



MEDIA RELEASE

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New suicide prevention funding helps save more lives in the Hunter

An innovative suicide prevention service trialled in Newcastle and delivered by Hunter Primary Care will continue after the Federal Government announced funding for a national rollout.

Hunter Primary Care has since 2016, supported more than 1000 people through The Way Back Support Service in their recovery after a suicide attempt.

Designed by *beyondblue*, the service provides non-clinical care and practical support for those discharged from hospital for up to three months following a suicide attempt. Research shows no group is at greater risk of suicide than those who have previously tried to end their lives.

The Federal Government recently announced it will provide \$37.6 million funding for *beyondblue* to expand The Way Back Support Service nationally. It was a timely announcement for Hunter Primary Care, which is transitioning the service out of its trial period into a longer-term community commitment.

The Newcastle site is currently funded by donations to *beyondblue* and The Movember Foundation, and from NSW Ministry of Health's Suicide Prevention Fund.

Hunter Primary Care Mental Health Executive, Katrina Delamothe, said the service has been vital in filling the gap in support for people after a suicide attempt.

"Our team has supported more than 1000 people from the Hunter region– a great achievement to reduce the impact of suicide in our region," Ms Delamothe said.

"We welcome the Government's funding commitment to expand The Way Back Support Service nationally and are proud to be running the largest trial on which the national rollout has been based.

"About 200 Australians attempt suicide every day and we know that up to a quarter of those who attempt suicide will re-attempt within twelve months. When they are discharged from hospital, the Way Back can provide practical, one-on-one support that links them to treatment and support networks."

The Way Back Support Coordinators help people develop a personal safety plan and support them to address issues that contributed to their suicide attempt – which may include mental health issues; financial, work and relationship challenges; isolation and loneliness.

The Way Back Support Service in Newcastle is delivered by a group of organisations led by Hunter Primary Care and includes Calvary Mater Newcastle, Hunter New England Mental Health Services, Everymind and Relationships Australia NSW.

For interview and photo opportunities contact Katie Vullo on 02 4935 3171 or 0407 956 861.

At Hunter Primary Care, our vision is to support people to live a healthy life. We Listen. Care. Connect.

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📍 7 Warabrook Boulevard, Warabrook NSW 2304 / PO Box 572, Newcastle NSW 2300
☎ 02 4925 2259 📠 02 4925 2268 ✉ info@hunterprimarycare.com.au 📠 ABN 27 061 783 015
🌐 hunterprimarycare.com.au 📱 @hunterprimarycare

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