

# A new chapter for Suicide Prevention

## Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial

October 2021

**The Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial is one of the twelve place-based trial locations throughout Victoria. The Trial aims to have a positive impact on rates of suicide and attempts, individual resilience and well-being and broader system improvements.**

**We are pleased to announce that the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial Site is consolidating its existing governance arrangements with the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group (MRSPAG). This will provide stakeholders and those who have a lived experience of suicide, with a single, unified platform from which to coordinate the delivery of suicide prevention activities for the Macedon Ranges community.**

### The Trial

The Macedon Ranges suicide prevention trial site has been funded through North Western Melbourne PHN (NWMPHN) since 2017.

It is one of 12 trial sites in Victoria supported by the Victorian Government and the six Victorian Primary Health Networks (PHN) to reduce rates of suicide and improve community resilience and wellbeing. Funding for the coordination of trial site activities and projects ceases in June 2022.

As the trial site heads towards its final six months, NWMPHN, along with other partners, have been keen to support practical discussions with stakeholders to identify how the learnings and gains made through the trial can continue to be sustained in the community at a local level.

Susan Cadman from North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network is Manager of Priority Populations and part of this project. She said:

*"We value the energy and efforts that health and community organisations, front line responders and those with lived experience have contributed to trial site activities over the last few years. Although the place-based trials*

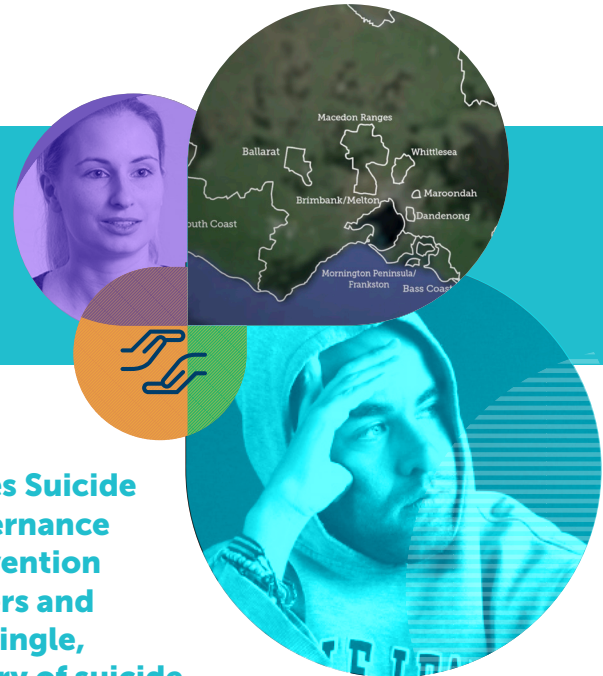
*will finish in June 2022, we are committed to ensuring that local sites are well positioned through local governance to maintain momentum with key activities and continue to build on learnings and insights through the trials well into the future."*

### Sustainability Plan

To support this objective, a consultant was engaged to work with stakeholders on development of a sustainability plan.

These sustainability planning activities have provided stakeholders with an important opportunity to reflect on the vision, purpose and scope of suicide prevention in the Macedon Ranges; the need to identify meaningful indicators that can be used to track and communicate progress with projects; the role and contribution of partners to supporting future work; and importantly, how the existing trial site governance structure can be consolidated with community led efforts.

Stakeholder discussions have identified that MRSPAG will auspice a governance structure to lead the coordination and delivery of current



and future suicide prevention activities within the shire. This will bring together trial site activities with existing efforts in the community.

## Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group (MRSPAG)

MRSPAG is a charitable organisation established in 2013 working to prevent suicide in the Macedon Ranges.

Its membership includes community members with a lived experience of suicide and representatives from local service providers.

Current MRSPAG membership will be expanded to include all those organisations that have previously been represented on the Trial Site Reference Group and Stewardship Group.

