



Building on the Victorian suicide first aid footprint: LivingWorks Australia on Vic Gov Budget 2021

LivingWorks Australia CEO Shayne Connell today welcomed the \$2.8 billion for mental health in the Victorian Government's Budget 2021.

“In a massive response to the Victorian Royal Commission, the Government has rightly begun injecting much needed funding into mental health service provision.

“Whilst we know prevention is better than cure, we agree that vulnerable Victorians need to have the right care in the right place and the right time, so we applauded this initial pointy end focus.

“However, also called for in the Royal Commission to a recognition that early intervention and prevention, including four mentions of our LivingWorks' activities, were vital planks in ensuring we connect those with the onset of suicide ideation and mental ill health, to those fit for purpose services.

“We're looking forward to continued conversations with the Victorian Government about moves to build on their current level of funding for suicide first aid footprint in the state, where they have thankfully helped fund under the Victorian Place Based Suicide Prevention trials and Vic Education Depart funding, along-side Federals grants:

- 1: Australia's first LGTBI co designed safeTalk (half day face to face training) and ASIST (2 day face to face training) in Victoria.
- 2: ACTIVATE Skills Save Lives campaign in North, south and west Victoria during and post COVID19
- 3: Community suicide first aid training - which includes in sports clubs, GPs and health staff.
- 4: Growing the evidence base for suicide intervention skills (SafeTALK in Schools) for Victorian young people and those around young people in partnership with Orygen and Lifeline Australia (pupils 13+, teachers, parents), where we aim to train 900 pupils this year alone in Melbourne.
- 5: Indigenous-ASIST for Aboriginal communities.
- 6: Gatekeeper training (LivingWorks ASIST and SafeTALK) for diverse communities and demographics such as high risk workplaces like construction with MATES in Construction
- 7: Victorian First Responders.



“Meanwhile, we are working with veterans and defence personnel in partnership with government agencies and support bodies alongside Open Arms, to support veterans in Victoria and nationally.

“LivingWorks is an organisation that has been built on lived experience of suicide and continues to be led by local Australian trainers who are driven by their personal experiences of suicide and that of their communities.

“However, this compassion and intent must be met by evidenced based implementation and scaling of the skills and services we desperately need across the public health system and broader community.

“It is essential that in designing these new and expanded services, an evidence based training and capacity building plan is embedded from the start. This includes but it not limited to suicide first aid through LivingWorks ASIST, recognised as gold standard both locally and internationally.

“Australians in workplaces, clinical/health, education, Defence & Veterans, and community settings are already learning lifesaving suicide first aid skills from local experts but this needs to be scaled nationally.

“Both the Productivity Report and Suicide Task Force Final Report also called for community and workplace training to recognise and respond to suicide earlier, though workplace and the community – and to connect those vulnerable to ongoing improved care and support.

“We have the policy directives/reports and now the funds allocated. Let’s build on what we know works when it comes to suicide prevention. ”

Full Budget papers can be found at <https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/2021-22-state-budget/2021-22-budget-media-releases>

Contacts

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To get help 24/7, phone Lifeline on 13 11 14 or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, phone 000 for emergency services

Skills training www.livingworks.com.au

Help to report about suicide safely is available online: Go to www.mindframe.org.au



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