

CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

PhD Confirmation

The University of Melbourne

Identification of key messages for a suicide prevention campaign aimed at family and friends

Presenter: Dr Angela Nicholas

Supervisors: Associate Professor Nicola Reavley

Professor Jane Pirkis

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**Tuesday 20th February, 3pm-5pm
Room 410, Level 4, 207 Bouverie Street**

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 strategy 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.

This PhD will consolidate the findings from a research program aimed at identifying suicide prevention messages aimed at family and friends of people at risk of suicide. The research program brings together perspectives on suicide prevention from those who had been at risk, their carers, suicide prevention professionals and members of the general Australian community who have been exposed to the suicide of others and those who have not. It also combines a number of methodologies, including a nationally representative computer-assisted telephone survey of 3000 Australians, an expert consensus study, and an online questionnaire study.



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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).

In her work at the Centre for Mental Health and as Senior Evaluation Officer for the headspace National Office, she has been involved in several evaluations of Australia-wide government-funded mental health programs delivered in primary care.