



Suicide Prevention  
Australia



# ANNUAL REPORT / YEAR IN REVIEW

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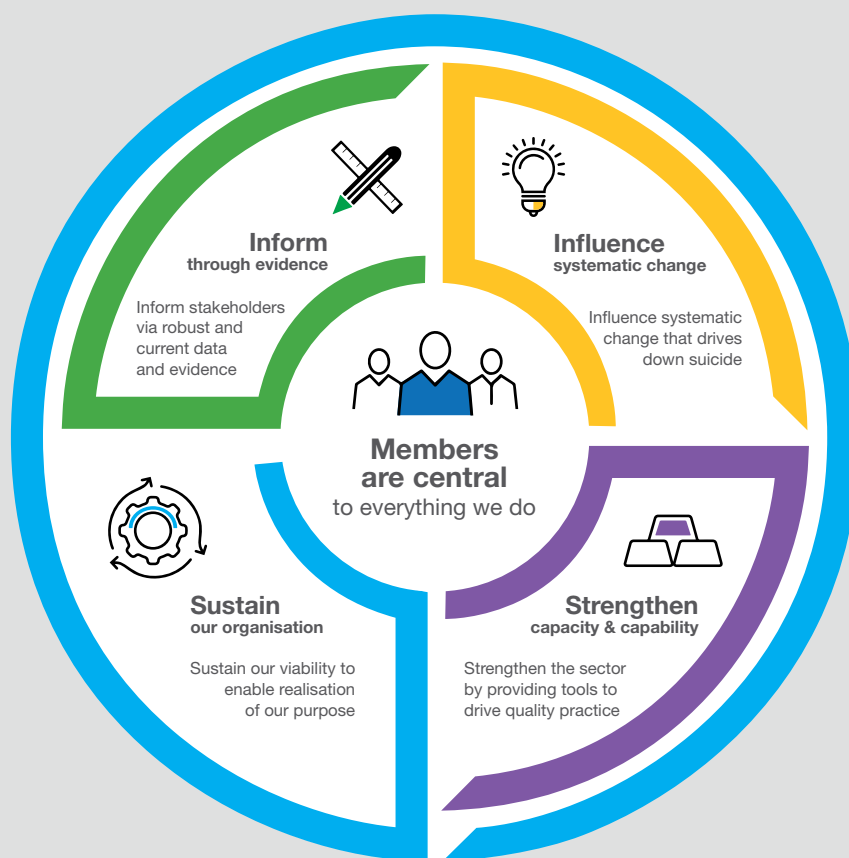
2019-2020

# Suicide Prevention Australia's strategic plan for the next five years

Compass 2025

Our  
ambition  
is a world  
without suicide

We measure  
our success by  
our collective  
impact



Lived  
experience of  
suicide is integral  
to our work

We exist to provide  
a clear, collective  
voice for suicide  
prevention



Suicide Prevention  
Australia

# Message from the CEO and Chair



We have continued to shine a light on suicide prevention throughout 2019-2020. From heightened government focus, to increased funding, innovative research, and a spotlight on priority populations, it's been a year of harnessing momentum and driving change both inside and outside the sector. At Suicide Prevention Australia, we have harnessed innovation and adaptation to sharpen our focus on our core purpose, policy platform, building best practice and delivering value for our members.

An integral part of this transformation was the development of a set of Board beliefs to articulate a common view of our role as a peak body, our objectives within the suicide prevention sector, and the Board's expectations of our management. This created a framework for decision making and strategy setting. In parallel, management and the Board developed a strategic plan and Compass 2025 outlines Suicide Prevention Australia's direction for the next five years.

COVID-19 hit Australia in March 2020, and with rolling lockdowns and a variety of state and federal restrictions, every organisation has had to adapt their working practices significantly. COVID-19 has driven an immense technological and workforce transformation across the nation, including in our own organisation. We've successfully used technology to bring Suicide Prevention Australia closer to our members and we'll continue to explore innovative ways of meaningfully engaging with our members and the communities they support.

The cancellation of the National Suicide Prevention Conference 2020 was a pivotal moment for Suicide Prevention Australia. As a team, we pulled together and worked to design and launch the Connect 2020 webinar series in under six weeks. The webinar series has been a resounding success and will continue into 2021 regardless of the easing of restrictions on events.

