

MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday, March 31, 2010

New Suicide Statistics – No Surprise

Crisis Support Services Inc (CSS), providers of SuicideLine (VIC), 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 14th leading cause of death in Australia, with 2191 Australians taking their own lives in 2008.

CSS' Clinical Services GM, Ms Laura Kennan said that new figures simply reaffirmed the need for professionally staffed, 24 hour support services for people at risk of suicide, their carers and those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

"International research tells us that people who access professional support via professional telephone counselling are up to six times less likely to die by suicide," she said.

Of the Australians who took their own lives, almost a quarter (23 per cent) were Victorian, of which 395 were men and 109 were women.

Ms Kennan said **Victoria was the only state in Australia to have a dedicated, professional, 24 hour suicide line.**

"SuicideLine (VIC) is Australia's only professionally staffed, 24 hour helpline for people at risk of suicide or concerned for a loved one. Our professional counsellors are committed to preventing suicide within the community, and provide specialised support to almost 8,000 Victorians each year.

Ms Kennan said the figures released today, weren't a full reflection of the impact suicide has on the community.

"Losing a loved one to suicide has deep and long lasting impact on friends and family. Suicide has a huge emotional and psychological impact on those left behind, and in many cases those directly affected are at increased risk of suicide themselves.

"I urge anyone who knows someone who has been affected by suicide to encourage them to seek professional support from SuicideLine (VIC) - it could save a life," she said.

Anyone who is experiencing suicidal thoughts, worried for a loved one or bereaved by suicide should seek free, professional support from:

SuicideLine (VIC) – 1300 651 251
Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, across Victoria.
www.suiceline.org.au

>>>ENDS

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