



Project Information

General Practice Capacity Analysis

2 May, 2022



GREAT SOUTH COAST
Suicide Prevention
Place Based Trial

Larter.

phn
WESTERN VICTORIA
An Australian Government Initiative



Australian Government

GENERAL PRACTICE CAPACITY ANALYSIS

This project investigated the factors impacting GPs from preventing suicide, and identified opportunities to build a strengthened response to suicide in general practice.

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project was completed between 2020-2021 by Larter in Victoria's Great South Coast.

This project was developed to engage and analyze the needs of General Practitioners and other staff working in General Practice, by undertaking a comprehensive analysis of **barriers to suicide prevention** including capability, service capacity and sense of capability for working with people at risk of suicide.

55 GPs representing 45 general practices in the Great South Coast and Ballarat participated.

FINDINGS + RECOMMENDATIONS

To deliver a strengthened response to suicide risk in general practice, areas of skill development have been identified as an opportunity to enhance GP skills in supporting patient distress, provide better supports for family and carers as well as providing safe, gender and culturally affirming service for all people.

The specific opportunities for building capacity in general practice can be understood as:

- Upskilling to recognise suicide risk in patients.
- Developing capacity to respond earlier to distress (before crisis occurs). For example through brief intervention.
- Developing treatment skills in contemporary approaches to working with suicidality.

THE BACKGROUND

- Evidence suggests that capacity building and education for general practice is one of the most effective interventions for reducing suicide (lowering suicidal ideation, self-harm, and death).
- International evidence suggests that further education around depression and suicidality may be one of the most effective interventions for lowering suicidal ideation, self-harm, and death.
- Recent Australian research suggests that GP capacity building could be associated with the largest predicted reductions in suicide.

*5 Page A, Atkinson JA, Heffernan M, McDonnell G, Hickie I. A decision-support tool to inform Australian strategies for preventing suicide and suicidal behaviour. Public Health Res Pract. 2017;27(2)].



GENERAL PRACTICE CAPACITY ANALYSIS

THE ANALYSIS

- Explored the professional development needs of GPs when working with suicidal patients, including levels of awareness of high-risk populations, critical combinations of static and dynamic risk factors, rating levels of risk and managing ongoing risks whilst continuing treatment
- Identified barriers, gaps and opportunities to improve circumstances for GPs in assessment, safety planning and management and ongoing support for patients at risk of suicide.
- Explored GP capacity for working collaboratively within the existing funding
- Incorporated contemporary cultural awareness, safety and competency for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NEXT STEPS

Next steps are for the workforce development team to embed the recommendations into the workforce development strategy for General Practice across the region to help build the capacity of General Practice in suicide prevention.

The findings are to be considered in the re-design of service models to help streamline access to ongoing care for people at risk of suicide and to reinforce collaborative shared care with GP's for those most at risk in the service models

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

GPs have access to the GPMHSC resource - a mental health first aid resource on suicide prevention to support general practitioners (GPs) in their day-to-day practice, to recognise and respond to patients whose mental health issues might be risk factors for suicide.

<https://gpmhsc.org.au/guidelinessection/index/dba12e0b-6816-40bc-a315-99a327fa3b0e/after-suicide>

GPs to complete Mental Health Skills Training (MHST) & Focussed Psychological Strategies Skills Training (FPS ST).

Living Works START first aid training is available for GPS and general practice staff in a 'whole of organisation' approach. This training is free to those living in the Great South Coast.

<https://bit.ly/STARTtraining>

Those bereaved by suicide can reach out to STANDBY 1300 727 247

StandBy is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing free face-to face and/or telephone support at a time and place that is best for each individual.

https://standbysupport.com.au/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMImr3ojY3y9gIVjwByCh1HKgTLEAAYASAAEgLXL_D_BwE

The program offers coordinated evidence-based support and resources (including connections to local services and groups) that is individualised for each person's unique circumstance. This support is continued for up to two years to ensure those that engage with StandBy are not alone and receive ongoing support.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE GSCSPBT TRIAL

Visit bit.ly/GSCSPBTbackgrounders



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