

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Evaluating the suicide risk of men in the Pilbara Region

Mr Michael Woods from the Men's Health Information & Resource Centre (MHIRC) will be evaluating a newly implemented suicide intervention scheme with construction and mining workers in the Pilbara region. This research was funded by OzHelp Foundation Ltd.

'Suicide rates among men employed in the construction and mining industries across Australia have been consistently higher than the national average for decades' explains Mr Woods. 'The OzHelp Foundation Ltd., (funded by the Department of Health and Ageing) has initiated suicide prevention services for men across the ACT, regional NSW, Tasmania and Queensland – and has now moved into the Pilbara region with the REAL4Mii (Real Engagement And Linking for Men in Industry) projects. A selection of suicide prevention and mental health awareness services from the REAL4Mii will be implemented in the mining and construction areas in the Pilbara region of north-west Australia in an attempt to reduce the risk of suicide among men in the region. The main objective of this project is to build awareness of suicide issues, identify those at risk of suicide, and assist workers identified at risk of suicide and build support services'.

The study will assess the achievements to date of the OzHelp Pilbara Project and assist in the continuing development of the project. The evaluation will use a combination of interviews and surveys with various groups of relevant men – senior managers, supervisors and tradesmen, and young apprentices – to assess their levels of knowledge around mental health and suicide risks, and to develop better programs and mechanisms for raising awareness in the workplace.



The research will improve the ability to tailor and change different aspects of the REAL4Mii program to ensure its effectiveness. A comprehensive suicide prevention program for construction and mining workers in the Pilbara region may lower suicide rates among these men. Such tools enhance the Australian community's overall capacity in suicide prevention.

Project Title: OzHelp Pilbara Project Evaluation Plan

Funding has been set at: \$24,856

Contact Details: m.woods@uws.edu.au

<http://www.menshealth.uws.edu.au>

December 2009