

Developing ‘Best Practice Guidelines for Youth Suicide Prevention in Rural Australian Communities’

Delphi Study - Participant Information Sheet

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a Delphi Study, which consist of multiple rounds of questionnaires sent to a panel of experts to work toward a mutual agreement or consensus opinion on what should be included in ‘Best Practice Guidelines for Youth Suicide Prevention in Rural Australian Communities’ (the Guidelines). This study is being conducted through the Centre for Rural Health (CRH), University of Tasmania (UTAS), Australia, by Ms Laura Grattidge (PhD Candidate), Dr Ha Hoang, Dr Jonathan Mond, Mr Stuart Auckland (all CRH), Dr Denis Visentin (School of Health Sciences, UTAS), and Professor Jane Pirkis (University of Melbourne).

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the Delphi study is to determine how best rural communities can be supported to plan and implement youth suicide prevention initiatives, by informing what should be included in the Guidelines. These Guidelines are being developed for Australian communities, to provide guidance on how to implement youth suicide prevention initiatives in rural communities, based on best practices, research, and evidence-based programs.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are living in Australia, speak English, and:

- Are a professional aged 18 years and over with experience researching, planning or implementing youth (people aged 12-25) suicide prevention initiatives in rural areas, OR;
- Are a person aged 16 and over with a lived experience of rural youth suicide*.

* Lived experience of rural youth suicide refers to having experienced suicidal thoughts yourself as a young person (aged 12-25) living in a rural area, and/or having survived a suicide attempt yourself as a young person living in a rural area, and/or having cared for a young person in a rural area through suicidal crisis, and/or bereaved by youth suicide that occurred in a rural area (adapted from Roses in the Ocean, 2018).

Your participation in this study will enable us to gain a greater understanding of what should be included in the Guidelines. We would be grateful if you would consider being involved and if you could please nominate any contacts with similar expertise. If you could please forward the recruitment flyer and Participant Information Sheet to all relevant contacts who may meet the criteria and be interested that would be greatly appreciated. We wholeheartedly value and encourage participation from young people, people with a lived experience of suicide, and people of all genders and cultures, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

What will I be asked to do?

Under the Delphi study design, you will be asked to complete three rounds of online surveys, with questions posed as statements based on common areas of rural youth suicide prevention and Guideline content. You will be asked to rank a number of statements as to what you feel the level of importance of each of these statements is, as a priority for inclusion in the Guidelines, from 1 to 4 (from 1= 'Strongly disagree' (that is, this item should not be included)" to 4= 'Strongly agree' (that is, this item should be included').).

Each round will be conducted via an online platform, over a period of two-three months, with the first round taking approximately 15-30 minutes, and rounds two and three around 5-10 minutes. After rounds one and two, statements will be reviewed by the research team, with only a proportion of the items ranked of highest importance being presented for subsequent rounds. You will have the opportunity to provide additional items to the statements which may be missing, for ranking in subsequent rounds. You will be asked to fill out a short demographic form along with a consent form, prior to participating, which will be provided to you electronically. For participants under the age of 18, parental/guardian consent is required, with people aged 16-17 years able to be interviewed to show they have the ability to provide informed consent without a parent/guardian.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

By participating you will have the opportunity to collaborate with other experts in rural youth suicide prevention around Australia and utilise your knowledge and expertise in this area to directly contribute to the development of the Guidelines.

Are there any possible risks from participating in this study?

Similar previous studies have demonstrated that discomfort or distress after research participation is rare, and that participation can actually have a positive reaction. It is, however, possible that you may experience discomfort as a result of thinking about suicide and its prevention. If you do feel distressed, you may withdraw from the Delphi study at any point. Members of the project team will also be available to help you obtain support if you do feel distressed, and you can contact the team directly on +61 3 6324 3357 or laura.grattidge@utas.edu.au if you wish to discuss any concerns.

You might also want to talk to family or friends, or contact your GP, or, if you require immediate assistance call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or headspace National Youth Mental Health on 1800 650 890. If the research team does become concerned about you based on the responses you provide, a research team member will discuss our concerns with you and recommend contacting the national Suicide Call Back service, who are a 24-hour free confidential counselling service. The Suicide Call Back service will then contact you, with your permission, to check you are okay.

Is there any reimbursement for participation?

At the end of the third round you will be offered a \$50 Prezzy gift card as a thank for your time and participation. For those who wish, a copy of the Guidelines and any journal articles will be made available by email.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any stage. Due to the nature of the study, where each response is collated and used to inform future rounds, if you wish to discontinue or withdraw your participation after the first survey round, you can do so, without providing an explanation, by contacting Laura Grattidge (laura.grattidge@utas.edu.au), within fourteen [14] days of the first survey being completed. Once data has been analysed and ranked for inclusion in the second and third round of surveys this information will not be able to be removed.

What will happen to the information you provide when this study is over?

All data will be stored on a password protected computer at the Centre for Rural Health, University of Tasmania and will be destroyed five [5] years after the date of publication.

How will the results of the study be published?

Results from the Delphi study will directly inform the development of the Guidelines. In addition, we hope that, in due course, results from this study will be published in peer-reviewed academic journals and presented at academic and/or public forums. Participants will be de-identified, to ensure anonymity.

Who do I contact if I have any other queries or would like copies of published results?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study or would like copies of the published findings, please contact Laura Grattidge, at laura.grattidge@utas.edu.au

Who should I contact if I have any concerns?

This study has been approved by the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you can contact the Executive Officer of the HREC on (03) 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote H0027211.

Thank you for considering this study