

Black Dog Ride

- WA 2016 -

raising
awareness
of depression
and suicide
prevention

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEDNESDAY 6th JULY 2016

WA Riders Shining a Spotlight on Suicide

Black Dog Ride has opened registrations for WA 2016, their unforgettable inland motorcycle ride hitting the highways in August. The ride aims to shine a spotlight on suicide prevention in regional Western Australia, which has the second highest suicide rate in the nation.

Black Dog Ride, now in its seventh year, is a national suicide prevention charity whose mission is to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention. Funds raised by Black Dog Riders during WA 2016 will fund Mental Health First Aid's Teen Program in Australian secondary schools and build the capacity of Lifeline's online Crisis Support Chat service.

Black Dog Ride's WA 2016 Coordinator Gary Pontifex has seen first hand the tragic results of suicide, "I have known a number of friends who have taken their life. Volunteering with Black Dog Ride provides me with a great opportunity to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention using my motorbike to engage communities all over the state."

Gary also sees the benefits of starting conversations about mental health, "Now I'm involved with Black Dog Ride and a Mental Health First Aider, some of my friends reach out to me when the black dog is shadowing them. I'm grateful to be making a difference in people's lives."

Participants in WA 2016 will depart Perth and Busselton on 18th August, circumnavigating to Kalgoorlie, Mt Magnet, Newman, Port Hedland, Carnarvon, Geraldton then arriving back in Perth on 28th August.

To register or donate to Black Dog Ride's WA 2016 campaign, visit www.blackdogride.com.au/wa2016

For more information about WA 2016, contact Gary Pontifex: wa@blackdogride.com.au or 0401-966-356

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KEY MESSAGING

WA 2016

General Messaging Points:

- The suicide rate in Australia equates to one death every three hours, or eight deaths per day
- More than twice as many people die from suicide in Australia than in road related deaths
- 75% of all Australians who die by suicide are men
- Suicide amongst men in regional communities is twice as high as men in metropolitan areas
- The average Australian suicide rate is 10 per 100,000 however in WA it is 14 per 100,000
- Depression is the most prevalent mental health disorder experienced by Australians
- Over one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year
- 1 in 5 people will experience depression in their lives; 1 in 4 females and 1 in 6 males
- Black Dog Ride is a national suicide prevention charity based in Busselton WA
- Black Dog Ride has raised \$2,200,000 for mental health services since 2009
- WA 2016 is a 10 day long motorbike ride in the WA organised by Black Dog Ride to raise awareness and funds for depression and suicide prevention
- Fundraising from WA 2016 benefits Lifeline Australia and Mental Health First Aid Australia
- Mental Health First Aid Australia will use the funds to continue the Black Dog Ride funded roll out of their MHFA Teen Program which has trained 714 adolescents since 2015
- Lifeline will be using the funds for building the capacity of their online Crisis Support Chat service which assists over 40,000 people experiencing suicide or a mental health crisis annually

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-----END OF KEY MESSAGING-----