Suicide Prevention Australia has proven that we are agile, nimble and most importantly able to adapt to change. In the last financial year, we launched two pivotal reports with significant member contributions, that have gone on to strengthen our policy and advocacy work.

The past year has seen significant progress on our whole of government policy platform, with the appointment of a National Suicide Prevention Adviser and clear recognition across Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to work together as one on suicide prevention. COVID-19 has amplified the social determinants of health particularly, unemployment, housing insecurity and financial distress. This adversity highlights the strength of our policy platform and the need for an inclusive, whole of government, whole of community effort to create a well society and prevent suicides from occurring, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and after.

Most importantly, as a sector we have harnessed momentum and secured ongoing funding and government support for our cause. Delivering national leadership is a group effort, and without the collaboration and support of our members these outcomes would not have been possible. We would both like to acknowledge the contributions of our Board of Directors, leadership team and employees, our Patron Sir David Hurley and everyone who volunteered, fundraised and supported us in other ways. In addition, the Board has had some change as we welcomed Bronwen Edwards and Karen Phillips to the team and farewellled long-serving Board Director, Matthew Tukaki.

Suicide Prevention Australia remembers those we have lost to suicide and acknowledges the suffering suicide brings when it touches our lives. We are brought together by experience and unified by hope. We look forward to continuing to work together in 2020/21 towards our vision of a world without suicide.



**Nieves Murray** - CEO  
Suicide Prevention Australia



**Angela Emslie**  
BOARD CHAIR  
Suicide Prevention Australia

# Year at a glance

## 2019-2020 Highlights

### Quality and Innovation

Secured Federal Government funding of over  
**= \$4 million** <sup>DECEMBER</sup> **2021**



Connect 2020 webinar  
series launched **160 average**  
registrations per event



**Suicide Prevention**  
**Quality Improvement**  
**Program launched**

**37** research grants & **21** research institutions

\$3.2m translational research grants



Establish Suicide Prevention  
Standards for Quality  
Improvement

**Self-assessment tool**  
**developed and launched**

Research grants database – more than **500 active members**

### Sustainable Foundations



Research and grants revenue  
**= \$4.6 million**

Operating revenue  
**= \$7.1 million**

**79%** employee  
satisfaction survey

**8 diversified**  
funding sources

**Developed Board beliefs and new strategic plan**



## Policy and Advocacy



**2x**

Suicide Prevention Australia's  
COVID-19 sector survey

**13** policy position  
statements



Strengthened and expanded reach  
and influence **across all state  
jurisdictions and federally**

Submissions



**Draft report Productivity  
Commission Inquiry into the  
Mental Health System**



**The National Suicide Prevention  
Adviser's Initial Report**

**2** policy  
roundtables **3** focus groups  
involving more than  
**70 organisations**

Reports



**Turning  
Points**



**Turning  
the Tide**

## Member and Community Engagement

**Audience reach growth**



87 K



29 K



20 K

**86** organisation  
members **= 7.5%** increase



**World Suicide Prevention Day 2019  
Suicide Prevention Australia  
achieved largest share of voice (33%)**



**Media audience reach  
= 747 million**



**Expansion of state committees pilot to joint state/territory committees**

**72%** membership  
retention

**210+** MEMBERS

National Suicide Prevention Conference 2019 over  
**670 delegates**



# National Suicide Prevention Conference 2019



*Life Awards recipients - July 2019*

## Delegates attend Melbourne event and unite in action

The National Suicide Prevention Conference 2019 attracted over 670 delegates to Melbourne for four days (22-25 July) of collaboration, networking and learning. The theme United in Action was a fitting description for the 2019 Conference, which was a chance for the sector to come together and recognise the work that is being done in suicide prevention.

Delegates had the opportunity to hear from leading voices in the suicide prevention sector, including from former Prime Minister Julia Gillard who delivered the 2019 Diego de Leo Address. Throughout the four days there were over 130 presentations, including poster presentations, keynote speeches and soapbox opportunities.



Conferences like the National Suicide Prevention Conference could not happen without the support of sponsors. We'd particularly like to thank the Principal Sponsor, Everymind, for their support and enthusiasm across the event. Thank you also to our Gold Sponsors; the Department of Health, StandBy and Lifeline.

