



MEDIA RELEASE
Thursday, 10 October, 2024

ABS CAUSE OF DEATH DATA REINFORCES THE IMPORTANCE OF AUSTRALIA'S SUICIDE PREVENTION SECTOR

Lifeline Australia Chief Executive Officer, Colin Seery, said today's release of the ABS's latest cause of death data¹, which reveals there were 3,214 lives lost to suicide in 2023², outlines a tragedy that reinforces the critical role of governments, families, workplaces and communities in reducing the number of deaths caused by intentional self-harm.

"Behind every statistic there is a person. Firstly, we remember the 3,214 individuals who died by suicide in 2023 and also those who attempted to take their life," said Mr Seery.

"Every life lost is a tragedy that affects families, workplaces and communities."

"We acknowledge and thank all the people and organisations who work tirelessly every day and the significant funding that governments and partners invest into moving towards our vision of an Australia free of suicide."

Over the past year, services including MensLine Australia, the Suicide Call Back Service and All Hours Suicide Support have formed an integral part of Lifeline's eco-system.

"We are working hard to both improve service quality and accessibility for help seekers and to lead the sector in creating a more connected mental health, suicide prevention and domestic violence prevention sector," said Mr Seery.

"Lifeline is committed to supporting any Australian through their darkest moments and providing them with the most appropriate support, which has led us to integrating clinical services with Lifeline's existing phone and digital crisis services to provide wrap-around care for the help seeker."

"As we move forward, the range of services within the Lifeline family will continue to shape how we deliver for help seekers and how we improve their journeys and their outcomes."

"This includes opening up more opportunities for us to expand the services we provide, collaborating with new partners and shaping the future of support for people experiencing crisis, emotional distress and mental health challenges."

¹ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/causes-death/causes-death-australia/2023#intentional-self-harm-deaths-suicide-in-australia>

² Preliminary data on causes by suicide has been released for 2023, noting that this data is subject to a revision process pending coronial inquiries. Importantly, there is an unusually large number of open cases in NSW as regards 2023 possible deaths by suicide. This means the data are still subject to significant revision and need to be interpreted with caution.

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Lifeline's 24-hour telephone crisis line 13 11 14 is pronounced 'thirteen eleven fourteen'.



Dr Anna Brooks, Chief Research Officer of the Lifeline Research Office, reinforced the importance of life-saving interventions in supporting people in suicidal distress or at risk of it.

“We are committed to ongoing improvement including through our community services, aftercare and bereavement, as well as supporting those who care for people experiencing suicidal thinking,” said Dr Brooks.

“Today will be a difficult day for many. We want to encourage anyone who is struggling to reach out for support – and to remind everyone that Lifeline is here for you across our phone and digital services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

You can phone Lifeline to speak to a Crisis Supporter on 13 11 14, text 0477 131 114, chat to Lifeline online or access the Support Toolkit to self-manage what you’re going through at www.lifeline.org.au (all services are available 24/7).

For Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander peoples: If you, or someone you know, are feeling worried or no good, you can connect with 13YARN on 13 92 76 (24 hours/7 days) and talk with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter.

To donate to Lifeline, visit www.lifeline.org.au/donate.

ABOUT LIFELINE

For over 60 years, Lifeline has been connecting with Australians in need through crisis support and suicide prevention services, operating the 13 11 14 telephone line within 43 centres around the nation as well as a 24/7 crisis text, webchat service and Support Toolkit.

The organisation expects to respond to over 1.4 million requests for support this year, creating an average of 120 safety plans to keep a person experiencing suicidal ideation safe every day.

From 1 October 2023, Lifeline has been delivering the suicide prevention, mental health and counselling services formerly delivered by On the Line Australia, following the organisations’ amalgamation. These services include MensLine, the National Suicide Call Back Service, SuicideLine Victoria and a range of mental health, counselling and family violence prevention services.

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