



The Way Back Support Service

The Way Back Support Service Newcastle

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The Way Back Support Service

What does the Way Back do:

Provides support for up to 3 months following a suicide attempt:

- Informal support
- Safety planning
- Non-clinical
- Person-focused
- Assistance to connect with services
- Safety net



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The Way Back Team

- Support Coordinators
- Behind the scenes:
 - Clinical Advisors
 - Administration
 - Data Support
 - Management





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Who is referred to The Way Back?

- Main pathway: Calvary Mater Hospital ED following deliberate self-poisoning
- Additional pathways for Aftercare services:
 - Way Back: HNE MH Units
 - Aboriginal Aftercare: referrals open to community





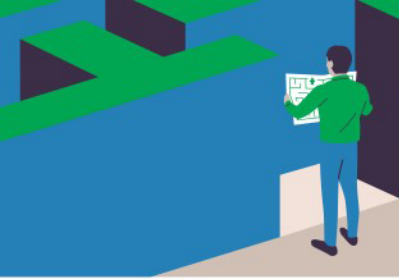
Safety Planning at the Way Back

- Integral to the service
- Structured format underpins the approach
- Can take on different forms – paper, Beyond Now APP, conversation
- Is a living document, reviewed regularly
- Person-centred, tailored to the individual



Benefits of Safety Planning

- Mental rehearsal
- Helps to break down stigma
- Provides a safe, non-judgemental space to talk about suicide and to offer hope
- Authentic, each person owns their own plan. No two plans are the same
- Practical
- For staff: provides a framework to guide conversations



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Consumer feedback

- Client: “I put mine on my fridge and read it everyday”
- Support person: “this is the single most helpful thing to know how I can support my friend”

Benefits: Feel safe, supported, understood, not rushed, no judgement, sense of ownership

Challenges: short-term service, multiple services involved



Support Coordinators Feedback

- Uplifting
- Powerful, see meaningful change
- Respectful of their role
- Value support from Clinical Advisors
- Safety planning – provides a framework/structure



Challenges with Safety Planning

- Stigma
- Awareness of language
- Not everyone responds to structure
- Reluctance to talk about suicide and risk
- Knowing when safety plan is not enough – escalation



Tips for engaging people in safety planning

- Be patient, genuine and interested
- Meaningful: Each individual owns their own plan
- Be prepared to be flexible
- Living plan: revisit, update, add, change, develop
- Encourage plan to be realistic and practical
- Encourage sharing of plan with key supports

Most importantly.....



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Critical Ingredient = Human Connection

“The dedication, genuine concern and support.... has shown me I am worthy and deserving of help”