



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

The Ripple Effect – Fighting to prevent the stigma of rural suicide

Participant Information Sheet

Having a chat and talking about emotions is something men in the farming community tend to shy away from. But when it comes to suicide, it's time we talked about it. Talking about suicide is never an easy thing to do, but unfortunately it's a harsh reality of rural communities. And, like we are all too aware, suicide has a ripple effect in the community.

It's a reality that we at The Ripple Effect want to turn around.

This is why we invite you to take part in a research study exploring how self-stigma (negative attitudes you have towards yourself) and perceived-stigma (negative attitudes you believe others have about you) of suicide can be reduced among men from the farming community. To do so, we invite males, aged 30-64 years, from the farming community who have lost someone to suicide, attempted suicide themselves, cared for somebody who has attempted suicide, experienced thoughts about their own suicide, or have been touched by suicide in some other way, to participate in an online research project called The Ripple Effect. All other adult members of the farming community are welcome to participate in the Ripple Effect but will not be part of the research study.

We understand that these can be emotional and intensely personal experiences. This is why we greatly value your assistance in developing a way to reduce male farmers' experience of stigma in the future. Any information you choose to share will be highly valued. Your experience is like no one else's. It is unique, personal and will be highly valued.

The Ripple Effect is led by the National Centre for Farmer Health in partnership with Deakin University, Western District Health Service, the Victorian Farmers Federation, AgChatOZ, Sandpit and the Mental Illness Fellowship of North Queensland.

The Ripple Effect has been funded by *beyondblue* with donations from the Movember Foundation.

HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED:

As part of The Ripple Effect, we invite you to complete an online questionnaire of the "tick or select the box" type which includes some demographic questions, some questions about your lived experience of suicide, and some true/false questions about suicide. This will take approximately 10 minutes.



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

You will also be asked the extent to which you agree or disagree to a number of words associated with suicide. Once you have completed these tasks, you will then take part in five core sessions of The Ripple Effect. These interactive sessions can be accessed and completed at your own pace and at a time that suits you within a maximum 12-week period. Each session will include a short video story and some reading/video material.

There will also be information, opportunity to share information about your experiences, personal challenges and links to support should you need it. At the completion of the core sessions, you will be asked to fill in another simple online questionnaire. You will have the opportunity to contribute further by having an interview with a researcher about your Ripple Effect experience.

The content of The Ripple Effect is not designed to cause significant psychological or emotional stress, but you will be reflecting upon events in your life that may be challenging. If you feel that taking part will cause you stress, you may consider not participating in this research. Should you indicate you are distressed at any stage, online contact will be made by the researchers to assist you with your support requirements. You will also have the opportunity to make contact with the researchers via the website should you have any questions during your participation in The Ripple Effect.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY: We would like to assure you that your online identity will be kept anonymous. While the information you share may be included on The Ripple Effect website or in scientific publications, you will never be identified in any way.

PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY: Your involvement in this study is voluntary and we respect your right to withdraw at any time. You may discontinue your participation at any time and do not need to provide any explanation. Should you withdraw from the study, all information provided to the research team will be excluded from any analysis.

STORAGE OF INFORMATION: Any information you choose to share in this study will be securely stored. Hard copies of any information will be kept in a locked cabinet in the research office. Electronic data will be kept on a password-protected computer. Only the research team will have access to the information. All of the information collected in this research will be kept at the National Centre for Farmer Health for a minimum of five years after successful completion of this research as is required by the National Health and Medical Research Council, after which relevant computer files will be deleted and hard copy materials will be destroyed or shredded.



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

RESEARCH PROCESS: The de-identified results of the research will be included in reports to *beyondblue*, presented at conferences, published in peer-reviewed journals and distributed through farming organisations.

ETHICS: This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Deakin University (Approval No. 2015-136. Valid to 06/07/2019).

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS: Should you have any questions about taking part in this study, please contact Alison Kennedy on (03) 5551 8587, email alison.kennedy@wdhs.net or contact any of the other members of the research team:

Associate Professor Susan Brumby: (03) 5551 8460 or email: susan.brumby@deakin.edu.au

Mr Graeme Ford: (03) 9207 5503 or email: gford@vff.org.au

Mr Sam Haren: 0404 110 558 or email: sam@wearesandpit.com

Mr Dan Koerner: 0422 945 498 or email: dan@wearesandpit.com

Ms Alison Fairleigh: (07) 4725 3664 or email: afairleigh@mifnq.org.au

COMPLAINTS: Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

The Manager, Ethics and Biosafety, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Victoria 3125.

Telephone: 9251 7129

Email: research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

FEEDBACK OF RESULTS: The outcomes of this study will be reported to *beyondblue* and made available on the National Centre for Farmer Health webpage.

If, after reading this Participant Information Sheet or sharing your experiences through any stage of this study, you feel distressed, we urge you to contact your GP or local community health centre or alternatively call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or *beyondblue* on 1300 22 4636 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 for counseling support.