

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

Project Name: Building a Framework for Mental Wellbeing
Project Manager: Alisha Stone
Project Sponsor: Andrew Brock
Prepared By: Alisha Stone
Date: February 2020

BACKGROUND

As the leading cause of preventable injury-related death in the district, the prevention of suicide is a key focus area for New Plymouth Injury Safe. On average 16 people in New Plymouth take their own lives every year.¹

Many factors influence this significant area of concern and vary per individual; including mental health issues, exposure to trauma, a lack of social support and connectedness, substance abuse and addictions, and experiencing stressful life events (e.g. chronic pain, discrimination, bullying, relationship conflict, job or financial loss, work related stress and living in rural communities). Data also shows in the period 2012-15, ten times more men than women died as a result of suicide in the New Plymouth district.²

The data indicates that those who are most at risk are men, with Maori men being statistically over-represented³. The construction sector has a high proportion of men and Māori; and nationally, this industry has the highest percentage of suicide for employed men of any industry, according to recent research by the Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ)⁴. At 6.9 per cent of all suicides, it is marginally higher than that of farming and forestry, which sits at 6.8 per cent. 'Macho and bullying culture' was the main reason suggested. The report also cited intolerance of different people on the work site as a main contributor to poor mental health. The study cited a culture of "toxic masculinity" - or the "take a concrete pill and harden up" attitude, boom and bust cycles, drug and alcohol abuse, customers demanding more, an undervalued career, and conflicts between young and older men on site^{5, 6}.

¹ New Plymouth Injury Safe (2019). *New Plymouth District Community Injury Prevention Needs Assessment 2015*. Retrieved 16 November 2018 from

<https://www.npis.org.nz/uploads/documents/Injury%20Statistics/Final%20report%20revised%20for%20NPiS%2017%20September%202015.pdf>

² Injury Prevention Research Unit (2019). *2012 to 2015 New Zealand Injury Fatalities, all external causes, Self-inflicted intent, both genders, all age groups, New Plymouth District TLA*. Retrieved 25 July 2019 from: https://psm-dm.otago.ac.nz/nigs/index.php?ethnicity=&query_type=fatal&year_min=2012&year_max=2015&age_min=0&age_max=85&ecode=&intent=2&gender=®ion_type=ta&dhb=&ta=33&local_board=&report=gender&submit=Produce+Report

³ Suicide Mortality Review Committee. 2016. *Ngā Rāhui Hau Kura: Suicide Mortality Review Committee Feasibility Study 2014–15. Report to the Ministry of Health*, 31 May 2016. Wellington: Suicide Mortality Review Committee

⁴ Bryson, K and Duncan, A. (2019). *Mental health in the construction industry scoping study*. Retrieved 23 July 2019 from: https://www.branz.co.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=b424b7e69484699597984c563ddad5a3d9170d97. New Zealand: Building Research Association of NZ.

⁵ Hutching, C. (2018). *Construction industry's 'toxic' masculine culture blamed for high suicide rate*. Retrieved 16 November 2018 from <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/107361218/construction-industrys-toxic-masculine-culture-blamed-for-high-suicide-rate>.

⁶ Sitesafe (2019) <https://www.sitesafe.org.nz/news--events/news/site-safe-publishes-report-on-suicide-in-construction-sector/>

NPiS sought frameworks that could support the construction industry and concluded the success of Taranaki’s Rural Support Trust in addressing mental health and wellbeing within their sector indicated a suitable approach for the construction industry. The framework is based on sector leadership and the sector looking to look after itself while seeking appropriate help when required.

To reduce the rate of suicide and improve the mental wellbeing of people in the district, New Plymouth Injury Safe is committed to supporting new models of support out in the community that promote conditions which enhance wellbeing, allow people to flourish, and provide structures that give the tools and resources to get help when people need it.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

