



Wednesday 28 November 2018

\$630,000 Injected into Suicide Prevention PhD Research

Suicide Prevention Australia today announced the first recipients of Higher Degree Research Scholarships totaling \$630,000 in Australian Government funding from the National Suicide Research Prevention Fund and additional funding support from Anytime Fitness and Regional Bank Australia.

“Six PhD candidates from five Australian universities in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory will each receive \$105,000 in funding to undertake new research into suicide prevention over three years,” said Suicide Prevention Australia CEO, Ms Nieves Murray.

“Funding new Australian research into suicide prevention is important. It helps improve our understanding of how we can best protect people from suicide, intervene in times of crisis, and provide ongoing interventions and support,” she said.

“The key is to then translate that research quickly and effectively into suicide prevention policy, programs and services; ensuring a quality, evidence-based approach. That’s what the National Suicide Prevention Fund is all about.”

These are the first Higher Degree Research Scholarships to be awarded from the \$12 million Fund administered by Suicide Prevention Australia and will support research into: hospital management of those presenting with self-harm injuries; predicting characteristics of suicidality in young people; co-designed physical activity interventions for first responders; enhance buoyancy in adolescents; and understanding the protective role of peer workers in suicide prevention.

“The Scholarship will enable me to spend a full year focused on writing my PhD thesis on ways to bolster adolescent coping strategies,” said Central Queensland University recipient and Brisbane high school teacher, Monique White.

“My work with Queensland teenagers uses the latest research on how our brain manages stress, to offer strategies for them to better manage life’s difficulties before it’s too late.

“Finishing my PhD will enable me to share what I’ve learnt with the community. I’d like to equip other educators and people working in community services and healthcare with a new tool to increase the resilience of Australian adolescents and help them resist toxic thinking.”

To get help 24/7, phone Lifeline on 13 11 14 or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, phone 000 for emergency services.

Media interviews and photos available.

Contact: Frances Wood 0404 184 175 media@suicidepreventionaust.org

Report on suicide safely: Go to www.mindframe-media.info

Support. Collaborate. Advocate.

Suicide Prevention Australia is the peak body for suicide prevention in Australia. We work to build a stronger suicide prevention sector, a more aware and engaged community, and a more effective regulatory and funding environment. Together we can achieve our shared vision of a world without suicide.

2018 Higher Degree Research Scholarship Recipients

Katie McGill, University of Newcastle | National Suicide Prevention Fund & Regional Australia Bank

Using sentinel unit data to inform best practice for hospital-presenting deliberate self-harm

The project will explore deliberate self-poisoning as it presents in priority groups and in a regional setting, as well as investigate the impact on self-harm repetition outcomes of innovative services and policies.

Carl Moller, University of Melbourne | National Suicide Prevention Fund & Anytime Fitness

Characteristics and Longitudinal Predictors of Suicidality in Young People with Depression

Depression is known to be associated with suicide. However, predicting with any degree of certainty whether a particular individual with depression will experience suicidal thoughts or engage in suicidal behaviour is difficult. The project will seek to improve our understanding of what specific characteristics of depressed young people are associated with suicidal behaviour.

Bernard Leckning, Menzies School of Health Research | National Suicide Prevention Fund

Informing improved hospital and follow-up care for patients presenting with self-harming thoughts and behaviours

The proposal is to investigate the characteristics and outcomes of individuals attending hospital with self-harming thoughts and behaviours. Identifying population and clinical characteristics associated with a higher risk of repeat hospitalisation and death by suicide, will better inform hospital assessment and management practices and targeted follow-up preventive interventions for this at-risk group.

Grace McKeon, University of New South Wales | National Suicide Prevention Fund & Anytime Fitness

A co-designed physical activity intervention delivered online for first responders and their partners

First-responders are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing poor mental health, including depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Individuals with PTSD are more likely to attempt suicide and consider self-harm, compared to the general population. This study will recruit groups of first-responders and their partners to an online physical activity program delivered through a private Facebook group as a gateway to helping people interact with community based services.

Monique White, Central Queensland University | National Suicide Prevention Fund

Adolescents understanding of neuroscientific based education to enhance buoyancy: An action research approach

This study aims to explore how an understanding of one's thoughts may impact on brain physiology and improve everyday resilience skills. It's using an action research methodology to enable the involvement of collaborators such as the school leadership, teachers, counsellors and staff to deliver an innovative intervention strategy to improve students' mental health and well-being.

Kerri Jackson, Central Queensland University | National Suicide Prevention Fund

Peer Support in Suicide Prevention

This research will make a substantial contribution to the field of suicidology with regard to the place of peer support in suicide prevention; explore and provide evidence of the ways in which peers can be a protective factor for people contemplating suicide, and identify and document the ways, in which peers currently provide suicide prevention services around the world.