

## 2 Principles

The LiFE Framework sets out a number of key overall principles for the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. These cover a range of important considerations, including statements about ethical practice; safety, quality and cultural sensitivity in activities; services and interventions within the strategy; about the shared responsibilities of government, service providers and communities for taking action; and about the target groups for different elements of the Strategy. They include the principle that the components of the Strategy should be evidence-based and sustainable, and should be responsive to the many factors that influence suicide risk such as the social, environmental, cultural and economic factors that contribute to quality of life and life opportunities and their variation across different cultures, interest groups, individuals, families and communities.

In general, the principles of the LiFE Framework also apply to suicide prevention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In guiding the investment of funding for suicide prevention activity targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Advisory Group developed key principles linking with the themes of the LiFE Framework as follows:

Projects need to demonstrate:

- **Community control and empowerment:** projects should be grounded in community, owned by the community, based on community needs and accountable to the community.
- **Holistic:** based on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander definitions of health incorporating spirituality, culture and healing.
- **Sustainable, strength based and capacity building:** projects must be sustainable both in terms of building community capacity and in terms of not being 'one off'; they must endure until the community is empowered. For example providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforces and community members with tools for awareness, early identification and for responding to self-harm issues within the community.
- **Partnerships:** projects should work in genuine partnerships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and other providers to support and enhance existing local measures, not duplicate or compete with them. Funding applications need to demonstrate a record of genuine community and stakeholder/provider consultations and a track record of community empowerment.
- **Safe cultural delivery:** projects should be delivered in a safe manner.
- **Innovation and evaluation:** projects need to build on learnings, try new and innovative approaches, share learnings, and improve the evidence base.
- **Community Promotion and education:** projects should share learnings and these should be promoted in other communities.

Investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention should be guided by these key principles as well as the themes of the LiFE Framework.

## Overarching principles for a national strategy

The following overarching principles have been developed to guide the implementation of the Strategy. The principles link with the themes of the LiFE Framework as well as the key principles developed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Advisory Group to guide current and future funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention activity.

The Strategy will:

1. Be based on respect and recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culture and history.
2. Be founded in partnership between communities, organisations and governments and enabled through cross-sectoral approaches to treatment and prevention.
3. Ensure that services maintain high quality standards of safety and security of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and families in need of assistance.
4. Be comprehensive, targeted and based on evidence.
5. Not lead to increased risk or vulnerability.
6. Be implemented to high standards of quality in culturally competent engagement and professional practice.

## 3 Goals

The overarching objectives of the Strategy are to reduce the causes, prevalence and impact of suicide on individuals, their families and communities. These goals will be achieved by action that involves many parties and that is sustained over time.

The goals of the Strategy are to:

1. Reduce the incidence and impact of suicide and suicidal behaviour in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and in specific communities affected by suicide.
2. Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and populations are supported within available resources to respond to high levels of suicide and/or self-harming behaviour with effective prevention strategies.
3. Implement effective activities that reduce the presence and impact of risk factors that contribute to suicide outcomes in the short, medium and long term and across the lifespan.
4. Build the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the workforce in fields related to suicide prevention, early intervention and social and emotional wellbeing through the provision of training, skills and professional qualifications at all levels.
5. Build the evidence base to support effective action and to evaluate the outcomes of suicide prevention activity at local, regional and national levels.
6. Make high quality resources, information and methods to support suicide prevention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples available across all contexts and circumstances.