



Suicide & self-harm monitoring system – Consultation with Young People

Consultation

Suicide is the leading cause of death among young Australians. It is therefore, important that the National Suicide & Self-harm Monitoring System reflects the unique needs and experiences of young people.

In partnership with Orygen, the National Mental Health Commission and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare consulted with young people to hear what information they need on suicide and self-harm and why, whether the *Suicide & self-harm monitoring* website meets this need and how the website could be improved.

The consultation included an orientation to the website and a focus group, with an open invitation to Orygen's networks to provide written feedback.

The feedback is being used to improve the monitoring system and website.

Participants

The participants were young people aged between 17 and 26 years who identified as male, female or non-binary. They lived in major metropolitan and regional areas in most states and territories (NSW, Vic, Qld, WA, SA, Tas, and the ACT). Participants identified as being CALD, LGBTQIA+ and/or Indigenous community members, with a lived experience of suicide, being a carer or being bereaved by suicide, as well as having experience of mental ill-health, homelessness and/or disability.

Feedback

Participants reported frequently looking for information on suicide to; increase their knowledge of suicide for study or research, to help increase their awareness about suicide for personal reasons or from the perspective of their community, and to inform their efforts for self-help and support to others.

After being introduced to the website, participants indicated the website was a useful resource that they would continue to use and recommend to others. They noted the website treated suicide respectfully, was a safe environment and was notably informative about suicide behaviours not only suicide deaths.

Participants suggested the website could be improved; (1) by enhancing accessibility, in particular for people from diverse communities or people with a disability, (2) by improving the functionality of the website, for example using a hover function for the glossary or being able to view full screen data presentations, (3) by increasing engagement with the information through more frequent and varied data presentations, graphics and media, as well as having a more intuitive and visual navigation menu, (4) by continuing to expand the breadth and currency of data available in the monitoring system.

Summary

The AIHW and the National Mental Health Commission partnered with Orygen to hear from young people about their needs for suicide and self-harm information and their experience of the *Suicide and self-harm monitoring* website.

We heard that young people want to increase their knowledge of suicide to help themselves and their community, and that the website was a useful resource to do this.

We also heard that the website's accessibility and functionality could be enhanced to improve engagement.

The AIHW are currently working on improving the website based on the feedback received.

Actions

Accessibility (1): We will work with our website & publishing team to review accessibility for people from linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability. AIHW websites currently meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 standards of publication at level AA.

Functionality (2): Suggestions made shall be reviewed with AIHW's web publication and communications teams. Some suggestions have been considered, such as ensuring clear linking to the glossary for statistical terminology, and full screen data visualisation presentation. Other suggestions have been implemented, for example the key findings banner linkage providing prominent key messages and direct access to take users to the relevant data page.

Engagement (3): the AIHW will continue to work with their Communications team to enhance the way the information is provided and improve the way users interact with the information. Everymind work with the Commission to develop communications material to support information on the website and have proposed the development of downloadable information on priority populations or based on answers to frequently asked questions, as well as educational content so people can understand how to better use the information in the website. We will also review the menu structure to enhance navigation within the site.

Data development (4): We shall continue to work with stakeholders to expand the breadth of data available on the website. The website will be updated regularly as new data becomes available.

Crisis support: The support options available on the website will be reviewed and pathways to the help page strengthened, particularly where content may cause distress. This will ensure young people can easily access support information to help themselves and others.

The Commission and the AIHW would like to thank each participant for their insights and advice, and Orygen for the support provided to the consultation.

The AIHW is working with their website & publishing team and Everymind, to:

- enhance the functionality of the website, with some work already completed and other work being planned for later releases.
- increase engagement through the way the information is presented and how people can interact with the information.
- consider improvements to the accessibility of the website for people from diverse communities and people with a disability.