



Experiences of families, carers, and community members impacted by suicide in the ACT



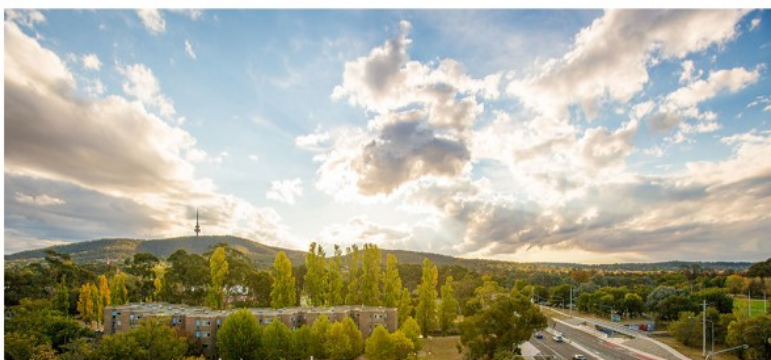
A number of studies indicate that elements of current support practices can be unhelpful and detrimental to families, carers, and the individuals for whom they are caring. Clinical services and practices have been reported as harmful, even traumatic in the context of addressing adolescent suicidal thoughts and actions. The aim of this research was to investigate the experiences of family, carers, and community members impacted by a suicide death in the Australian Capital Territory, to help identify barriers to effective care for people affected by suicide.

What we did

We conducted a face-to-face interviews in the Australian Capital Territory Coronial Counselling Service ($n = 17$). Interviews focused on participants' accounts of their experiences, expressed as their own story. Some questions were also provided as prompts. These questions were provided to participants in advance, to ensure that all participants were comfortable with the questions and to gather their thoughts.

What we found

Participants described how concerns over their loved one's welfare were minimized by health professionals, and how the communication styles of health professionals and the ethos of power and control evident in many health care settings made them feel excluded and powerless. These results provide compelling evidence that emergency services and health workforces require new strategies for effective management and care of people experiencing suicidal distress, their families, and carers.



What we learned

Restorative practice listening and responding to people's need with dignity and respect, could improve the support experience for people affected by suicide.

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