Sustaining a collaborative approach to suicide prevention

Dr Alex Hains

Regional Manager
Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative

@alexhains @SPCollaborative

4 Counterintuitive Principles

- **MISSION, not organisation**
  Leaders adopt strategies and tactics to achieve a mission, not necessarily to stimulate organisational growth

- **NODE, not hub**
  Network partners see their organisations as a part of a larger web of activity directed toward a cause, not as a hub of action

- **HUMILITY, not brand**
  Organisations work alongside their peers as equals and willingly take a backseat when their partners are in a better position to lead

- **TRUST, not control**
  Trust and shared values are far more important than formal control mechanisms (contracts or accountability systems)

Wei-Skillern & Silver (2013)

Sustainability

- Focus on the mission, not the contract
    - Importance of lived experience & a broad range of stakeholders
- Cultivate and reinforce trusting relationships
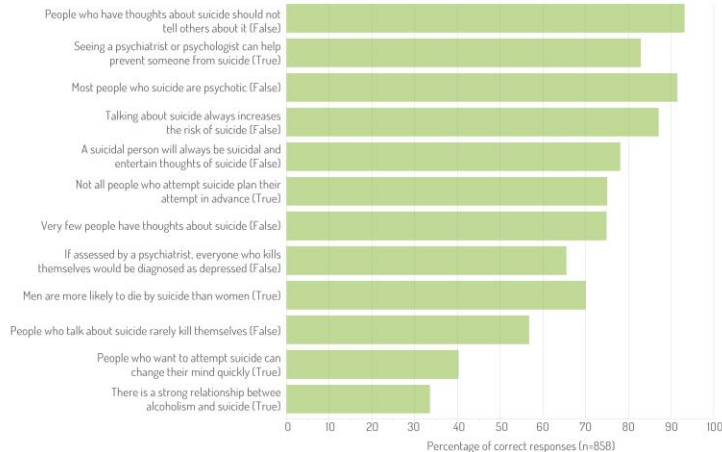   - Regular & transparent communication

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY?

ILLAWARRA MERCURY #CARE2QPR MEDIA CAMPAIGN

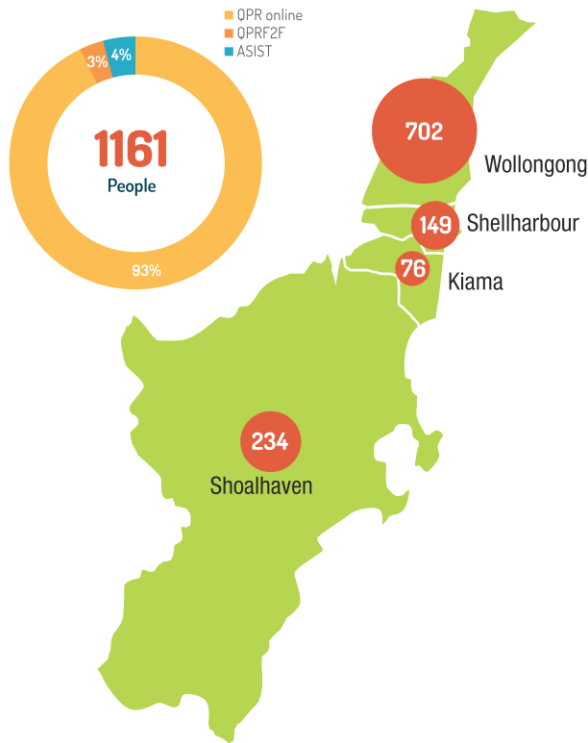## WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY THINK ABOUT SUICIDE?

Bar chart — Percentage of correct responses (n=858):

- People who have thoughts about suicide should not tell others about it (False)
- Seeing a psychiatrist or psychologist can help prevent someone from suicide (True)
- Most people who suicide are psychotic (False)
- Talking about suicide always increases the risk of suicide (False)
- A suicidal person will always be suicidal and entertain thoughts of suicide (False)
- Not all people who attempt suicide plan their attempt in advance (True)
- Very few people have thoughts about suicide (False)
- If assessed by a psychiatrist, everyone who kills themselves would be diagnosed as depressed (False)
- Men are more likely to die by suicide than women (True)
- People who talk about suicide rarely kill themselves (False)
- People who want to attempt suicide can change their mind quickly (True)
- There is a strong relationship betwee alcoholism and suicide (True)

X-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100 — Percentage of correct responses (n=858)

HAVE CAMPAIGNS RESULTED IN COMMUNITY ACTION?

