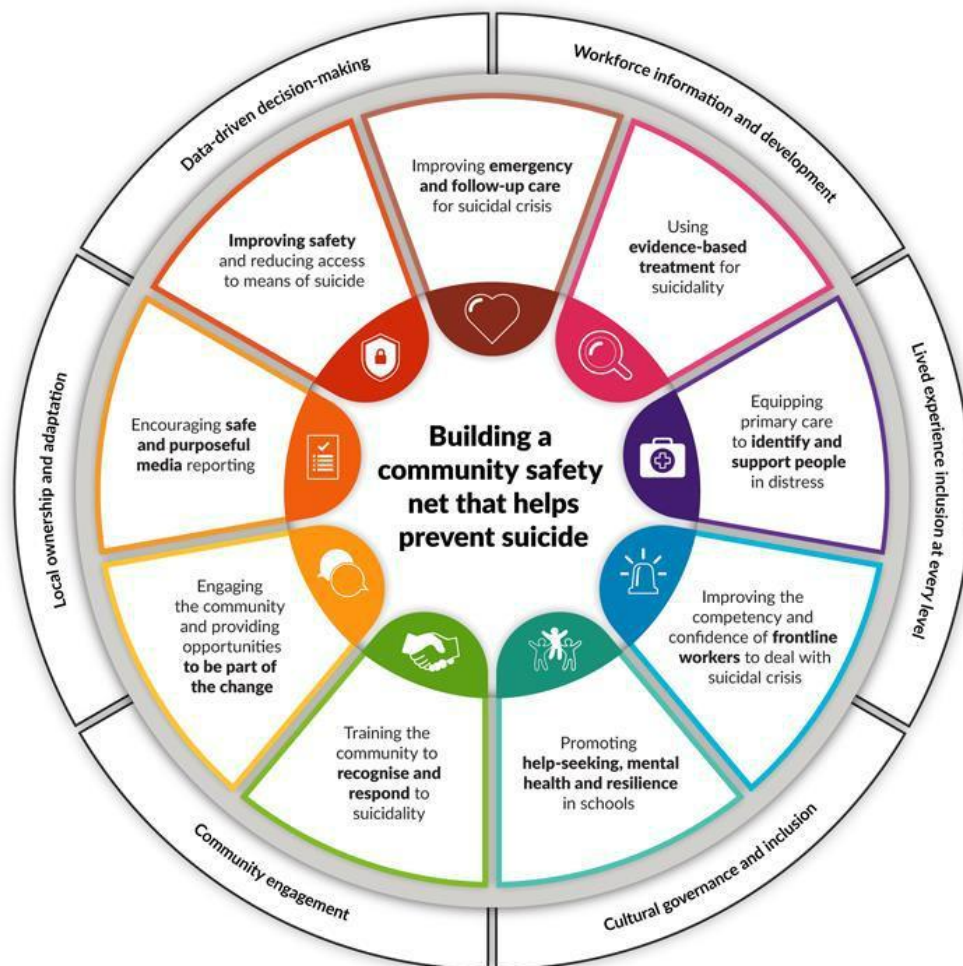
Key Result Area: Community Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Focus: Community Capacity Building and Sustainability

Time Frame: 1st July 2020- 30th June 2022

Project Summary:

This project will provide a community capacity building program centred upon the prevention and intervention of suicide. It will educate members of the local community on how to intervene when someone is suicidal. Local community members will be trained using a train the trainer model as Volunteer Peer Workers to deliver the program in their community.



LifeSpan:

The LifeSpan model is an integrated framework guiding the rollout of Suicide Prevention activities in the Tasmanian National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) site, as well as other sites around Australia. Developed by the Black Dog Institute in 2016, the LifeSpan model combines nine strategies for Suicide Prevention into one community-led approach incorporating health, education, frontline services, business, and the community (Figure 1).

