

The International Association for Suicide Prevention hosts the 1st International Conference of its kind in New Zealand.

2 - 5 May 2018 Copthorne Hotel and Resort, Bay of Islands, NZ, in partnership with CASA, LeVa, Te Rau Matatini and the University of Otago.

WASHINGTON DC, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, April 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It is estimated that globally, every year, more than 800,000 people die by suicide – that's one person every 40 seconds, and up to 25 times as many make a suicide attempt.

Suicide is a significant public health issue in New Zealand: "every year over 500 people die by suicide in New Zealand making it the third most common reason why people die younger than expected" (<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/strategy-prevent-suicide-nz-draft-consultation-apr17-v2.pdf>). NZ's last suicide prevention strategy ran until 2016 with consultation on the new strategy currently taking place. In the recent Budget 2017, investment in a Mental Health Social Investment Fund was announced, along with proposals for new initiatives.

Dr Sarah Fortune, Deputy Chair of the Suicide Mortality Review Committee said the Committee "has been reviewing suicide deaths in New Zealand to identify levers for prevention. We look forward to the IASP meeting as an opportunity to bring together local and international suggestions on how we can reduce the persistently high rate of suicide in Aoteroa/New Zealand."

[The International Association for Suicide Prevention \(IASP\)](#) is hosting its [8th Asia Pacific Regional Conference](#), 2 - 5 May 2018 Copthorne Hotel and Resort, Bay of Islands, in partnership with CASA, LeVa, Te Rau Matatini and the University of Otago. The Conference, which will focus on evidence-based research, best practice and innovative suicide prevention activities, will bring together researchers, practitioners, helpline workers, programme planners, graduate students, those within the community and anyone affected by suicidal persons, from a range of disciplines from within New Zealand, the Asian-Pacific Region and around the world.

The theme of the conference is 'Turning the tide together – Tai pari, Tai timu ngātahi ai. "What a fantastic kaupapa that is" said Dr Kahu McClintock, Research Manager at Te Rau Matatini. "We all have a roll to play; we will look at key issues around suicide behaviour and in particular around cohesive and relevant programmes that we work within our communities".

The aim of the Asia Pacific Conference is to identify key issues in suicidal behaviour in the Asia Pacific Region in order to formulate cohesive, relevant and evidence based strategies by bringing together networks working in the field of suicide prevention and to share knowledge, skills, research and good practices in preventing suicide. The Programme encompasses over 200 presentations and will be attended by delegates from over 30 countries. Some of the highlights include:

- Keynote: Professor Sir Mason Durie 'The Turamarama Declaration: Indigenous Suicide Prevention'
- CASA launch of postvention guidelines
- Professor Murad Khan, IASP President, Plenary session: Religiosity, culture and suicidal behaviour

- Dr Sarah Fortune, reporting on 'The New Zealand Suicide Mortality Review Committee'
- Witeria Ashby 'Cultural Storytelling' Masterclass
- Forum 'Partnerships for life: Building the suicide prevention sector in Pacific Island Nations.
- Dr Jemaima Tiatia-Seath, Plenary session: 'Pacific suicide prevention: Defining it ourselves'
- Professor Ella Arensman, IASP Past President, Plenary session: Self-harm and suicide in young people: Associated risk factors and evidence based interventions

The Conference is taking place at Waitangi, in the Bay of Islands which Matua Witi Ashby of Te Rau Matatini believes is the right location for the conference. "Ngati Rahiri and Ngati Kawa are the traditional owners and occupiers of Waitangi, a special place where the Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Waitangi were signed. It is the place where our ancestors debated key social and political issues, and to this day these debates continue at Waitangi – so it is an appropriate place for the serious topics of the IASP Asia Pacific Conference 2018 to be considered."

More information can be found at <https://iasp.info/newzealand/>

IASP is a Non-Governmental Organization concerned with suicide prevention, dedicated to:

- preventing suicidal behaviour,
- alleviating its effects, and
- providing a forum for academics, mental health professionals, crisis workers, volunteers and suicide survivors.

Founded by the late Professor Erwin Ringel and Dr. Norman Farberow in 1960, IASP now includes professionals and volunteers from more than fifty different countries.

For more information please contact: newzealand@iasp.info

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