Legend: Paid · Free · Accumulative

Left Y-axis: Weekly QPR online signups (0–250)
Right Y-axis: Accumulative QPR online signups (0–3000)
X-axis: Aug-17, Sep-17, Oct-17, Nov-17, Dec-17, Jan-18, Feb-18, Mar-18, Apr-18, May-18, Jun-18, Jul-18, Aug-18

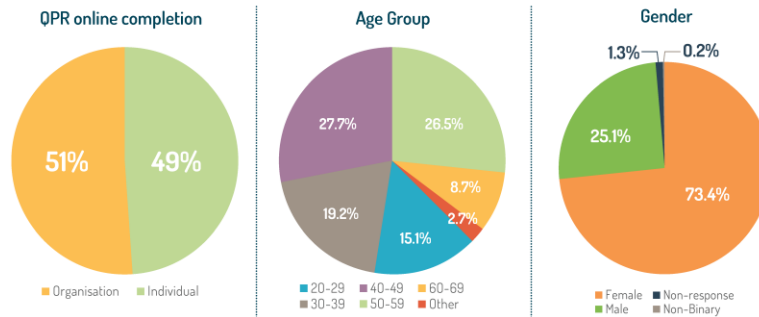LifeSpan Launch

Illawarra Mercury Media Campaign

QPR = Question Persuade Refer

TRAINING THE COMMUNITY TO HELP PREVENT SUICIDE

## HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE COMPLETED SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING?

- QPR online
- QPRF2F
- ASIST

4%
3%
93%

1161 People

702 Wollongong
149 Shellharbour
76 Kiama
234 Shoalhaven

WHO HAS DONE QUESTION PERSUADE REFER (QPR) ONLINE?

QPR online completion
51% Organisation
49% Individual

Age Group
- 26.5%
- 27.7%
- 19.2%
- 15.1%
- 8.7%
- 2.7%

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- Other

Gender
- 1.3%
- 0.2%
- 25.1%
- 73.4%

- Female
- Male
- Non-response
- Non-Binary

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF QPR ONLINE?

If someone was showing signs of suicide, I would directly raise the question of suicide with them

Pre-training · Post-training

Strongly Disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly Agree

I have the skills to help or support a suicidal person

Pre-training · Post-training

Strongly Disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly Agree
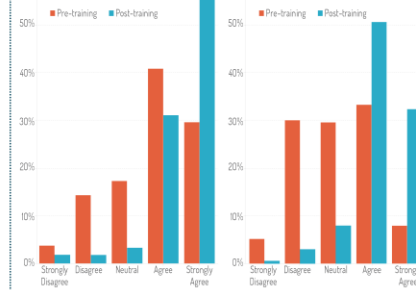
"When (my daughter) initially confessed that she had suicidal thoughts, I was beside myself. We talked it through but I didn't know what to ask and how to ask it or what to say. Initially I called Beyond Blue and the person I spoke to gave me some strategies and that did help.

Then I saw the QPR advertised, I did the training and since have been able to approach discussions with her more confidently. She is on medication, is receiving counselling both at school and with Headspace."

QPR = Question Persuade Refer   ASIST = Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Sustainability

- Focus on the mission, not the contract
  - Importance of lived experience & a broad range of stakeholders
- Cultivate and reinforce trusting relationships
  - Regular & transparent communication
- Help people see how they are contributing to the bigger story

