# Suicide prevention.

Please carefully consider your needs when reading information about suicide. If information on this page raises any issues for you or if you need immediate assistance, please contact a crisis service. A list of services can be viewed on the [in a crisis webpage](https://www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au/communities/in-a-crisis).

Suicide requires coordinated and combined efforts from all levels of government, health care systems, front-line health and community groups, as well as individuals, families and communities.

A focus on a broad spectrum of suicide prevention interventions allows for activities to be targeted to populations and individuals. Suicide prevention should prioritise cost-effective and evidence-based approaches that focus on intervening as early as possible. It should also look outside the health and other service systems, and think broadly about tackling the factors that may increase or decrease risk in individuals and communities.

By using evidence and working together, we can combine public health approaches, treatment approaches and community capacity-building to prevent suicide and suicide attempts.

Strategies that have proven to be effective in reducing suicides include:

* reducing access to the means of suicide;
* ensuring media coverage of suicide is safe and responsible;
* introducing policies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;
* improving early identification and access to treatment and referral pathways for people at risk of suicide and those with mental and substance use disorders and chronic pain;
* training of non-specialised health and community 'gatekeeper' workers to identify and support people at risk of suicide;
* follow-up care for people who have attempted suicide, as well as provision of community support;
* postvention interventions to support individuals and communities bereaved or impacted by suicide.

These efforts must be comprehensive and integrated, as no single approach alone will reduce suicide at the rates required.

Research suggests that multi-modal interventions are most effective, for example; education programs for community members combined with gatekeeper training and enhanced treatment and referral pathways. This is consistent with current approaches (such as [LifeSpan](https://www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au/programs-resources/regional-approaches/phn)) being trialled in Australia.

## Effective programs and services for suicide prevention in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Programs must be culturally appropriate and need to incorporate community engagement and ownership from the outset. For further information see the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project](http://www.atsispep.sis.uwa.edu.au/).

## Suicide prevention in other priority populations.

Specific populations experience higher rates of suicidal behaviour than the general population. See the [Other population groups webpage](https://www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au/about-suicide/other-population-groups) for information about complex suicide prevention needs and strategies for these communities.

## Suicide prevention strategies.

The Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan outlines the government's commitment to work together to achieve agreed priority areas, including actions to strengthen suicide prevention activities in Australia.

Download a copy of [The Fifth National Mental health and Suicide Prevention Plan (PDF)](http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Portals/0/Fifth%20National%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Plan.pdf).

The national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention strategy has an early intervention focus that works to build strong communities through more community-focused and integrated approaches to suicide prevention, and commits the government to genuinely engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop local, culturally-appropriate strategies to identify and respond to those most at risk within our communities.

Download a copy of the [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Suicide prevention Strategy (PDF)](https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/1CE7187EC4965005CA25802800127B49/%24File/Indigenous%20Strategy.pdf).

The [National LGBTI Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy](https://lgbtihealth.org.au/resources/national-lgbti-mental-health-suicide-prevention-strategy/) is a plan for strategic action to prevent mental ill-health and suicide, and promote good mental health and wellbeing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people and communities across Australia.

The World Health Organisation’s [Preventing Suicide: A Global Imperative](http://www.who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/world_report_2014/en/) recognises suicide as a public health priority. This report aims to increase the awareness of the public health significance of suicide and suicide attempts, and to make suicide prevention a high priority on the global public health agenda. It also encourages countries to develop or strengthen comprehensive suicide prevention strategies in a multi-sectoral public health approach.