

Ensuring evidence-based

People living with mental illness are up to 30 times more likely to die by suicide than the general population. Although not all people who die by suicide have a mental health problem, and not all people with mental illness experience suicidal behaviour, access to excellent mental health treatment represents an important strategy for suicide prevention.

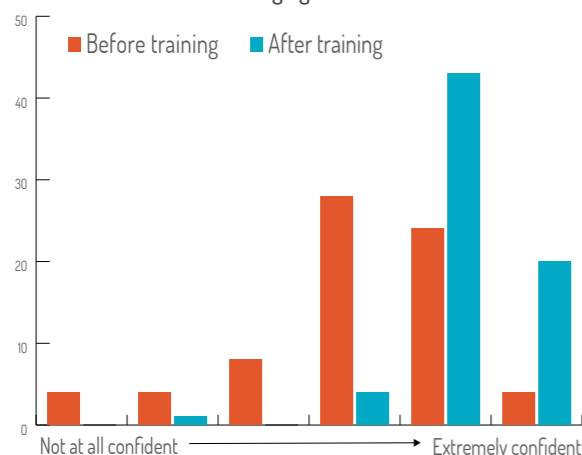
Training

Since 2017, **233** local health professionals have undertaken training focused on suicide prevention.



178 have done **Advanced Training in Suicide Prevention (ATSP)**, an interactive workshop for multi-disciplinary health professionals. Ten workshops have been delivered across the region, including some that were customised for general practitioners and school counsellors.

Participants rate their confidence with regard to recognising and managing suicide risk



55 undertook the SafeSide training. The **SafeSide** approach teaches health professionals how to develop practical, tailored treatment plans that address whatever is driving a person's suicidality.

Staff from a number of health services came together for the SafeSide training, which was funded by the NSW Ministry of Health.

92% of participants said they walked away feeling able to apply the SafeSide training to their work.

"This training has given me so much more confidence, particularly on how to talk about a person's suicide risk with other clinicians." - Training participant

Supporting implementation

Of course, training health professionals only makes a difference if the learnings are embedded into actual practice.

So, the Collaborative is continuing to work with SafeSide training participants and local health services to make evidence-based practice part of routine care.



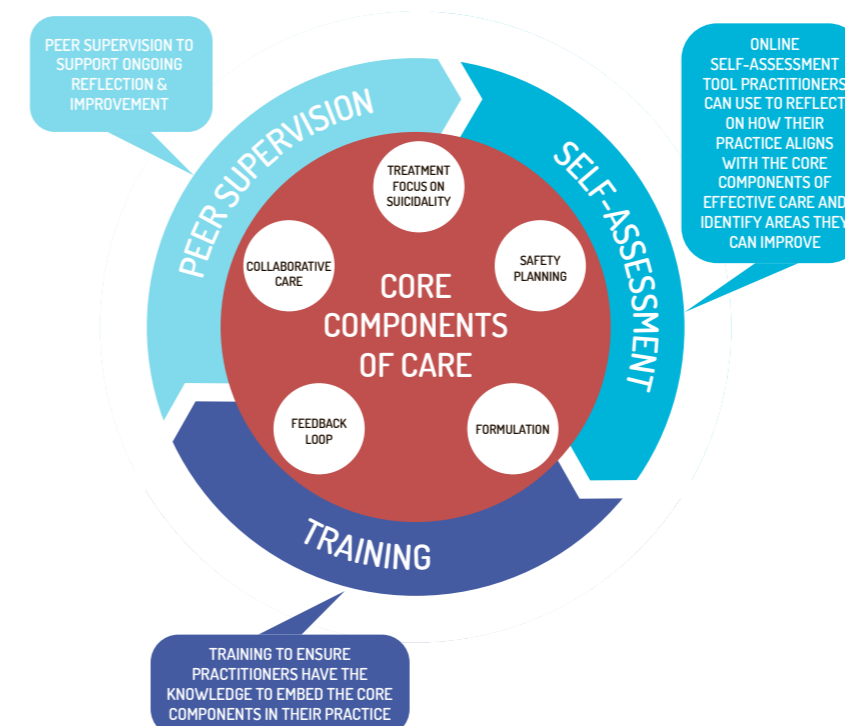
treatment for suicidality



Self-assessment and training to embed evidence-based treatments in practice

Psychosocial therapies are one form of mental health treatment that has been shown to significantly reduce suicidal thoughts and behaviours. Recent national and international models have identified the core components or mechanisms that make this care effective. The Collaborative has set up a process that uses self-reflection, training and peer supervision to support health professionals to embed these core components into their practice and continually reinforce high quality care.

Resources and training for health professionals can be found on the Collaborative's website.



"We often talk about evidence-based treatments e.g. CBT or DBT, but we don't always think about what elements of these treatments make them effective. The self-assessment helped us think critically about the care we are providing and we came away with some concrete actions we can take to improve."

- Rebecca Sng, Manager Primary Health Services, Grand Pacific Health



Effective care requires health professionals with compassionate and respectful attitudes towards people with mental illness or suicidality.

To promote these attitudes amongst health professionals, the Collaborative has funded 10 health professionals to attend Recovery Camp. These camps provide an opportunity for health professionals and students to spend a week doing a range of outdoor recreation activities with people living with mental illness, learning with and from each other about how to support people's recovery.

Research has shown that those who attend Recovery Camp have increased confidence and competence working with people with mental illness compared to health professionals who do a traditional training placement. And perhaps most importantly, **Recovery Camp participants have less stigmatising attitudes towards people with mental illnesses.**

Caitlin, who took one of the sponsored spots funded by the Collaborative, said: "I returned from camp with a renewed sense of perspective, deeper insight into my own work in the community and how it can reach those with more complex needs, and a greater respect for mental health nurses too."