Steven Power, Chair of the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group said,

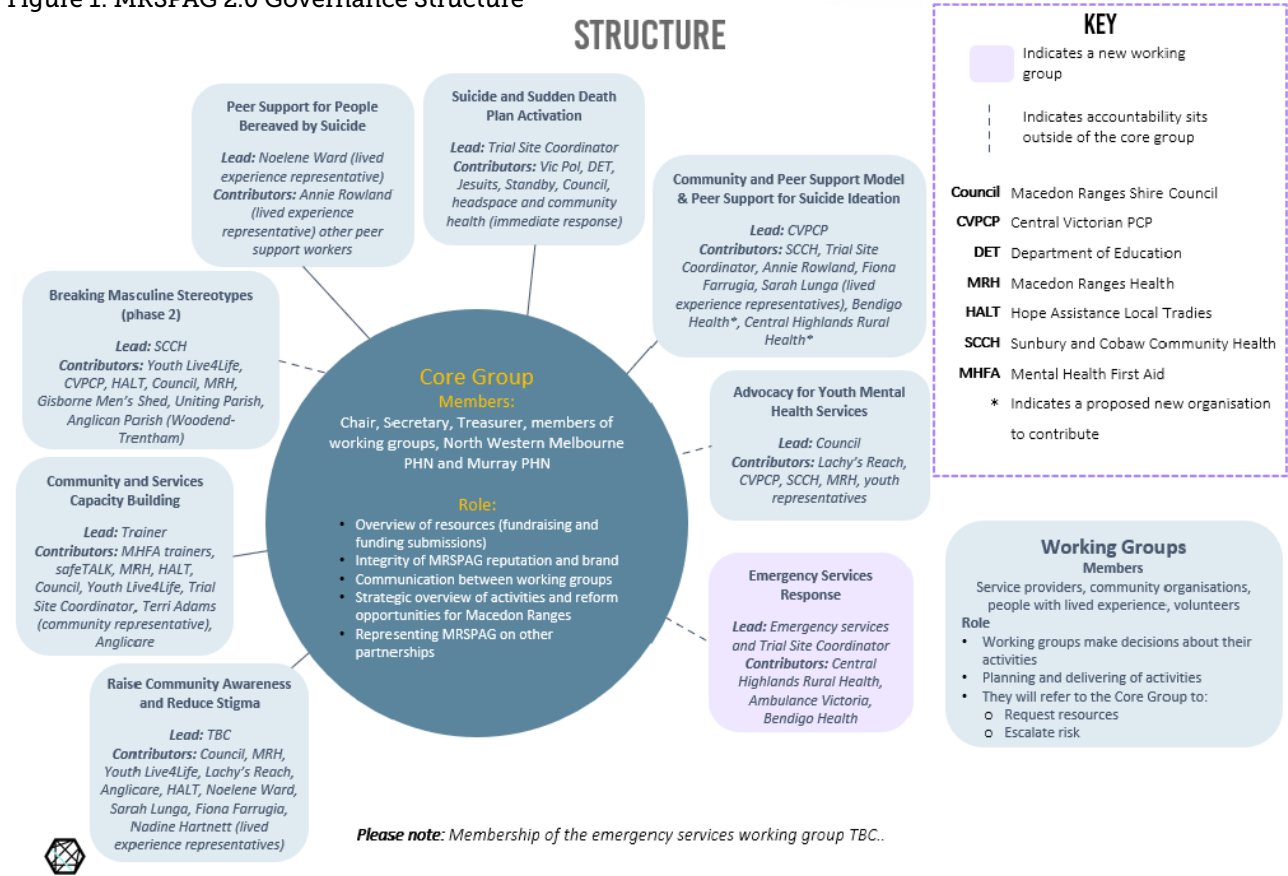
***“The trial site and MRSPAG have already worked closely on a number of key projects including developing the Macedon Ranges Community and Peer Support Model for mental health, the Macedon Ranges postvention protocol and delivering suicide prevention training to the community.*”**

***We know there is good alignment between what stakeholders have identified as activities for the future and our existing work. It feels natural that this be the next step in the process.”***

Shelly Lavery, Chair of the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial Site said, ***“The trial site has helped us to get some momentum on a number of key projects including developing the Macedon Ranges Community and Peer Support model for mental health and suicide prevention and # the human code project. It is important that partners are able to continue to contribute to activities in this space. MRSPAG is a recognised brand that is trusted within the local community. We know that meaningful change can only be achieved with the community, those with a lived experience of suicide and services working together in a genuine partnership.”***

Next steps will include an inaugural meeting of MRSPAG in December 2021, to elect a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. This first meeting will also be an opportunity for stakeholders to confirm an updated terms of reference and agree the Working Groups that will support the delivery of identified work priorities. For further information about MRSPAG, visit [www.mrspag.com.au](http://www.mrspag.com.au).

Figure 1: MRSPAG 2.0 Governance Structure



The Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial is a collaborative partnership between local communities and organisations, training partners, The Victorian Government and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network - an Australian Government Initiative.