



SUPPORTING THE ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE OF SUICIDE



HOW TO:

communicate the meaning and value of lived experience to various stakeholders

It is important to find a way to communicate the meaning and value of people with a lived experience of suicide in the language of various stakeholders.

- Many people will have reasonably low suicide literacy levels and will require basic education first before being able to understand the value of lived experience of suicide and the prevalence of suicide in our communities and workplaces.
- Communication needs to be tailored for specific audiences.
- People connect through authentic story telling far more than statistics and dry facts – draw on the expertise of people with lived experience of suicide who are experienced in facilitating discussions and training about suicide.
- Highlight the ways in which lived experience of suicide can enhance current and future projects.
- Explain the difference between staff who identify as having a lived experience of suicide and the impact that a designated lived experience role with a sole focus could have in the organisation. Also how important it is to have multiple diverse perspectives contribute to discussions, design, development, implementation and evaluation.
- Promote and facilitate meaningful conversations among your staff.
- Demonstrate how co-design of programs of work and services, including people with lived experience as key stakeholders, result in enhanced outcomes for all.
- Lead and encourage workplace engagement, have members of the executive team lead discussions around suicide prevention and personally endorse training programs.
- Remind staff:
 - People who have experienced suicidal thoughts and/or been through suicidal crisis, are best placed to inform how we can best support others in crisis.
 - People bereaved through suicide, know what is and isn't useful when it comes to supporting them to understand and adapt to their 'new normal'.
 - People who have cared for a loved one through suicidal crisis are acutely aware of what fear, helplessness and conflicting emotions feel like – and what helped them help their loved ones.