

# Putting Suicide Prevention on Tasmania's Agenda

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**Michelle O'Byrne**

**Minister for Health**

The State Government is continuing to implement the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy with moves today to increase community involvement in the issue, Health Minister Michelle O'Byrne said.

Ms O'Byrne said advertisements this weekend call for proposals from not-for-profit organisations to deliver a range of initiatives under the Strategy.

"This is an important step in our campaign to encourage stronger community engagement in suicide prevention," she said.

"While there is no single cause of suicidal behaviour, and the reasons behind suicide are often complex, in many cases it is preventable.

"To be truly effective, suicide prevention requires action within communities, as well as at all levels of government and the business sector."

Ms O'Byrne said one of the expected outcomes from Tasmania's Suicide Prevention Strategy is the development of communities that understand suicide, can articulate the way suicide is a problem for their local area, and have a range of strategies they can use to address the problem.

The six initiatives outlined in today's Call for Proposals include:

- Establish and facilitate the new Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network (TSPCN) and work with communities ready for action in suicide prevention
- Develop a suicide prevention action plan for Tasmania's Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (GLBTI) communities
- Deliver the annual Tasmanian Life Awards
- Deliver an annual suicide prevention forum, in conjunction with the Tasmanian Life Awards
- Map suicide prevention and support services in Tasmania
- Support community sector organisations to develop performance indicators for suicide prevention activity in Tasmania in line with work underway at a national level.

Ms O'Byrne said implementation of these initiatives alongside other work that has been progressing under Tasmania's Suicide Prevention Strategy would lead to a more robust relationship between the Tasmanian community and Government on suicide prevention.

"For example, the mapping of suicide prevention and support services will provide a clearer picture of where services are, while also identifying gaps that may need filling.

"This mapping process will also provide useful data for governments to ensure better coordination of effort and investment."

Ms O'Byrne said that the development of the network will give governments a focal point for engagement within the community.

"Implementation of the initiatives we have outlined today, will lead to a new approach to community engagement and action in suicide prevention in Tasmania.

"It will create an environment focused on collaboration, and on providing stronger opportunities for every Tasmanian with an interest in suicide prevention, to influence what happens within their own community."

