



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy

May 2013



FOREWORD

Suicide is a complex and multidimensional issue that impacts on individuals and families and has ongoing implications for the communities in which they live. This is even more so for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are experiencing suicide within their communities at approximately twice the rate of the rest of the population.

This is why the Australian Government has made a commitment to tackling suicide within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through increased investment for suicide prevention activity that is specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy has a holistic and early intervention focus that works to build strong communities through more community-focused and integrated approaches to suicide prevention and commits the Government to genuinely engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop local, culturally appropriate strategies to identify and respond to those most at risk within our communities.

It gives us great pleasure to release, on behalf of the Australian Government, the first National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy. The Strategy demonstrates the Government's commitment to working with other portfolios and across all levels of government to reduce the longer term incidence of suicidal and self-harming behaviour amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes addressing other social determinants that contribute to social disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples such as unemployment, education, housing and community safety and focusing on building strong, resilient families, young people and communities.

We would also like to acknowledge the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, state and territory governments, local government and non-government organisations who helped shape the Strategy through participation in the community forums held across the country. We would also particularly thank the members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Advisory Group who contributed their time and expertise in guiding the development of the Strategy.

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Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

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