

# MEDIA RELEASE



## Trial to enhance support following sudden loss of life

21 February 2019

**In an Australian first, the Peel and Rockingham Kwinana Community Response Steering Group (PaRK CRSG) and WA Police have collaborated to trial an immediate notification service, following a critical incident involving a sudden loss of life.**

This triggers a rapid response from support services, allowing them to reach out to the immediate family who has been impacted to offer counselling and other much needed support.

The 12-month trial is an enhancement to a comprehensive postvention plan developed by local agencies in response to a number of suicides in the Rockingham and Mandurah area in 2016.

Postvention is a term used to describe the range of timely, coordinated, and appropriate activities following a sudden loss, designed to support those who are bereaved, affected and impacted.

PaRK CRSG Chair, Steve Batson confirmed that over the past year, the postvention plan has allowed local agencies to support seven families, along with friends and community members.

“The addition of the immediate notification service and the rapid response it allows, means we can now reach out to more people even earlier to offer support in the critical period immediately following a sudden loss.”

WA Police Sergeant, Paul Trimble said, “There has been an extensive amount of work involving Police and other joint agencies around this trial to ensure families who are bereaved by a loss are receiving the best possible support and care available in the shortest amount of time.”

The importance of this work is highlighted by evidence indicating that without a referral or information detailing the support available, it can take several years for those bereaved by suicide to access support.

In addition, people bereaved by the sudden death of a friend or family member are 65 percent more likely to attempt suicide if their loved one died by suicide rather than natural causes.

These initiatives form part of the Australian Government’s Peel, Rockingham and Kwinana Suicide Prevention Trial, led by WA Primary Health Alliance and PaRK CRSG.

WA Primary Health Alliance Suicide Prevention Trial Project Coordinator, Chloe Merna said, “The enthusiasm and dedication of local support services, health services and WA Police is paying off by delivering a truly coordinated postvention response to communities across Peel, Rockingham and Kwinana who, sadly, have been deeply impacted by suicide in recent years.”

If you or someone you know needs urgent support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14, Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 or Kids Helpline (5 to 25 years) on 1800 55 1800.

### ENDS

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**About WA Primary Health Alliance:** WA Primary Health Alliance oversees the strategic commissioning functions of the Perth North, Perth South and Country WA Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The WA PHNs are three of 31 PHNs established by the Australian Government nationally to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the

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community. We work across the WA healthcare system with doctors, allied health professionals, hospitals and service providers to improve the coordination of care for people who are at risk of poor health outcomes. For more information, visit [www.wapha.org.au](http://www.wapha.org.au)