



**Australian Government**



National  
**Suicide  
Prevention**  
Office

# ***Advice on the National Suicide Prevention Strategy***

**Consultation Draft**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**



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# National Suicide Prevention Office

## What is the National Suicide Prevention Office?

The National Suicide Prevention Office (NSPO) was established in January 2022 as a specialist office located within the National Mental Health Commission. The NSPO is tasked with leading a coordinated, whole-of-governments approach to suicide prevention.

The NSPO aims to guide and support all levels and parts of government to take coordinated, comprehensive and consistent action to reduce suicide and suicidality, including through:

- Developing a whole-of-governments National Suicide Prevention Strategy.
- Embedding lived experience at the core of decision making to ensure policies and programs meet the needs of those impacted.
- Monitoring and reporting on national progress, enhancing data collection, and building evidence to support decision-making and improve outcomes.
- Building capacity and capability of government systems, service providers, and community networks to respond early and provide coordinated, compassionate support.

Learn more about the NSPO and the team here: [About the National Suicide Prevention Office - National Mental Health Commission](#)



# Advice on the National Suicide Prevention Strategy

## (Consultation Draft)

### Why does Australia need a Strategy?

Every day in Australia approximately 9 people die by suicide and more than 150 people attempt to take their own life. This is more than 3,000 deaths and 55,000 attempts each year. In addition, thousands more will experience suicidal distress or thoughts of suicide.

The impacts of the loss of life, suicide attempts and suicidal distress on individuals, families and communities is devastating.

Currently, Australia's approach to suicide prevention is focussed on crisis responses and supports provided by the mental health system.

While these are important, people with lived experience of suicide, the data and scientific research all tell us that suicidal thoughts and behaviours are not just about mental ill-health – they are also about all the circumstances that can create feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and entrapment.

Experiences such as financial stress, housing instability, domestic and family violence, childhood adversity, discrimination, and alcohol and drug harm – among many other issues - can play a role in contributing to suicidal distress.

A more effective approach to suicide prevention must therefore involve working to address these issues in order to prevent people from reaching the point of suicidal distress in the first place, in addition to ensuring that people who do experience suicidal distress have access to compassionate and effective supports.

### How does the draft Advice on the Strategy align with other suicide prevention strategies and frameworks across the country?

The draft Advice on the Strategy builds on, and aligns with, the recommendations from three key reports that are guiding Australia's reforms in suicide prevention:

- *The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health*
- *The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*
- *The National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Advice.*

In addition, recommended actions in the draft Advice on the Strategy have been informed by more than 30 existing agreements, plans, strategies, reports, submissions, and inquiries. This has ensured that it is guided by expert recommendations and aligns with existing work at national, state and territory levels.

### States and territories strategies, frameworks, and activity

The draft Advice on the Strategy has been developed in deep consultation with all states and territories to ensure alignment in suicide prevention activity across Australia. (See more about this below under [‘How was the draft Advice on the Strategy developed?’](#))



## National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy

The draft Advice on the Strategy has been designed to work in unison with the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy* being developed by Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia.

The two documents have been developed along similar timelines with the intention of mutual reinforcement and the recognition that the vision within this Advice cannot be achieved without significant and sustained reductions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives lost to suicide.

## Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

The *Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide* handed down its final report on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The actions within this Advice reinforce the need for all governments to work with Defence and Veteran communities to progress recommendations as a critical part of national suicide prevention efforts.

## How was the draft Advice on the Strategy developed?

Over the last two years, many people have contributed to the development of the draft Advice on the Strategy.

