

#YouCanTalk about suicide

Andrew Marriott's son Glenn died by suicide at the age of 18, and now he's urging people across Central Queensland, Wide Bay and the Sunshine Coast to join a new initiative and save lives.

"This initiative starts with getting 1,000 people to go online and complete free suicide prevention training, it takes less than an hour," Mr Marriott said.

"The training focuses on three simple steps, Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR).

"You don't need to be a mental health professional or a doctor to check-in with someone you are concerned about.

"If you notice someone is more withdrawn, more tired or more emotional than usual then they may be in need of some support.

Mr Marriott, said the stigma around suicide needed to be addressed to make it safe to talk.

"People often don't know what to say but it's important for people not to feel isolated.

"It's time to have the conversation in our communities about suicide and let people know that it's OK to talk and it's OK to ask someone if they need you to take them to get help.

Michelle McAllister, Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast Primary Health Network's Senior Manager for Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, said suicide needed a community response.

"Suicide is an issue that affects entire communities, and it takes a community to make a difference. By completing this training, you become part of a new community safety net.

"You will gain the skills to identify someone who is at risk, the confidence to talk to them and the knowledge to connect them with professional care.

"The available data shows that from 2010-14, suicide rates affected the Gympie region at an age standardised rate of 20.1 per 100,000 people. These statistics show us an issue but they don't show the individuals and stories behind those numbers.

"Any single suicide is one suicide too many and as a community we have the power to make a difference. For every suicide there is a community, a network of family, friends and work colleagues who are affected," Ms McAllister said.

You can access the training by visiting www.ourphn.org.au/preventsuicide/, follow the prompts, click 'Get started' and use the code SCPHN.

World Suicide Prevention Day is an annual event held on 10 September to raise awareness around the issue of suicide.

National 24/7 crisis services:

- Lifeline 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au
- MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78 www.mensline.org.au

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Media contact

Matt Norman – Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast Primary Health Network

0434 849 878 | mnorman@ourphn.org.au