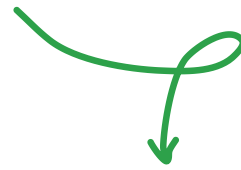


Safely Talking – Community Audience Factsheet

Older People



The Community Audience Fact Sheet provides further information on discussing suicide and suicide prevention with specific community groups. The information provided offers general guidance on key messages to share with the community group, recommended support services and where to go for further information to support your discussion. The factsheet should be utilised alongside the Safely Talking toolkit.

To download the toolkit go to www.tascharter.org/safely-talking

There are many factors that contribute to greater risk of suicide for older people. These include social isolation and loss of meaningful connections. Additionally, older people can face challenges due to loss of employment, illness and reduced independence.

Things to consider when discussing suicide and suicide prevention:

- It is important to be mindful of unconscious bias towards ageing which can contribute to stigma and discrimination for older people. For further information on ageism visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hs28FgRxqt0
- To reduce the impact on vulnerable people, it is important to distinguish between suicide and voluntary assisted dying. Refrain from using terms that create ambiguity such as ‘assisted suicide’. Also remember to refrain from any detailed discussion about methods.
- It is important to remember that older people are a diverse population including people from the LGBTI community and CALD populations. Older people have had a life time of experience and some experiences may impact on the discussions you are having. Being mindful of this can help in guiding discussions.

Key messages to share with the community audience

“Depression is not a normal part of ageing. It is important to get help early if you are worried about your mental health.”

Local services available:

- Book a mental health assessment with your local GP.
- Rural Alive and Well provide outreach support - <http://www.rawtas.com.au/get-help-now/talk-to-your-local-raw-outreach-worker.aspx>
- Loss of a family member has been identified as a psychosocial risk factor for people over 65 years of age. The Bereavement Care Network provides information on local services and supports <https://bcntasmania.org.au/> Building meaningful social connections can also help, go to COTA for a full list of social activities in your local area <https://www.cotatas.org.au/information/activities>

Recommended 24-hour crisis services:

- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636
- Suicide Call back service – 1300 659 467

Further information:

- Beyond Blue - general information regarding mental ill-health and older people <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/older-people>
- Every Age counts campaign - information on ageism <https://www.everyagecounts.org.au/>

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