

# Minds Together summary

January – June 2023

*Minds Together is a suite of programs and resources developed to support the mental health and wellbeing of those who care for someone experiencing mental health concerns or suicidal distress.*

## Building capability

**Minds Together for family and friends supporting someone who has attempted suicide**



- Seventy-two research trial participants since October 2022. Participant demographics include:

Caregivers	Care recipients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 83% female</li><li>• Age range 18-78 years</li><li>• Mean age 48 years</li><li>• 58% employed full-time</li><li>• Supported their:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Child: 29%</li><li>– Wife/husband/partner/spouse: 27%</li><li>– Parent: 16%.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 58% male</li><li>• Age range 12-80 years</li><li>• Mean age 36 years</li><li>• Number of suicide attempts:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– One attempt (40%)</li><li>– Two to four attempts (47%).</li></ul></li><li>• 80% with a diagnosed mental illness (depression, anxiety most common)</li><li>• 22% with physical health difficulties</li></ul>

- Lived experience videos were the highest-rated content.
- Work commencing on the future sustainability of this program to be embedded in aftercare services.

**Minds Together for family and friends supporting the mental health of paramedics**



- Forty-four research trial participants since November 2022.
- Ongoing national research trial supported by partners University of Newcastle, NSW Ambulance and Fortem Australia.
- Exploring options for program sustainability and applications to other first responders or defence cohorts.

## Participant feedback

Participants from the programs told us:

### Suicide attempt program



*“Devising a support plan with my daughter has been really helpful for her and me (it has reduced my worry when I’m out of town, etc.)”*

- Parent supporting an adult child who has attempted suicide.
- “I have been able to refer to some of the ideas and experiences shared in the materials provided in the program. Especially around prioritising self-care.”*
- Partner of someone who has attempted suicide.
- “It helped me to think more about my own mental health and break down some of the taboo about asking for help or stepping back sometimes.”*
- Friend supporting someone who has attempted suicide.
- “It truly helped me identify themes and crisis points and gave me strategies to help in the lead-up and during times of crisis.”*
- Parent supporting an adult child who has attempted suicide.

### Paramedics program

*“Excellent resource for someone supporting someone in the frontline with mental health problems.”*

- Partner supporting a paramedic with their mental health.
- I found the advice/tips on how to manage conversations with the paramedic helpful, i.e. to listen without offering advice. The encouragement of self-care was helpful as well.”*
- Sister supporting her paramedic brother.
- “Highlighting the mental health challenges that my daughter might be experiencing. Providing insight into her lived experience and developing my skills to support her in theoretical and practical ways.”*
- Mother supporting her paramedic daughter.
- Being able to log on and use at any time from any device.”*
- Paramedic supporting a colleague.



## Community engagement and knowledge sharing

Over 600,000  
Australians

reached by  
*Minds Together*  
promotions

- Presentations at the National Suicide Prevention Conference 2023, NSW Carers lunch and learn event, Carer Knowledge Exchange Research Incubator 2023 Spotlight Series, Frontline Mental Health Conference for Emergency Services, Western Australia Mental Health Commission, Hunter Medical Research Institute Healthy Minds Summit.
- SANE Topic Tuesday family and friends facilitated forum discussion.
- Featured in Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's Suicide Prevention Project.
- ABC Newcastle, ABC Upper Hunter, 2NURFM and ABC Mornings radio interviews.
- Brainstorm, Brainwaves and eMHPprac podcast episodes.
- Collaboration with universities around embedding *Minds Together* content in paramedicine curricula and potential research opportunities supporting paramedic mental health.
- Developed clinician resources to embed *Minds Together* programs in service provision such as Employee Assistance Programs and mental health services.
- Pursuing opportunities in programs for defence and veteran families.
- Promotions in stakeholder communications, including by various Primary Health Networks and Local Health Districts, Beyond Blue, Lived Experience Australia, Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition, Resolute Ready, and more.

## Research and evaluation



- Research and evaluation frameworks finalised for use across all Everymind programs and projects.
- Commenced scoping review to define completion criteria for online early intervention mental health programs.
- Commenced systematic review of peer interventions for those supporting someone experiencing anxiety, depression or suicidal distress.

### Publications

**Feasibility and Acceptability of a Novel Online Program for Mental Health Carers** (Fitzgeraldson, 2023), published in the International Journal of Psychological Research.

This paper evaluates the feasibility and acceptability of *Minds Together* for family and friends supporting someone with their mental health.

### Papers in progress

- Consultation study publication: Family and friends supporting the mental health of paramedics.
- *Children in Mind* randomised controlled trial and family day care Phase 2 study publication.
- Systematic review of peer support interventions for caregivers of people with mental health concerns - seeking to explore the role of peers in supporting family and friends who care for someone experiencing depression, anxiety or suicidal distress.
- Feasibility and acceptability randomised controlled pilot study: Family and friends supporting someone who has attempted suicide.
- Supporting someone with a lived experience of suicide: Outcomes from a workshop in Australia (from a workshop held at Roses in The Ocean Lived Experience Summit 2023).

