

30 January 2020

## National Suicide Prevention Trial – two new programs announced

### New programs have been announced as part of a National Suicide Prevention Trial underway in the Northern Territory.

NT Primary Health Network (NT PHN) has today announced the delivery of two new suicide prevention programs as part of the \$4 million, four-year National Suicide Prevention Trial being funded by the Australian Government.

Two local organisations, Headspace in Schools and Menzies School of Health Research, will deliver programs focused on improved social, emotional and mental wellbeing and suicide prevention.

Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) will develop a community-led social media campaign aimed at building a sense of pride and identity in Aboriginality for individuals and the broader community. Key messages will target resilience, overcoming adversity and hope as well as messages that combat the stigma around mental health and poor social and emotional wellbeing.

Professor Tricia Nagel, head of mental health research at Menzies, says the program is a wonderful opportunity to work with community to promote connection to culture, land, language and lore.

“We’ll be tapping into the lived experience of locals and building connections through Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our new Stay Strong Darwin website by using images and sounds of local language, music, and country,” Prof Nagel said.

“Our initial theme for consultation is **Stay Strong Gara Batji gu-batji lurru** (Stay Strong Darwin, Be well, Stay well). We’re planning to use games, puzzles and fun memes to bring together a light-hearted campaign promoting resilience and wellbeing.”

Headspace in Schools will use a previously developed video resource to develop a training package to help build capacity for the community, health and education workforce who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and families.

Both programs will be designed and delivered under the ‘Strengthening our Spirits’ model. The model is a systems-based approach which captures the needs, cultural values and priorities of Darwin-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

NT PHN Chief Executive Officer, Nicki Herriot said “These programs are an important part of NT PHN’s focus on improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional health and wellbeing.

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NT PHN is proud to be coordinating delivery of this national suicide prevention trial in the Northern Territory, in a unique way that meets the cultural priorities of our community. We have a real opportunity to not only make a difference, but to introduce culturally-based programs designed for local needs. We look forward to seeing the positive outcomes of the programs.”

Headspace CEO, Jason Trethowan said, “The additional investment by the NT PHN for the training package will mean we can better support educators and communities to be equipped with knowledge and awareness of how best to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.”

Both programs will be delivered between now and October 2020 when the national trial concludes. Further information is available at: <https://www.ntphn.org.au/national-suicide-prevention-trial>

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

The first reference group for **Stay Strong Darwin will be held** with local youth and adults on Wednesday 5 February 2020. The campaign will run from March to August 2020.

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