

Hope Saves Lives
...You can make a difference



In this issue:



The Christmas edition of our newsletter highlights events that have taken our team right around the nation in 2014. It is a year that has offered our team the privilege of serving communities that are dealing directly with challenges relating to suicide risk and loss, First Australians, the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, regional, rural and remote townships, as well as major metropolitan and regional cities. In every State and Territory, Hope for Life aims to be a caring and responsive presence. Using Salvation Army resources, we have been able to touch many, and aim to do the same in 2015.

The Hope for Life team prides itself on delivering a responsive and agile program that adapts to local requirements and collaborates with sector partners. The reality in today's busy world is that suicide prevention, intervention and support services need to be flexible and accessible. Hope for Life has reached over 3000 participants over the year and through a range of online training and a very adaptable menu of face to face training products. We have proudly partnered with communities, schools, disability services and fellow providers.

The year's highlights and featured events are described below. In total, 50 events have been facilitated with approximately half of these focusing on regional and rural areas. Of the remaining 50%, many have targeted communities and sectors that have significant risk factors: e.g. Indigenous, CALD, refugee and disability sector workers and supporters.

Living Hope was delivered to 25 locations throughout 2014. Living Hope is a unique postvention course that seeks to build a circle of support around those bereaved by suicide. By demystifying the investigative process, coronial findings and key principles of bereavement support, this program equips participants with the knowledge and skills to engage and support those bereaved by suicide. The program complements the work of other providers (e.g. Wesley Life Force bereavement support network) or can provide inspiration to local people to set up their own support services and create local champions.

A selection of events:

NSW - Lightning Ridge: A successful regional entrepreneur has been involved with a number of initiatives seeking to support regional Australia and in particular, the community of Lightning Ridge. In her own words: "I am passionate about creating an economy of healthy entrepreneurship and community vitality in rural and regional Australia". It is this passion for community wellbeing that led her to contacting our team via email in November. Lightning Ridge is literally the final stop before you venture into the remote centre of the country. It is a community that is resourceful and proud, and has a permanent and itinerant population. It is a community that seeks to respond to the loss of local people to suicide in a caring and effective way.



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The issue of suicide in Lightning Ridge was identified not only impacting on farming families but the community at large, which includes many individuals who lack social supports and services, or have been directly impacted by suicide loss. Being three hours by road beyond Moree, the community of Lightning Ridge was pleased to find that our Hope for Life trainer was able to respond to this request prior to Christmas. Living Hope is designed to give a community better skills in supporting the bereaved and identifying persons at risk, is frequently reviewed, and draws on current clinical evidence and practice.

Farms in the region have been in the grips of a severe and prolonged drought, but it should also be remembered that the town supports opal miners, families and individuals who struggle to find regular income and supports. 11 attendees who attended the workshop were receptive and appreciative of the training delivered. The community of Lightning Ridge has left us with a great impression of a rural backbone that genuinely cares for its people, and is searching for better ways to support and connect with people at risk of suicide. We truly believe that this is only the start of a partnership in the furthest reaches of NSW and we will be discussing other training options with the community for 2015. A Salvation Army Chaplaincy service regular perform outreach to this community, as they do in many communities throughout the New England and North West of New South Wales.

NSW -Bega: Throughout 2014 we have delivered Living Hope to a number of small townships in Southern NSW including Eden, Bega and Corowa. Demand for the program has been very strong in regional communities and the Bega event was given significant coverage by ABC radio. The local Salvation Army Church officer is a member of the local Suicide Prevention Action Network (SPAN) and many community workers, volunteers and welfare students were encouraged to attend a workshop that has proven to not only be popular, but a strong protective strategy within this community.

QLD -Logan: Earlier in the year, Hope for Life brought a Living Hope postvention workshop to a community all too familiar with suicide loss. The Salvation Army Church personnel at Slacks Creek noted that whilst suicide loss affected all of the community, the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities had seen particularly devastating losses, particularly amongst young people. With the support from the Hope for Life team and the good grace of local concerned people, we facilitated the workshop and then begin the process of planning for a Healing and Remembrance service in December. We feature this event later in this newsletter.



Local attendees at the Healing Service in Logan



Briannah thanks Professor Judy Atkinson

WA - Karratha: One of Hope for Life's real strengths has been the preparedness of team members to go to communities that express the need for support at the grass roots. Karratha is a gateway to the Pilbara and one of our intrepid travelling facilitators returned to this community earlier this year, following a request from local Salvation Army Church and community workers. We have delivered numerous programs to legal workers and the broader community over the past 2 years.

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Other Living Hope locations for 2014 included: Preston, Gold Coast Lifeline, The Salvation Army Playford, Kent Town (Train the Trainer), Mt Gambier, Portland, Swan Hill/Kerang, Liverpool, Wayville, Slacks Creek, Wollongong, Corowa, Ballarat and Newcastle.

Healing and Remembrance events were held in Sydney, Ferntree Gully (VIC), Carindale and Logan (QLD) over the past 12 months. Whilst all events were well patronised, the December 1 Logan event was unique as it had a distinct connection to our First Australians.

This event evolved through the work of our team members and the very committed local partnerships within the Salvation Army Church in Slacks Creek (QLD), who felt that a Healing and Remembrance Service could provide both comfort and healing within a community that has continued to experience losses through suicide. We had previously conducted a Living Hope workshop in the local community and a Healing and Remembrance Service was seen as a natural follow up for our team that are busy building relationships to prevent suicide loss and support the bereaved.

