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SUICIDE INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND

Council wants to equip a worker with the skills to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or are in a mental health crisis until appropriate professional help is received or the situation is resolved. Being a Mental Health First Aider for Circular Head Council is not a commitment to help people through their issues but merely a first contact to guide the person onto a path of professional help.

This guideline assists if you are, or someone you know is, suicidal or struggling with life issues, it is important to tell someone – if you are facing a crisis in your life, or a period of change, then counselling may help.

OVERVIEW

Definitions:

Worker means:

A person who carries out work for Council.

Mental Health First Aider means:

A person who has been trained in Mental health first aid.

Contact Officer means:

A person who has been trained to assist workers who experience discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Employee Assistance Program means:

An organisation that Council contracts to provide effective, confidential, and early intervention counselling to workplaces including regular onsite contact, employee counselling, mediation, and critical incident response as negotiated.

Choose Life Services– 1300 132 098

GUIDELINE

Identify

Identification of workers with potential suicide risks occurs from the point of referral and continues across all stages of the care journey to guide plans to mitigate a person's risk of harm. Suicide risk may exist and be imminent without communication thoughts intent or plan. Identifying suicidal behaviour requires sensitivity, attention, and training. If you are concerned about someone's wellbeing it's essential to reach out to them and let them know you care. Encourage them to speak to a mental health professional or helpline.

Common signs

- Expressing thoughts of hopelessness, worthlessness or feeling trapped
- Displays signs of depression
- Making statements such as "I wish I wasn't here" or "Everyone would be better off without me".

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- Engaging in reckless behaviour such as substance abuse or taking unnecessary risks
- Giving away belongings or planning as if preparing for death
- Increased aggression, irritability, or sudden change in personality

Assessment

- Pick a place and time – it is important to respect their privacy and minimise interruptions.
- Express your concerns – It seems like you have been up and down lately. Talking about it really helps.
- Ask directly – Are you thinking about suicide.
- Keep the door open if they won't talk. - Consult a Mental Health First Aider about the next steps
- Stay calm if they say Yes.
- Listen and validate their struggle.
 - What to say – I'm so glad you told me this. Let's keep talking.
 - What not to say – But you've got so much going for you.
- Tell them you want to connect them to help.
- Get immediate help if they are unsafe – **RING 000**
- TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF – It can be overwhelming to help someone who is struggling with suicidal feelings. Be sure to talk to a professional.

REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Suicide Intervention Policy CP033

National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standard 2017

Circular Head Community Connection Guide

The Circular Head Community Connection Guide is designed to assist community members to quickly locate important services and find ways to connect through local groups, clubs, and organisations.

Every effort has been made to ensure that all organisations are included, and that information is correct and up to date at the time of printing.

A copy of the guide will be updated regularly and available on the Circular Head Council website.

Information can be added to the directory by contacting Jodie at Circular Head Council on 6452 4803 or jsaville@circularhead.tas.gov.au

[Download a copy of the Circular Head Community Connection Guide](#)

[Circular Head Council Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Community Action Plan](#)

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