## LiFE Awards recipients contribute to suicide prevention in our communities

The LiFE Awards are an important opportunity to recognise the work that is being done across Australia in suicide prevention. The prestigious awards attract nominations from all areas, including business, media, grassroots organisations, research and government. Every year, Suicide Prevention Australia is overwhelmed with the quality of nominations and 2019 was no exception. The 2019 recipients certainly showcase some of the exciting, innovative and diverse work being undertaken within suicide prevention.

### Congratulations to the 2019 LiFE Awards recipients:

**Tony Lee** - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Award  
**Justin Geange** - Communities Matter – Individual Award  
**Jewish Care** - Communities Matter – Organisation Award  
**Dr Angela Nicholas** - Emerging Researcher Award  
**Illawarra Mercury** - Media Award  
**Hydro Tasmania** - Workplace Award  
**Brendan Maher** - Leadership Award

# World Suicide Prevention Day 10 September 2019



World Suicide Prevention Day 2019 captured the hearts and minds of many Australians. In particular, the attendance of close to 100 people, many of them MPs, at the Parliamentary Friends of Suicide Prevention breakfast event signified a swell of momentum for suicide prevention. The Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Health Minister Greg Hunt and Shadow Health Minister Chris Bowen addressed the room with personal stories and a determination to reduce suicide rates. There is no doubt that suicide prevention has gained political momentum.

A focal point of the breakfast was the unveiling of Suicide Prevention Australia's pivotal piece of work developed with KPMG; Turning Points: Imagine a world without suicide.

The white paper examines the emerging trends in housing, finance, employment and relationships and their likely effect on Australians in the coming decade. The more we can proactively predict what economic and social risks are around the corner, the better we can prepare Australians ahead of time and prevent suicide rates increasing. The white paper highlights that more needs to be done to understand suicide prevention service provision outside the traditional health and human service sectors, such as in the finance and service industries.

**WORLD  
SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
DAY** ● ● ●





# Thought leadership and policy influence

2019-2020 was a significant year in Suicide Prevention Australia's policy and advocacy work, seeing significant progress against our National Policy Platform goals, the publication of fresh thought leadership, and our involvement in key Government inquiries and reforms.

The appointment of National Suicide Prevention Adviser, Christine Morgan, was a critical step toward a whole of government approach to suicide prevention. We made a comprehensive submission on Ms Morgan's Initial Report which highlighted key areas for the next phase of her deliberations, in particular the systemic reforms needed to set up a permanent whole of government function for suicide prevention. We are grateful to the many members who contributed to the thinking behind our contribution.

We also contributed to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Mental Health System. We gave oral evidence at the Commission's Sydney hearing, and contributed a submission on the Commission's Draft Report in consultation with our members. We look forward to the outcome of the Commission's ground-breaking investigations into the cost, architecture and impacts of the mental health system and the Government's response.

A particular highlight in 2019-2020 was our foray into proactive thought leadership. On World Suicide Prevention Day in 2019, the Prime Minister launched our white paper *Turning Points: Imagine a world without suicide*. The white paper, prepared in partnership with KPMG, showcased research into key emerging risk factors for suicide: the gig economy, financial distress and relationship breakdown. We published a companion piece covering solutions to these risks in March 2020, *Turning the Tide: A six-point plan for change*, which was prepared in consultation with 70 organisations represented at a series of roundtables and focus groups.

Finally, in 2019-2020 we continued to strengthen our relationships with key government contacts across the Commonwealth Government, States and Territories. We formed relationships with key contacts in portfolios as diverse as the office of the Minister for Health, the office of the Attorney General, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, as well as with the office of our portfolio Ministers in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The breadth and diversity of these relationships indicates the Australia-wide shift toward a whole of government, cross-portfolio approach to suicide prevention. This is an approach Suicide Prevention Australia will continue to advocate for in the months and years ahead.





# Best Practice in Suicide Prevention

The National Suicide Prevention Research Fund (The Fund) awarded over \$3million in grants to support the rapid translation of knowledge into more effective services for individuals, families and communities.

The Fund commissioned eight research grants to inform whole of government priorities and cross-portfolio initiatives of the National Suicide Prevention Taskforce.

Suicide Prevention Australia commenced national consumer journey mapping research to better understand the experience of people with a lived experience of suicidal behaviours and their carers. Through mapping the experience of those with lived experiences we aim to identify the extent to which support contributes, or alleviates, distress for those directly experiencing suicidality.



In May 2020, the Connect 2020 webinar series was launched. This mental health and suicide prevention webinar series brings together thought leaders, experts and those at the forefront of suicide prevention each month to share knowledge and discuss best practice.