The afternoon featured the impressive work of Professor Judy Atkinson, a Jiman (central west Queensland) and Bundjalung (northern New South Wales) woman, with Anglo-Celtic and German heritage, and an acknowledged expert in intergenerational trauma and suicide loss within Indigenous communities. Judy's presentation was received with a great deal of respect and acknowledgement by the Murri attendees who came from as far afield as Townsville and Rockhampton. Her unique understanding of generational trauma is essential knowledge for any service that deals directly with Indigenous peoples.

The Healing and Remembrance Service was led by Queensland Salvation Army leaders, and a Hope for Life representative conducted numerous radio interviews for regional Queensland in the days preceding the event. In addition to featuring the Life Keeper Memory Quilt to honour the deceased, local elders acknowledged the attendees through a water blessing. Three speakers shared their lived experience of suicide, spoke of the significance of suicide loss personally and recognised the impact on their community at large. After the service concluded, attendees were invited to share food and have a yarn about the day and its significance. In addition to local people (Indigenous and non – Indigenous), service representatives from Queensland Health, Wesley Life Force and a range of Emergency Response services, including Salvo's Care Line Manager (QLD) attended to support the local community. The event was given television coverage through NITV and film footage of Judy Atkinson will be used to develop culturally appropriate training materials. This resource will be made available and will form an important information resource for individuals working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities into the future.

[Click here to view NITV Report Healing & Remembrance Service Slacks Creek December 1](#)

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Ferntree Gully Service



Aunty Narelle Simpson speaking at Logan



HFL travel to all corners of the land

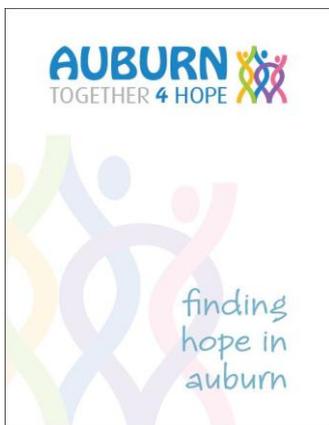
Be There: Hope for Life - Be There workshops have been in high demand. As a one day prevention course, Be There uses the principles of QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer) to enhance the skills of frontline workers in a variety of sectors. These include advocacy Services for people living with acute mental health issues (Compeer and ACT Connections), community chaplains, schools liaison officers, community health service staff, TAFE sector students and employment services providers. The Hope for Life team adapts the product so that the learning is contextualised, recognising that the factors that lead to suicide risk and completions are usually quite complex. Our team has a breadth of skills relevant in many of these sectors, and a good understanding of the typical issues front line workers face day to day in their workplace. In addition to Be There deliveries, we encourage attendees to access our free on line modules to maximise learning and reaffirm core behavioural outcomes for caregivers. A sample of our targeted delivery partners are cited below:



ASIST: Hope for Life has built capacity to provide ASIST Suicide Intervention training to targeted communities throughout Australia. ASIST is licenced through Living Works in Australia and is currently delivered in over 45 countries around the world. It has a solid research base and is constantly moderated to ensure that it remains the leading global program in suicide intervention. A successful ASIST workshop was conducted at the Salvation Army Church and Community Centre at Cranbourne (VIC) in December, and our team are excited about taking this product to communities in 2015.



CLASP= Community Based Local Action on Suicide Prevention: Two initiatives assumed real prominence over the past 12 months. The Salvo’s provide a backbone to communities looking to reduce suicide harm at a local level.



Auburn: The “Together for Hope Initiative” in Auburn evolved as a response to local leaders who recognised a community under stress. Auburn is a wonderfully vibrant suburb that has over 100 separate nationalities represented through diversity of language, faith and culture. Over 70% of the population have a language background other than English. Hope for Life have been proud to partner with a myriad of local service providers and community leaders to build awareness, knowledge and capability regarding suicide prevention. From humble beginnings in February, the program has delivered training, a successful public forum, a steering committee, a street candlelight walk to commemorate those lost to suicide, engagement at Auburn Community festival and delivery of awareness training to nearly 30 community liaison officers through the wonderful support of Auburn Girls’ High School. It goes without saying that conventional crisis services can only reach a limited number of people in communities like Auburn. Partnerships become imperative, as does the training of bi-lingual workers, faith, settlement, welfare and mental health leaders. Our journey continues, and will continue to build on the wonderful stories and images.

http://suicideprevention.salvos.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AUBURN_BOOK_2014-FINAL-HIRES.pdf

Mt Druitt: Hope for Life has developed a strong relationship with the Koori community of Mt Druitt throughout 2014. Through our allied Mental Health program - Insight - and the work of the Hope for Life team, we have established a very strong relationship with leaders who provide support to the Circle Sentencing Program throughout New South Wales. This program is designed explicitly to ensure that offenders have advocacy, support and links to elders within the community, both pre and post sentencing. The premise underlying this is that country and traditions are recognized as part of the legal process, and that the community can play a significant role in social rehabilitation of offenders. The team from Circle has recognized that recidivism and generational disadvantage pose a major risk to not only those involved in the court system, but their families, children and friends. Mt Druitt in Western Sydney has one of the largest Aboriginal communities in New South Wales, and the largest in metropolitan Sydney.



Circle Sentencing locations throughout NSW

The Hope for Life team worked closely with the Circle team, culminating in monthly meetings and discussion about the prospect of an awareness and training event to occur on September 10, World Suicide Awareness Day. An event was held at the West’s Tradies Club in Mt Druitt, sponsored financially by the State Attorney General’s Department. Through our input the event evolved into a half day of training, a presentation on how the circle methodology can support high risk clients, a lived experience speaker & a brief presentation from the Nepean Bereavement Support Network (Wesley Life Force). Approximately 70 people attended, including representatives from the Dharrug and other nations, Aboriginal Medical service, head space, local elders, community welfare workers & local police.