- The draft Advice has been informed by people with lived and living experience of suicide through:
  - The testimonies of 3,000 people from the Compassion First study which was part of the Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Advice.
  - Targeted consultations with over 170 people including representatives of populations disproportionately impacted by suicide.
  - A workshop conducted by the NSPO at the Roses in the Ocean Lived Experience Summit 2023, which included 230 participants and focussed on Critical Enabler 2 of the Strategy (Embedding lived experience).
  - Representatives with a lived and living experience of suicide who are members of the NSPO Lived Experience Partnership Group and Advisory Board.
- A scoping paper for the Strategy was released for public consultation in October 2022. Feedback from this consultation was used to further inform the structure and content of the Strategy.
- The recommended actions in the draft Advice on the Strategy were informed by 35 existing agreements, plans, strategies, reports, submissions, and inquiries.
- To ensure the actions are firmly grounded in the latest research, the NSPO commissioned the University of Melbourne to produce a series of academic papers and evidence briefs. These included:
  - *'A Public Health, Whole-of-Government Approach to National Suicide Prevention Strategies'*.
  - The *'Environmental Scan of Suicide Prevention in Australia'* which examined more than 40 Australian suicide prevention policies.
  - Nine evidence briefs which drew on literature reviews and consultation with Australian and international suicide prevention experts, non-government organisations and service providers.



- The NSPO's work was guided by:
  - the Lived Experience Partnership Group (LEPG), and the NSPO Advisory Board - that work in parallel.
  - two Working Groups – the Governance and Social Determinants Working Group, and the Service Systems Working Group. The membership of the groups is outlined in the Appendices of the draft.
  - a Scientific Adviser - Professor Jane Pirkis, University of Melbourne.
- The NSPO has also worked with state and territory suicide prevention lead agencies through a Jurisdictional Collaborative Forum. This aimed to draw on the expertise of these agencies in designing and delivering suicide prevention reforms, and to ensure alignment of the draft Advice on the Strategy with suicide prevention activities across jurisdictions.

## When will the draft Advice on the Strategy be launched?

The launch date for public consultation is Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September and will remain open until Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

Feedback from the Public Consultation will then be integrated into the Advice before finalising. A date for launch has not yet been confirmed.



# Public Consultation

## What are the dates for the public consultation?

The public consultation on the draft Advice on the National Suicide Prevention Strategy opened on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September. The consultation will close on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

## How can I provide my feedback?

Your feedback can be provided as an individual, organisation or as a collective in the following ways:

- [Complete the public consultation survey](#)
- Email to [nspo@nspo.gov.au](mailto:nspo@nspo.gov.au)
- Mail to:  
The National Suicide Prevention Office  
PO Box R1463  
Royal Exchange NSW 1225

For any community groups seeking to provide collective feedback, please find some supporting information [here](#).

## What happens with my feedback?

Once your feedback is received, it will be collated and categorised. The National Suicide Prevention Office will then consider this feedback and incorporate it into the finalised version as is appropriate.

## How will the National Suicide Prevention Office handle my personal and sensitive information?

The NSPO is grateful that you are taking the time to provide your feedback on the Advice on the Strategy. We understand and take seriously your privacy and the sensitivity of the information you provide.

The National Suicide Prevention Office will use the information collected through this consultation for the purpose of informing the development of the Advice on the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. It may also inform the National Suicide Prevention Office's broader work in monitoring, reporting and providing advice on Australia's suicide prevention system.

Where you (or another person) are reasonably identifiable from your survey response, your personal information will be protected in accordance with the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#).

For more information on the National Mental Health Commission's privacy practices and the contact details of our Privacy Officer, please refer to the National Mental Health Commission's privacy policy, available at:

<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/about/governance/policies/privacy><https://haveyoursay.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/privacy>



## Who does the NSPO want to hear from?

It is critical that we hear the views of the full diversity of the broader Australian community including individuals, governments, researchers, service providers, peak bodies, and all other organisations.

## I'm having difficulty accessing the survey, how can I get a copy?

Please reach out to the NSPO via email at [nspo@nspo.gov.au](mailto:nspo@nspo.gov.au). We will share the link with you directly.

## How long should my feedback be?

You can provide responses as long as you feel you need to share your views.

## How do I find out if my feedback has been considered?

Responses will be collated in the weeks after the public consultation. Responses will be categorised and a thematised summary report will be published by the National Suicide Prevention Office on [this website](#). The report will include a summary of how the feedback received was incorporated.