A focus of the nine strategies is building a community safety net that helps to prevent suicide. Key themes or components of the LifeSpan model include local ownership and adaptation, community engagement, cultural governance and inclusion, and lived experience inclusion at every level Black Dog Institute, 2018 (BDI).

As published in The Evaluation of the CORES Devonport and Launceston Community Networks by the Centre for Rural Health at the University of Tasmania in May 2020. (See attached). As observed by the evaluation team and based on the evaluation findings, key components of the CORES training program and network activities, within both its content and structure, enable it to correlate to the following eight (of nine) strategies of BDI's LifeSpan model (Figure 1), which is currently adopted by the NSPT in Tasmania.

- ***Engaging the community and providing opportunities to be part of the change*** – encouraging local communities to be a part of the CORES network, and initiating consultation with community members to determine the needs of the communities, and how can they be involved with programs like CORES, to reduce suicide rates.
- ***Training the community to recognise and respond to suicidality*** – providing training to local community members, who are then equipped with knowledge that can be shared within their personal and professional networks.
- ***Promoting help-seeking, mental health, and resilience in target groups*** – providing training to local community members, providing self-care and support strategies within the training, in addition to resources on where further help can be sought.
- ***Improving the competency and confidence of frontline workers to deal with suicidal crisis*** – training frontline workers to increase knowledge, understanding and confidence to respond to someone at risk, including avenues for referral.
- ***Equipping primary care workers to identify and support people in distress*** – through the provision of training, the knowledge and confidence of primary care workers are increased.
- ***Using evidence-based treatment for suicidality*** – training content and delivery format is continuously updated with current statistics and research concerning best practice delivery of community-based, gatekeeper SP training, including recommendations for refers to treatment.
- ***Improving emergency and follow-up care for suicidal crisis*** – both CORES training and the CORES network provide follow-up support for people who have a lived experience of suicide. Both provide a supportive environment for stories to be shared, with trained facilitators available to further guide and refer people to receive any follow-up care they need.

- **Encouraging safe and purposeful media reporting** – training content and how it is delivered reflects the Mental Health Council of Tasmania’s National Communication Charter, including their guide to language, which is subsequently taught to training participants.

Considering the wider categories of the LifeSpan model (Figure 1), CORES aligns with all categories, where it:

- incorporates **lived experience inclusion at every level** – reflected in both facilitator and participant characteristics and providing a safe environment for storytelling;
- **engages community** – through both the delivery of the training program and the network;
- **harnesses local ownership and adaptation** – of the training program and network;
- incorporates **data-driven decision-making** – utilising current, reliable statistics and research to inform the training content and delivery; and
- targeting **workforce information and development** – targeting workplaces, including those delivering community and health services.

Strategies over two-year timeframe:

- Set up a CORES Network for sustainability of the program including a project reference group using community members and relevant service providers.
- Facilitate 8-10 CORES training sessions.
- Train 3-5 volunteer facilitators to deliver the CORES training.
- Continue to invest in fostering close collaboration with Suicide Prevention and Mental Health peak bodies to extend the reach of the CORES training program across Australia.
- Collaborate and partner with networks and organisations working with suicide bereavement, mental illness and the reduction of stigma.
- Develop a marketing or communication strategy for CORES, including how local community members or groups, or volunteers, can be utilised to take on this task, as well as maintain social media platforms.
- That all facilitators (including volunteers) continue to be supported and encouraged to undertake relevant professional development, with costs covered by CORES Australia.
- Training content continues to be regularly updated and refined to ensure optimal alignment with current Suicide Prevention statistics, policy, and practice and that this is reflected in the design, delivery and evaluation of CORES training activities.

- CORES Staff, through the CORES Networks, continue to involve local communities and/or target population sub-groups to assist with the design of the CORES program, including objectives, outcomes and evaluation processes.
- That CORES Networks share their considerable successes with staff, volunteers, stakeholders and the wider community, including utilising the voices of training beneficiaries to spruik these successes. Potential platforms to do this include local community events, recognition dates or weeks, forums, conferences and publications.