How does this fit into bigger picture?
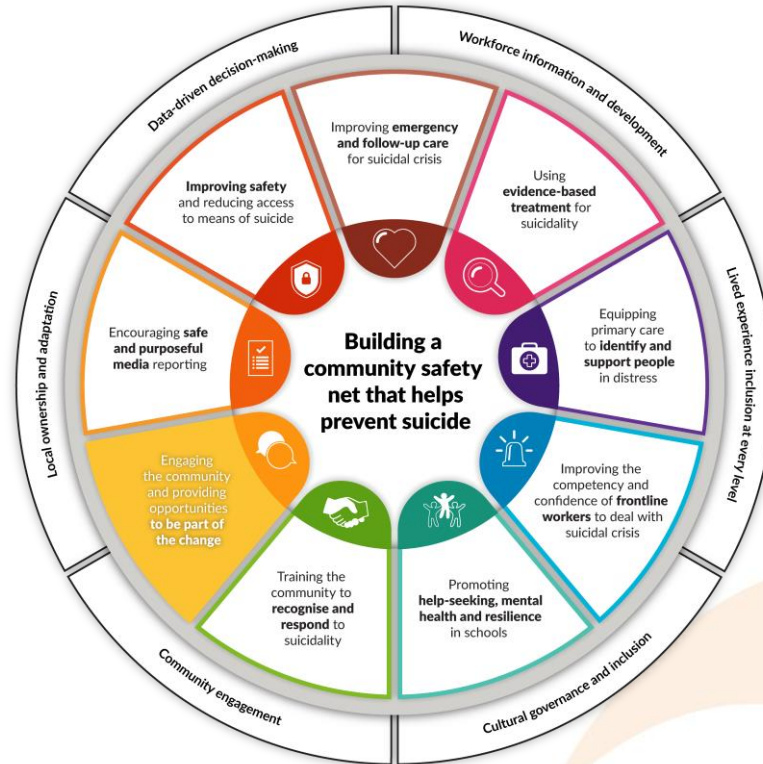
How does this fit into bigger picture?
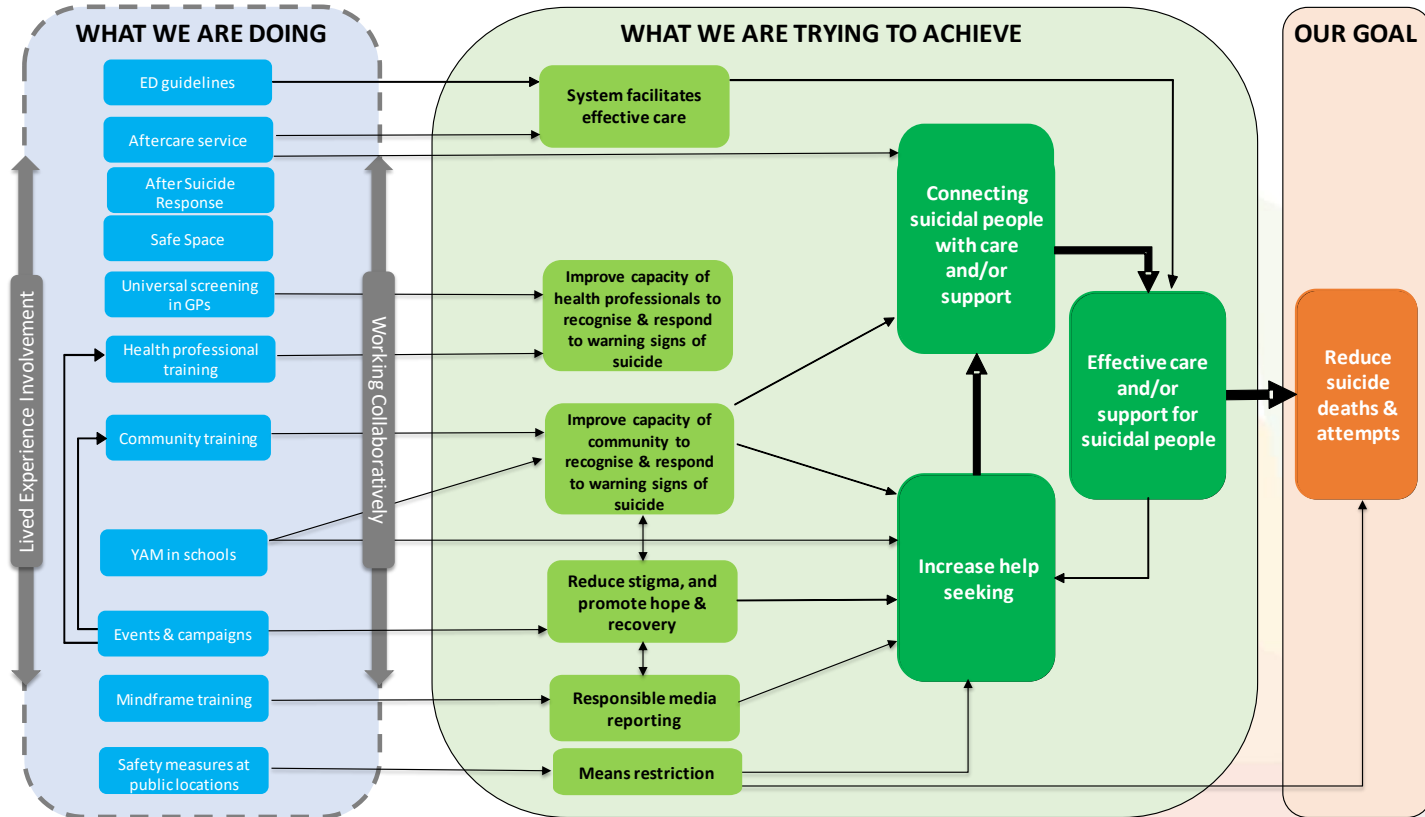
Sustainability

- Focus on the mission, not the contract
  - Importance of lived experience & a broad range of stakeholders
- Cultivate and reinforce trusting relationships
  - Regular & transparent communication
- Help people see how they are contributing to the bigger story
- Translate relationships into systematic practice
- When in doubt, look to the evidence
- Ongoing funding commitment for 'backbone' staffing

