



HALT
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HALT – Pre Budget submission

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the pre-budget submission process.

HALT was founded in 2013 in Castlemaine after the suicide of a local Tradie and a strong desire from the community to try and do something to help other tradies get through the tough periods of their lives.

HALT is a registered Health Promotions charity with the ACNC with our focus being on Tradies, building and construction apprentices, local council depot workers, hardware store staff and manufacturing/factory blue collar workers.

HALT focuses on improving understanding of the issues surrounding mental health and suicide, educating people on how to have the tough conversations, reducing the stigma and shame of speaking up when you're struggling and debunking myths around the word suicide and giving the word the right context.

The HALT talk has been delivered at 'Save your Bacon' brekky's at hardware stores, building sites of all sizes, sporting clubs, council depot sheds, TAFE, Men's sheds, factories and industrial estates.

A large section of the HALT workforce have a lived experience which is a critical and important element when talking on a building site to 100 tradies at 7am, with the talks being honest, authentic and relatable.

The talks cover the following topics:

- The origins of HALT
- Risk factors associated with mental health and suicide
- What support services are available – local, state, and national
- What makes a good listener?
- How to have a tough conversation
- Use of the word 'suicide', why we haven't used it and how to use it in a conversation
- The importance of doing something good for yourself

All of our HALT project workers in the community delivering the HALT talks weave their own personal story into the narrative, giving it that authentic feel.

In 2019, through the Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, and Federal Department of Health, HALT was awarded \$2 million, over four years, to start building a national program.

HALT works with both the South East Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN) and North West Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) and we are being evidence over three years by Swinburne University with the reports attached.

A key focus of HALT is working with building and construction apprentices at TAFE and other registered training organisations to improve the apprentices, trade teachers and other staff's understanding of mental health and suicide prevention.

We have a partnership with Apprentice Victoria, and we have delivered HALT talks in nearly every TAFE in Victoria and many TAFE's in NSW.

We know the apprentices are the future of the building industry and we believe HALT can help these encourage and educate them on their help seeking behaviour and give them the knowledge for when they go out into the industry.

I have also attached, for your perusal, our current application for the National Suicide Prevention Leadership and support program.

From a team of seven we are perfectly placed to expand the work of HALT into other communities across Australia.

We work with local GP practices and psychologists as part of our HALT friendly clinic program.

We want to put fulltime HALT workers into TAFE to value add to existing roles there. These HALT workers would bring in people to help with issues surrounding finance, relationships, drugs and alcohol, gambling, bullying and grief and loss.

We collaborate with local Headspace centres, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Master Builders Australia and Victoria, Bunnings, Mitre 10, TAFE, large construction companies and small building sites.

HALT would love to be able to put HALT workers into the community, especially working with tradies and with businesses in industrial estates.

HALT goes into Industrial estates, where no one goes to talk about mental health, to deliver our talk and HALT resources.

We believe in a whole of community response to reducing the rates of suicide in Australian communities.

Jeremy Forbes, HALT Founder, has spoken at National and overseas conferences on suicide prevention.

Our Founder, Jeremy Forbes, even has a TED talk...

https://www.ted.com/talks/jeremy_forbes_how_to_start_a_conversation_about_suicide

Here is our website., with details of our HALT friendly clinic program.

<https://halt.org.au>

No, we don't have a lengthy, polished, professional submission...we have evidence, we have passion, we get out into the community and save lives, that's what HALT does best.

We know and understand the Tradie culture, we speak the language.

We reach all sections of the community, employing people in the community who know their community best, and we'd like funding to be able to offer HALT workers to more communities.

Simple but effective.

I write this after returning from two HALT talks this morning in Melbourne, speaking with around 180 tradies, it is powerful and I'm extremely grateful to be able to have this impact, imagine how much impact we would have with HALT workers across Australia doing this every day?

Thank you again for this opportunity and whoever is reading this, take care and be kind to yourself!

Regards

Jeremy Forbes

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