



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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TIME TO STOP THE STIGMA AROUND SUICIDE

Minister for Mental Health, Kevin Humphries, has urged people across NSW to use World Suicide Prevention Day today as an opportunity to talk more openly about suicide and raise awareness that suicide can be prevented.

Mr Humphries said that with 65,000 Australians attempting to take their own life each year, it has never been more important to break the stigma surrounding suicide.

“Every death by suicide is one death too many, and in NSW 550 lives are lost to suicide each year,” he said.

“The warning signs that someone could be at risk of suicide often go undetected but when people are aware of them there is a far greater chance that suicide can be prevented.

“If people today take the time to find out more about suicide and recognise the warning signs they may find that one day they help save someone’s life.”

The theme for World Suicide Prevention Day 2013, *Stigma: A Major Barrier to Suicide Prevention*, aims to lift the cloud of stigma that prevents people from seeking help when they are in trouble as well as the loved ones of those lost to suicide.

“I would urge everybody in the community to use World Suicide Prevention Day to help break down the stigma and discrimination that people who are affected by suicide face, and in doing so help to remove one of the biggest barriers to recovery,” Mr Humphries said.

“It is up to all of us to help reduce stigma by talking about suicide and increasing awareness to better ensure that people at risk of suicide - as well as their families, friends and carers - are connected with the treatment and support they need.

“Most of us will experience challenging times at some point in our lives, yet people are often reluctant to acknowledge there is a problem, or have trouble knowing how to talk about it, which only serves to worsen the stigma and stop people from seeking help early on.

“Since coming into Government the NSW Liberals & Nationals have held suicide prevention forums in communities across the State that have been crucial in shaping the Government’s response to suicide prevention.

“As a direct result of these forums the NSW Mental Health Commission is developing a range of resources to better support communities affected by suicide such as the ‘Small Towns Toolkit’, to help small communities to both prevent acts of self-harm and suicide, as well as deal with the impacts when they occur.”