



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES
MS JOY BURCH MLA (CHAIR), MR ANDREW WALL MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MS NICOLE LAWDER MLA

MEDIA RELEASE

Invitation for Public Submissions **Inquiry into Youth Suicide and Self Harm in the ACT**

The Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services is calling for submissions to its inquiry into Youth Suicide and Self Harm in the ACT.

On 11 February 2016, the Legislative Assembly for the ACT referred issues related to Youth Suicide and Self Harm in the ACT to the Committee for its consideration. The Committee is required to report back to the Assembly by the end of the August 2016 sitting period.

The Inquiry intends to examine the roles and responsibilities of the ACT and Commonwealth Governments in regard to youth mental health and suicide prevention, ACT Government-funded service provision and whether there are unique factors contributing to youth suicide rates in the ACT. The full terms of reference are attached.

The Committee invites submissions from interested organisations and individuals to its inquiry.

Written submissions should be lodged with the Committee Secretary by close of business on Wednesday, 6 April 2016.

The Committee prefers all submissions to be lodged in electronic form (Word format), although handwritten submissions are acceptable. All submissions, including those sent electronically, must include a name, an email address, a postal address and a telephone contact number. Personal contact details will not be published.

Submissions should be forwarded to:

The Committee Secretary, Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services,
Legislative Assembly for the ACT, GPO Box 1020, CANBERRA ACT 2601. Fax (02) 6205 0432

Email: committees@parliament.act.gov.au

The Committee intends to hold public hearings in late March to assist its inquiry. Please be aware that the final witness selection rests with the Committee.

Further information is available on the inquiry web-page: http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/in-committees/standing_committees/Health,-Ageing,-Community-and-Social-Services/inquiry-into-youth-suicide-and-self-harm-in-the-act?inquiry=822269.

Friday 4 March 2015

For more information contact:

Committee Chair, Ms Joy Burch on 620 50020

Committee Secretary, Mrs Nicola Kosseck on 620 50435

**Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services-Standing Committee Reference -
Youth Suicide and Self Harm in the A.C.T.**

At its meeting on Thursday, 11 February 2016, the Assembly passed the following resolution:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that, according to the ABS' last recorded data from “Causes of Death” in 2013:
 - (a) a third of young people aged 15-25 who died in the ACT in 2013 died as a result of suicide;
 - (b) in 2013, suicide was the leading cause of death of children between 5 and 17 years of age;
 - (c) intentional self-harm is one of the top ten leading causes of death in males;
 - (d) 37 persons died due to suicide in the ACT in 2013, which is a 54% increase on the previous year;
 - (e) there was a 13% increase of persons aged 15-19 dying from suicide in Australia in 2013 compared to 2012;
 - (f) between 2011 and 2013, there were more deaths by suicide in the ACT than there were in transport accidents;
 - (g) intentional self-harm is the leading cause of death among Australian children and young people aged 15-24 years;
 - (h) as at November 2014, one child under 18 years of age takes their own life every week, and 18 227 children and young people were hospitalised in Australia for intentional self-harm over the last five years;
 - (i) between 50 and 60 children every week are admitted to hospital for self-harming incidents in Australia; and
 - (j) there has been a 650% increase in deaths from self-harm, when comparing 12 and 13 year olds with 14 and 15 year olds from 2007 to 2012;
- (2) resolves to refer the issues related to youth suicide and self harm to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services to examine the extent and impact of these in the ACT, having regard to:
 - (a) ACT Government and Commonwealth Government roles and responsibilities in regard to youth mental health and suicide prevention, particularly in relation to the recently announced Commonwealth response to the National Mental Health Commission Report and the mental health and suicide commissioning role for the Primary Healthcare Networks as it affects the ACT;
 - (b) any gaps or duplicate roles and responsibilities;
 - (c) whether there are unique factors contributing to youth suicide in the ACT, taking into account the small number of young people who have died by suicide in the ACT in recent years, and the impact public investigation may have on families and close friends, that can be identified through submissions and expert witnesses; and
 - (d) ACT government-funded services, agencies and institutions, including schools, youth centres, and specialist housing service providers' role in promoting resilience and responding to mental health issues in children and young people; and

the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services will report back to the Legislative Assembly by the last sitting day of this Assembly.”