



# Improving emergency and follow-up care for suicidal crisis

## What do we know?

- A suicide attempt is the strongest risk factor for subsequent suicide. To reduce the risk of future attempts, a coordinated approach to care for people after a suicide attempt is essential.
- Coordination of care is complex and emergency departments are high-pressure environments where staff are time poor. Often people who present in emergency departments (EDs) for suicidal thinking or attempts don't receive the care and support they need.
- Evidence shows that it is the experience rather than strict adherence to a protocol that makes the difference

between good and poor care. When people seek help, services need to make them feel validated, welcome and heard.

## What is happening?

- Improved crisis care with new guidelines and training in EDs, education and resource packs distributed to individuals and families in crisis.
- Dedicated aftercare services for people who attempt suicide.
- Better networks and information sharing between care providers and families.

## What can I do?

### General community

- Be aware that we are working to improve the quality of care provided to people who attempt suicide. Your feedback can help, contact your local Primary Health Network.
- If in the ED, request a copy of the education and resources pack developed for individuals who have attempted suicide or their family and friends.
- Provide feedback on the care you receive by participating in the research study so we know how well these approaches are working.

### Emergency department and hospital staff and service providers

- Undertake training, use the best practice care guidelines and adopt new evidence-based procedures.
- Collaborate with others and share information and best practice.
- Provide education packs to patients, families and carers and help keep them up to date.
- Encourage your organisation and team to complete the workforce surveys so we can track changes in local workforce capacity.

Contact us: Call the LifeSpan team at (02) 9382 4530,  
email us at [suicideprevention@blackdog.org.au](mailto:suicideprevention@blackdog.org.au) or visit our website at [www.lifespan.org.au](http://www.lifespan.org.au)

To find out how you can support this initiative and help make a difference, please visit [www.lifespan.org.au](http://www.lifespan.org.au)