Australia's first National Standards for Suicide Prevention programs and services was launched in June 2020. The Suicide Prevention Quality Improvement Program and Suicide Prevention Standards provides a national framework for assuring safe, high-quality, effective suicide prevention programs in Australia.

The sector-led Suicide Prevention Quality Improvement Program has received strong endorsement.

## Gatewayto Excellence

Suicide Prevention Australia is committed to promoting and supporting excellence so that the sector provides safe, high quality and consistent standards of care for the people they help. At Suicide Prevention Australia we promote quality improvement to build sector capability and allocate millions of dollars for research. We are dedicated to identifying and responding to gaps in knowledge, policy and practice. Gateway to Excellence encompasses a series of initiatives designed to enhance best practice including the Suicide Prevention Quality Improvement Program and the Research Grants.

**“The Suicide Prevention Quality Improvement Program will help us continue to be leaders in best practice postvention. Accreditation through the quality improvement program will ensure our organisation is continually improving, it provides us with a framework in which to view our sustainability and viability and most importantly it lets us know how we are working is best practice.” - StandBy**

# State Committees Pilot

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## **This 12-month pilot program was trialled in South Australia and Queensland**

In 2019, new State Committees were trialled in Queensland and South Australia. The purpose of the Committees is to enable Suicide Prevention Australia members to:

- Share suicide prevention information
- Discuss state or territory-specific suicide prevention service delivery and policy issues
- Act as a conduit to Suicide Prevention Australia regarding current and emerging suicide prevention issues in the states and territories

The State Committees also hosted two special events, where members had the opportunity to engage on three areas of emerging suicide risk: relationship breakdown, the gig economy and financial distress. The contributions of the attendees at the Adelaide and Brisbane events were a key input into the Turning the Tides report.

Both events involved prominent keynote speakers, with CEO of Anglicare SA, Peter Sandeman, addressing South Australian attendees, and Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic addressing the group in Queensland.

After evaluation of the trial, members were surveyed to gauge their response. All participants expressed an interest in continuing and over two-thirds of participants said the Committee was a valuable opportunity for member engagement, gathering intelligence and policy advice and to launch 'grassroots' state or territory-based events.

As a result, the Board endorsed a proposal to continue with a slight change to format. Rather than single state/territory representation, the committees would be in the form of Joint Committees where each Committee pairs two states and/or territories together.

The following Joint Committees will be formed in the 2020-21 year;

- Western Australia & South Australia
- Northern Territory & Queensland
- Victoria & Tasmania
- New South Wales & ACT

# Uluru Statement

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In September 2019, Suicide Prevention Australia announced its public support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart. This landmark document captures the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for justice, truth telling and respect. Suicide rates of First Nations people are unacceptably high. The Uluru Statement from the Heart aligns with our values and priorities in suicide prevention.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island elders, academics and delegates from across the nation, embraces the elements of self-determination and justice. Recognition of Indigenous peoples within the Constitution is a critical step in realising First Nations autonomy.

Our work at Suicide Prevention Australia embraces the Uluru Statement from the Heart to support justice and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We encourage others to walk with us in an inclusive movement towards a better future for all Australian people.



