

PRINT HANDICAPPED RADIO OF ACT INCORPORATED

Policy

Reporting suicide and mental illness responsibly

Approved 4 September 2017

Policy – Reporting suicide and mental illness responsibly

Background

Suicide is a prominent public health issue in Australia with over 2,000 people dying by suicide each year.

Mental illness is a major risk factor for suicide with studies showing that up to 90% of people who suicide may have been experiencing mental disorder at the time of their death.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the considerations to be given when reporting on suicide and mental illness.

Policy

Issues to consider when reporting:

- whether the story needs to be broadcast
- item should not be explicit about the method or location of suicide
- discussion of celebrity suicide can glamorise suicide
- consider the angle (or positioning) of the story
- Include helpline contacts in your story.

If in doubt about reporting, the issue can be discussed with the station manager or a representative of the 1RPH committee.

The Mind Media and Mental Health Project (MMMh) is one of a suite of projects on suicide, mental illness and the media developed as part of the national media strategy. MMMh aims to build a collaborative relationship with the Australian media and mental health systems to enable a more accurate and sensitive portrayal of suicide and mental health issues across all news media in Australia. A key activity of MMMh is the development of a resource kit for use by media professionals. It is available from: www.mindframe-media.info.