



15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia www.wcph2017.com

Suicide Prevention in First Nations people

Tuesday 4 April 2017, 1600 - 1800, Plenary Hall 3

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Lead	Dr Vanessa Lee Summer May Finlay
Speakers	Richard Weston (Facilitator) Professor Pat Dudgeon, Australia Carol Hopkins, Canada Michael Naera, New Zealand

The First Nations Suicide Prevention World Leadership Dialogue at the 15th World Congress on Public Health is designed to bring people working in the First Nations suicide prevention space together to discuss 'best practice' that are strengths based and solutions focused. The aim of the World Leaders Dialogue is to develop a set of recommendations for each of the organisations who are part of the Congress which can be used to form part of their policies to address suicide rates among First Nations. Globally one million people die each year from suicide and many more attempt it (WHO, 2014). Worldwide, suicide is prevalent amongst the most marginalized and discriminated against groups within society, including First Nations peoples. In Australia for example if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicides were ranked alongside the world's sovereign states they would rank at the 12th highest suicide rate (Hunter and Ting, 2016). The Inuit's in Canada have a suicide rate at six to 11 times the national Canadian average. In Nunavut, 27 of all deaths since 1999 have been by suicide, making it on average one of the highest in the world (Kahn, 2008). Suicide occurs five to six times more in Aboriginal youth than





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non-Aboriginal youth (Centre for Suicide Prevention, 2013; ATSIPEP, 2016). While often there are different reasons why First Nations people commit suicide, there are some similarities across groups. Suicide is preventable however the taboo and stigma around suicide can often prevent First Nations people from seeking help. Additionally, when First Nations people do seek help they are often faced many challenges within health systems including but not limited to the lack of culturally effective and timely services. To address this global public health issue requires full collaboration with First Nations people. First Nations people need to part of the dialogue for change and to also be adequately resourced to implement the change.

Though the World Dialogue we hope that by bringing together First nations peoples from around the world we can share solutions which can be adapted to local contexts.