What to sustain?
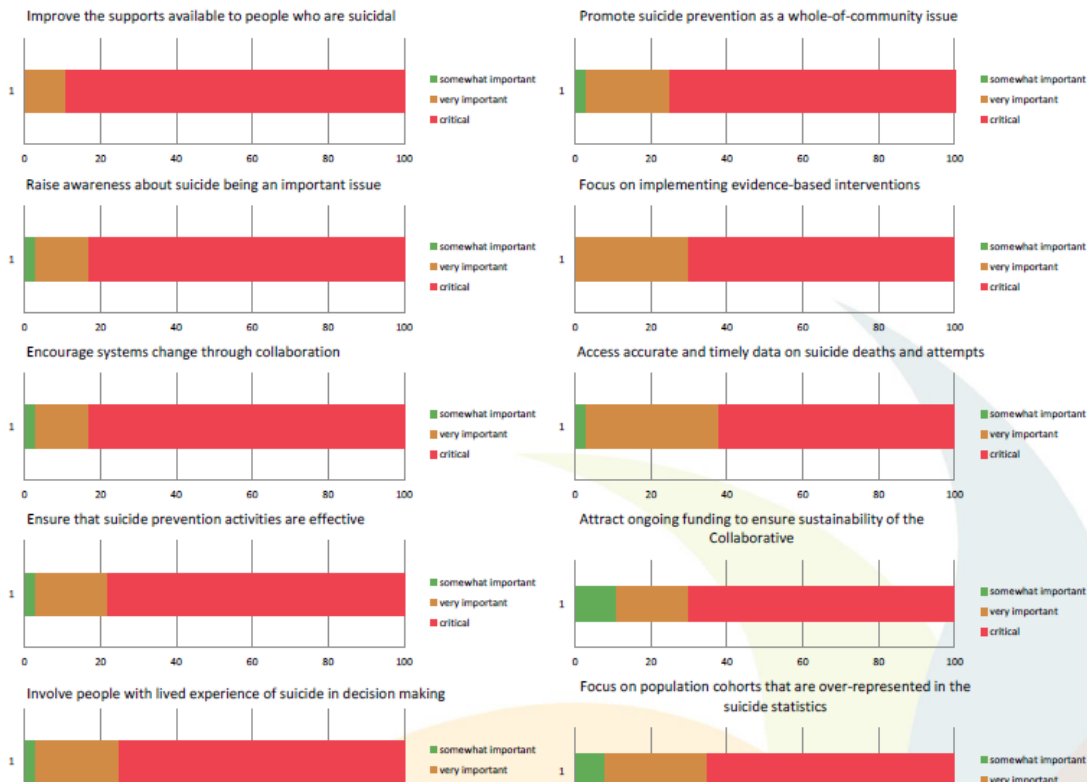
Estimated impact on suicide rates[1]		Interventions	Intervention status		Current resourcing		Anticipated local resource needs
Deaths	Attempts		Implementation	Systematic evaluation	Local	LifeSpan	
Emergency and follow-up care 1.1%	19.8%	Crisis care			Low	Nil	High
		Next Steps			High	Nil	High
Treatment for suicidality 5.8%	8.0%	ATSP			Low	Nil[2]	Low
		CAMS			Low	Low	Medium
General Practice 6.3%	Insufficient evidence	StepCare			High	Nil[3]	High
		ATSP/TASGP			Low	Nil[1]	Low
Frontline workers Insufficient evidence		Nil			Nil	Nil	Unknown
Schools Insufficient evidence	2.9%	YAM			High	Medium[4]	High
Community training 4.9%	Insufficient evidence	QPR online			Medium	Low	Medium
		QPR face-to-face			Low	Nil	Low
		ASIST			Low	Nil	Low
Campaigns 0.3%	Insufficient evidence	Annual events			Medium	Nil	Medium
Media		Media					

Suicide Prevention Collaborative ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN

For each activity, consider:

- Likely impact on key outcomes
- Implementation maturity
- Evaluation maturity
- Resourcing required, both locally & externally
- Anticipated resourcing required (or likely changes to resourcing)

What to sustain?

Improve the supports available to people who are suicidal

Promote suicide prevention as a whole-of-community issue

Raise awareness about suicide being an important issue

Focus on implementing evidence-based interventions

Encourage systems change through collaboration

Access accurate and timely data on suicide deaths and attempts

Ensure that suicide prevention activities are effective

Attract ongoing funding to ensure sustainability of the Collaborative

Involve people with lived experience of suicide in decision making

Focus on population cohorts that are over-represented in the suicide statistics

…and of course, also consider:

- What do the stakeholders WANT to sustain?

Dr Alex Hains

Regional Manager
Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative
Honorary Fellow, University of Wollongong
Research Affiliate, Illawarra Health & Medical Research Institute

w. suicidepreventioncollaborative.org.au
e. ahains@coordinare.org.au
p. 1300 069 002
@alexhains @SPCollaborative