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**RE: Inquiry into suicide prevention in Australia**

I was the consultant facilitator for the S.T.O.R.M Program (Skills Training on Risk Management –Suicide Prevention). The program was devised by The University of Manchester (UK) and was offered to all NHS (National Health Service) staff in the UK. The program was devised using evidence based information. The rationale was to train staff to deal with a very real and sensitive whilst attending their duties. The program was either one or two day training involving risk management, perceptions of suicide, dealing with suicidal patients and the impact of suicide.

I personally facilitated over 50 one and two day programs to front line staff including GP's, nursing staff, psychologists, carers, police and ambulance staff. The outcomes were always positive and enabled the staff to ask pertinent questions about a taboo subject. The staff learnt how to risk manage a person with suicidal ideation and learnt how to deal with the subject of suicide whether it was fleeting thoughts, planned or post suicide situation.

The efficacy of training for suicide, its' prevention and knowledge is a positive tool to arm front line staff with as it is often viewed as a taboo subject and has a fear attached to it for asking direct questions on the subject. The program participants mostly indicated that they felt the training had helped to support them to be better equipped to deal with a person who was suicidal. It was also indicated that the training was a positive aspect to their ongoing professional development training.

There should be a caveat within suicide prevention training that it can be a catalyst for the participant's feelings about the subject whether about their own or loved one's experiences. A support system for the participant should be made available in this event.

In terms of suicide training being made available for all front line staff it should be viewed as an integral part of PD events and one which would benefit staff and patients in the long term.

Cath Ashton

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