

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 18th March 2025

Suicide doesn't discriminate

Mallee District Aboriginal Services has responded to the latest Coroners Court Report that shows 27 First Nations people passed by suicide in the state in 2024.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised this content includes information associated with deceased persons from events that have occurred in Victoria. Readers are warned that there are words and descriptions that may be culturally distressing.

The Chair of Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS), Ms. Jenene Murray has said the results of the report are deeply alarming, emphasising the growing rate of suicide among First Nations people compared to the non-Indigenous population.

“It is beyond saddening to see the findings of this report, and to witness that the rate of suicide is almost three times higher than the non-Indigenous population. It really highlights the very real issue faced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) community.

“This report will hit home for many across the state, particularly in rural and remote areas, where almost everyone has been directly impacted by suicide—either through personal experience or through the loss of someone close.”

Ms. Murray emphasised MDAS’s commitment to providing a holistic, culturally safe model of care for the ATSI community.

“We have invested—and will continue to invest—significant time, effort, and resources to ensure our mob feels safe, supported, and empowered to seek help.”

MDAS provides a wrap-around support service for those affected by suicide and suicidal ideation. This includes efforts to establish a *Mental Health Local* to address long wait times for mental health services. MDAS is working closely with local partners, including Sunraysia Community Health, Wellways, and Mildura Base Hospital, to improve access to care.

Culture Care Connect Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Sharni Karpany, acknowledged that while the report’s findings are not surprising, they are still deeply distressing.

“Our focus is on making sure our community knows they are not alone—support is available, suicide does not discriminate.

*Self-determined, healthy, robust & culturally strong
Aboriginal communities, throughout the Mallee Region.*



“We want to break the stigma that talking about suicide isn’t something to avoid or put off. Our goal is to continue offering a space where mob feel safe to openly and honestly, discuss their experiences with suicide and suicidal thoughts.”

Meanwhile, MDAS will continue to support its community and improve mental health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the north-west of Victoria.

ENDS

*Self-determined, healthy, robust & culturally strong
Aboriginal communities, throughout the Mallee Region.*