



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 11

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)
Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT
Tuesday, 28 May 2024

Asked by Miss Laura Nuttall MLA on 28 May 2024: Anne Leslie, Acting Director of Policy and Government Relations, Suicide Prevention Australia, took on notice the following question:

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 28 May 2024 pp. 50-51

In relation to: Learnlink portal conversation practice

MS NUTTALL: Thank you Chair. When you talk about evidence based first aid suicide prevention training. Are there particular professions or places that have really jumped out as needing training? I know you mentioned pharmacies and barbers but—

Ms Henricksen: Yeah, it again depends on whether you are in a smaller community or a larger community, but it is the people who would be more likely to have that casual conversation. So if somebody who is not wanting to be terribly involved in the community, if they are isolating themselves because they are feeling a stigma of depression or that they just do not feel that they are able to participate in the community, they still have some points that they actually need to communicate with and that is why we highlight the pharmacist or the barber, that people who are likely to be that first point of contact.

It could be anybody who comes into contact with people in that casual format that they just know what to say to connect that person further. So instead of somebody coming up and saying that first voice of distress, instead of being met with a blank stare or something that is not really appropriate, there is actually that meaningful engagement that makes them feel that they can actually connect to the next level. It gets them to open up more to the right people and the training gives that meaningful approach to it.

MS NUTTALL: Thank you, supplementary if that is okay. What would the training tend to look like for these workers?

Ms Henricksen; Suicide Prevention Australia has a form of it which is our learning portal which is all online. So it is accessing research, it is accessing modules, different resources that you can tailor to what you actually—so if you are a pharmacist you have a different clientele from the barber for example, but you can actually tailor it to the level that you want to. So it is generally online but it is the guidelines on what language to use for example, how to recognise signs of somebody who is at suicide risk, different levels of information available to different people in various roles.

MS NUTTALL: Thank you. One more supplementary if that is okay. Just in terms of conversational practice and this might be purely anecdotal, but I have chatted to quite a few people who are not sort of confident in having those important conversations, sort of understanding the weight of them if they have not had practice and things like that.

Are there sort of options for practice within those?

Ms Henricksen: Are you aware of that practice?

Ms Leslie: If I take that question on notice, but one thing to note is, it needs to be a learning program. For example, if someone receives gatekeeper training it needs to be continual for example, it needs to be refreshed. You know, a couple of months later you might forget that information, it is like first aid, you do need refreshers. So it does need to be continual learning to ensure information is absorbed.

Anne Leslie, Acting Director of Policy and Government Relations, Suicide Prevention Australia: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

Learnlinc is Suicide Prevention Australia's supported learning platform designed to connect individuals with quality learning resources in suicide prevention and supports their learning journey to encourage ongoing learning and building of confidence. Quality Learning resources include accredited gatekeeper or foundation training, population and other risk factor specific learning resources, and advanced learning resources for suicide prevention, to support a systemic approach to suicide prevention and enable individuals and organisations make informed decisions for suicide prevention specific learning resources that best fit their circumstances, environment and needs.

Foundation skill training included in the Learnlinc directory, such as those provided by LivingWorks, Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Programs (CALM), Headspace, and Black Dog Institute, meet minimum standards for suicide prevention learning, and include both demonstrations and opportunities for practice of conversation skills designed to reduce stigma, increase help-seeking, and support a person in suicidal distress.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:



Date: 4.06.24

By Anne Leslie, Acting Director of Policy and Government Relations