



MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW ONE-OF-A-KIND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HELPLINE UP AND RUNNING TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN CRISIS

13 YARN, Australia's first - and only - national Indigenous-led crisis hotline is now up and running. Funded by the Australian Government (through the Department of Health), the new purpose-built, 24/7 national telephone helpline is codesigned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people specifically to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander crisis support line has been developed in collaboration with Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia and is run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the support of Lifeline.

All Crisis Supporters will be of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and are provided with clinical and cultural support. As the line grows, helpline staff will be embedded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities across Australia, with a virtual workforce and training model ensuring that information and expertise can be shared to every corner of the country.

National Program Manager Marjorie Anderson said every aspect of 13 YARN has been designed to be culturally appropriate – from the non-typical conversation approach to the welcome message and Aboriginal hold music.

“13 YARN offers a confidential one-on-one over the phone yarning opportunity for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. It's a place where they can connect and receive help from a trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter,” Ms Anderson said.

“We believe there is always hope at the end of a yarn, we know how to listen without judgement or shame, and we believe in the power of storytelling to heal.”

Anyone can access the line by calling 13 YARN [13 92 76] around the clock, where they will be assisted for their immediate situation and, if necessary, referred to culturally appropriate programs and services to make sure there is ongoing support.



Initial feedback has been encouraging, with one caller saying the service was completely unique.

“There’s never been a national service run by mob, that’ll let me spin a yarn, and will take the time to listen, anytime that I need it,” they said.

Other smaller existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island crisis lines will be supported by 13 YARN, which will openly share resources and expertise to build on the network of resources and programs available for people in need.

Funding for an independent evaluation of the impact of 13YARN has been included to ensure the service stays on track and remains fit for purpose.

If you, or someone you know are feeling worried or no good, we encourage you to connect with 13 YARN [13 92 76] and talk with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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