

## MEDIA STATEMENT

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Tuesday, March 31, 2010

### **New Suicide Statistics – Men at Greatest Risk**

**Crisis Support Services Inc (CSS), providers of MensLine Australia, have said that the latest figures on suicide in Australia are no surprise. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008 – Causes of Death data) suicide remains the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for Australian men, with 1709 Australian men taking their own lives in 2008, accounting for 78 per cent of all suicide deaths.**

CSS' Clinical Services GM, Ms Laura Kennan said that new figures simply reaffirmed the need for professionally staffed, 24 hour, counselling and support services, especially for men.

“While international research tells us that people who access support via professional telephone counselling are up to six times less likely to die by suicide, we know that men are less likely to seek out support.

“In general, a reluctance to seek help can lead to mental health problems being undiagnosed and untreated, and at worst, place men at an increased risk of suicide,” she said.

**Ms Kennan said calls to Mensline Australia highlighted that men are more likely to develop a mental illness such as depression or anxiety during a family relationship breakdown, and that during these times men were also nine times more likely to complete suicide (than women).**

“Every day more than 100 men talk to MensLine Australia counsellors and tell us what a devastating impact family relationship breakdown has had on them. Sadly, many of these callers experience thoughts of suicide and need the professional support of our counsellors to keep them safe.

“Last year, our professional counsellors answered almost 40,000 calls from Australian men in crisis,” she said.

Designed specifically for men, MensLine Australia is a 24 hour support service providing a valuable gateway to counselling and information, including referrals to mental health, counselling, drug and alcohol services. Telephone counselling is particularly attractive to men, who often find it tough to ask for help and can find face-to-face discussions about difficult issues confronting and even shameful.

This unique service is available from anywhere in the Australia, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for the cost of a local call. MensLine Australia is staffed by paid professional counsellors, who specialise in working with men.

*For immediate, professional support call **MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78**, available nationally, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Visit [www.menslineaus.org.au](http://www.menslineaus.org.au)*

*Anyone who is experiencing suicidal thoughts, worried for a loved one or bereaved by suicide should call the national **Suicide Call Back Service** on **1300 659 467** and visit [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)*

>>>ENDS

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