

CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

PHD Completion Seminar

The University of Melbourne



MELBOURNE SCHOOL OF
**POPULATION
& GLOBAL
HEALTH**

Building a suicide prevention campaign aimed at family and friends of a person at risk of suicide

Presenter: Dr Angela Nicholas

**Supervisors: A/Prof Nicola Reavley,
Prof Jane Pirkis & A/Prof Matthew Spittal**



Thursday 6th February 12.30pm-1.30pm
Seminar Room 410, Level 4, 207 Bouverie Street, Carlton

The rate of Suicide in Australia has steadily increased over the last decade and novel approaches to suicide prevention are needed. Research evidence suggests that people at risk of suicide often communicate their suicidal thoughts and intentions to family members and friends before they make a suicide attempt. However, family members and friends can be uncertain how best to interpret and respond to this communication. A suicide prevention campaign aimed at promoting identification of people at risk of suicide and positive helping responses among family members and friends could therefore have significant positive effects for both those at risk and those wanting to offer support who are unclear about how to do so.

Angela's PhD research comprises five studies aimed at identifying suicide prevention messages to include in a family and friends-focused suicide prevention campaign. This research has examined Australian community members' confidence and intentions to help a person at risk of suicide, actions taken toward a person at risk of suicide, and Australians' beliefs in suicide 'myths'. The research program brings together perspectives of people who are at risk of suicide, those who have helped a person at risk and suicide prevention professionals. It also combines a number of research methods, including a nationally representative computer-assisted telephone survey of 3000 Australians, an expert consensus study, and an online questionnaire study. Using the combined findings from these five studies, Angela makes recommendations regarding the key suicide prevention messages that should be included in a national family and friends-focused suicide prevention campaign. These findings have been translated into a national suicide prevention social media campaign, which will also be discussed.

Angela is a PhD candidate in the Centre for Mental Health, where she is also a Research Fellow. She has a Doctor of Health Psychology (Research) and a Bachelor of Psychology (Hons). She currently works on a national consultation project aimed at developing a mental illness stigma and discrimination reduction strategy, and has previously been involved in several evaluations of Australia-wide government-funded mental health programs delivered in primary care.

These seminars are free. Visitors are welcome to attend.
For more information contact the Centre for Mental Health +61 3 8344 0908