# Australian Institute of Company Directors Governance Standards



AICD Governance Principles	Current Compliance Status
<b>Principle 1: Purpose and strategy</b> The organisation has a clear purpose and a strategy which aligns its activities to its purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia's purpose is clearly articulated in its Constitution.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia has a Strategic Plan which is reviewed at least annually at a Board and leadership Strategic Planning day.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia also has an Annual Operating Plan which is driven by the Strategic Plan.</li> <li>- The Board reviews Suicide Prevention Australia's performance against the Key Performance Indicators in the Annual Operating Plan each quarter.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia produces Annual Reports and publishes them on its web site.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 2: Roles and responsibilities</b> There is clarity about the roles, responsibilities and relationships of the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roles and responsibilities of Directors are articulated in the Constitution and Board charter.</li> <li>- New Directors are given an induction pack and encouraged to meet with senior management and staff as part of their induction.</li> <li>- There is a Governance Committee to provide guidance, as needed, on roles and responsibilities. In addition, there is a policy on Delegations of authority.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 3: Board composition</b> The board's structure and composition enable it to fulfil its role effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Director appointment process is defined in the Constitution including member nomination of Directors, a majority of independent Directors (including an independent Chair), ballot procedures and maximum terms for Directors.</li> <li>- Directors are assessed against a skills and experience matrix and Board diversity (gender, age, culture) is considered in Director appointments.</li> <li>- Director succession is discussed by the Board.</li> <li>- There is a Governance Committee to provide guidance, as needed, on Board composition.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 4: Board effectiveness</b> The board is run effectively and its performance is periodically evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia holds Board meetings at least quarterly, and they are usually face to face.</li> <li>- The CEO reports monthly to the Board.</li> <li>- The Director induction pack as stated above in Principle 2.</li> <li>- The Board Charter provides for regular review of Board, Chair and CEO performance.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 5: Risk management</b> Board decision making is informed by an understanding of risk and how it is managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia has a risk register which is reviewed quarterly by the Audit &amp; Risk Committee and considered by the Board at its meetings. Risks are assessed regularly by the leadership team.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 6: Performance</b> The organisation uses its resources appropriately and evaluates its performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is monthly financial and non-financial reporting to the Board.</li> <li>- The Audit &amp; Risk Committee evaluates the financial performance of Suicide Prevention Australia.</li> <li>- Annual Operating Plan KPIs are monitored quarterly by the Board.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 7: Accountability and transparency</b> The board demonstrates accountability by providing information to stakeholders about the organisation and its performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia produces regular member alerts and briefings.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia holds an AGM where its Annual Report is presented to members.</li> <li>- Members can nominate to the Board in accordance with the rules detailed in the constitution.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia's Strategic Plan aligns with its three organisational objects.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia has a complaints policy and process, including a whistleblower policy. Suicide Prevention Australia has a range of other policies and delegations which are regularly reviewed by the Governance Committee and the Board.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 8: Stakeholder engagement</b> There is meaningful engagement of stakeholders and their interests are understood and considered by the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Members are invited to attend, and may ask questions of the Board, at Suicide Prevention Australia's Annual General Meeting.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia holds regular meetings with members and welcomes feedback.</li> <li>- There is member involvement in the annual Strategic Planning day.</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia produces regular member alerts and briefings.</li> <li>- There is member involvement in and membership of State advisory committees (currently under trial in two States).</li> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia conducts regular member surveys.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 9: Conduct and compliance</b> The expectations of behaviour for the people involved in the organisation are clear and understood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suicide Prevention Australia has a Board charter, policies and procedures.</li> <li>- Staff have position descriptions and undergo regular performance reviews.</li> <li>- There is a Conflict of Interest register and conflicts are declared at the start of each Board meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 10: Culture</b> The board models and works to instil a culture that supports the organisation's purpose and strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Board articulates the culture it wants for Suicide Prevention Australia to support its mission and appoints the CEO who in turn develops and implements this culture under guidance from the Board.</li> <li>- Board diversity is considered in Director appointments, refer to Principle 3 above.</li> </ul>

# Our Financials

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue	7,135,019	4,982,879
Administration expense	(381,058)	(301,298)
Depreciation expense	(48,961)	(65,739)
Employee benefits expense	(2,001,169)	(1,430,997)
Loss on disposal of assets	(39,633)	(6,902)
Program expenses	(3,298,009)	(2,760,392)
<b>Surplus before income tax</b>	<b>1,366,189</b>	<b>417,551</b>
Income tax	0	0
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,366,189</b>	<b>417,551</b>
Current assets	12,452,650	9,087,315
Non-current assets	21,837	90,368
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>12,474,487</b>	<b>9,177,683</b>
Current liabilities	7,532,962	5,986,532
Non-current liabilities	1,253,443	869,258
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>8,786,405</b>	<b>6,855,790</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>3,688,082</b>	<b>2,321,893</b>
General funds - unrestricted	2,388,082	2,321,893
Reserves	1,300,000	
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>3,688,082</b>	<b>2,321,893</b>



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**For general enquiries**

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**There are crisis services available 24/7 if you or someone you know is in distress**

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**Lifeline: 13 11 14**  
[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

**Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467**  
[www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

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## Acknowledgement Statement

Suicide Prevention Australia remembers those we have lost to suicide and acknowledges the suffering suicide brings when it touches our lives. We are brought together by experience and are unified by hope. Suicide Prevention Australia acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders past, present and emerging.