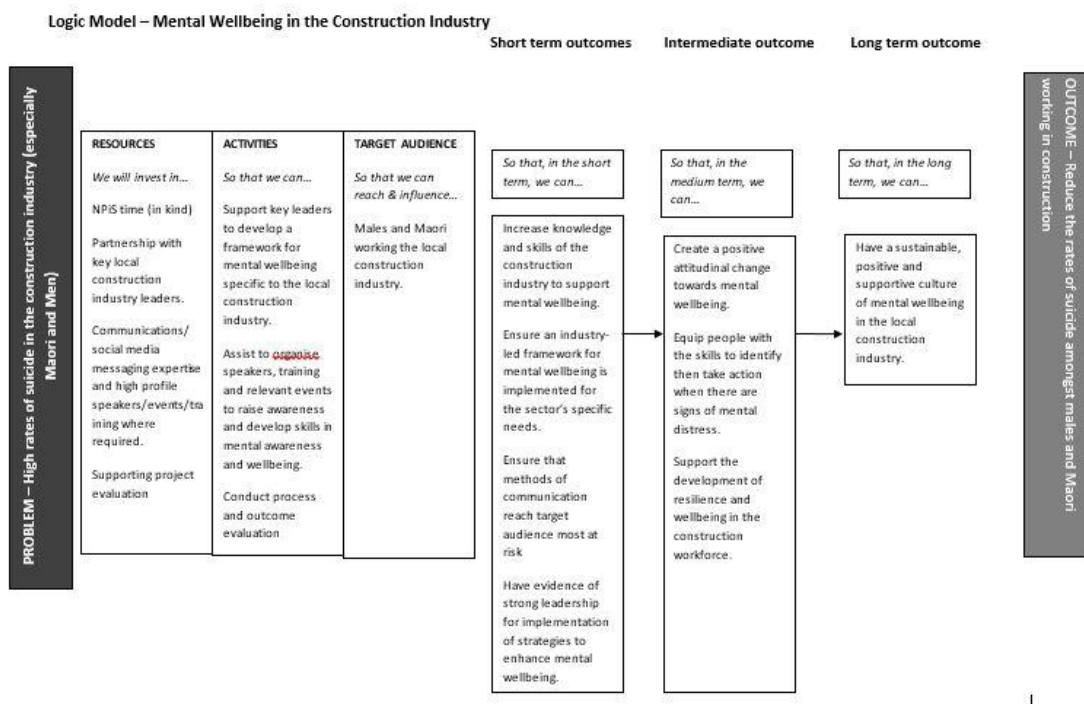
Goal:

- To improve the mental wellbeing and decrease the incidence of self harm and suicide by construction workers

Objectives:

- To work alongside key stakeholders in the local construction industry to raise awareness of the issue of mental wellbeing for the sector
- To support the local construction industry to identify and implement a model to support enhanced mental wellbeing
- To engage with an industry that provides a channel to reach a high proportion men and Maori men
- Support the construction industry to own and lead the model to ensure its sustainability

LOGIC MODEL



STAKEHOLDERS

- Key stakeholders and industry leaders from the local construction industry, - including Pepper Construction, Clelands Construction, Location Homes/Master Builders, Whitaker Construction, New Plymouth District Council.
- Taranaki Rural Support Trust (example of successful industry specific peer support model)
- CHASNZ – Construction Health and Safety New Zealand
- Other construction industry stakeholders including SiteSafe, Worley, Bell Building.

ACTIVITY

Key stakeholders/industry leaders were identified and approached by NPiS to discuss the recent report released by BRANZ, obtain their perspective on the situation with the local construction sector and gauge interest in working together to enhance mental wellbeing.

Some stakeholders approached were involved in organising their own mental health event for the construction industry in May with Mike King as the speaker. In June, the Chair of the Taranaki Master Builders Association had an article published in local media about mental wellbeing in the construction industry (see appendix 1)

NPiS organised and held a seminar with Nigel Latta in October to assist in raising awareness about the specific challenges and solutions required to enhance mental wellbeing in the construction industry. In mid-2019, after consultation with industry reps, the following draft framework was agreed to. NPiS continued to meet directly with key industry leaders throughout 2019 to help initiate further framework development and implementation.

Taranaki Construction Industry, building a framework for Taranaki mental health and wellness

2019 Draft

Why build a framework

- Outlines the magnitude of the problem
- Signals a commitment by the construction sector to tackling the issue
- Provides guidance and identifies the actions to be taken
- Identifies key stakeholders
- Makes it human
- States the outcomes

Outcome

Reduce and eliminate suicide and suicide attempts in the construction industry

Objectives/steps

1. Have key stakeholders on board who are committed to long-term sustainable change
2. Increase awareness of the challenges that impact on mental wellness across the construction sector
3. Deliver an education programme on mental wellbeing
4. Train key people across the sector who can be identified and approached for help.
5. Develop a support network within the local construction sector
6. Strengthen the relationship with GP's, health sector and NGO's.
7. Develop a specific Postvention response for Taranaki construction sector
8. Establish a sustainable model

Objective	Action
1. Have key stakeholders on board who are committed to long-term sustainable change	Facilitate a leaders forum for mental wellness in sector
2. Increase awareness of the challenges that impact on mental wellness across the construction sector	Disseminate research across sector Keep all stakeholders informed of statistics and information Communicate with media when opportunities arise
3. Deliver an education programme on mental wellbeing Evolve the culture of the sector, (BRANZ research) macho, old young divide, boom bust cycle, reduce stigma associated with asking for help.....	Support seminars on mental wellbeing Tool box meetings include mental wellness conversations, intentionally trying to change the culture Include mental wellness in all apprentice training All new staff member induction includes mental wellness and who to talk to if you need help. Get people asking for help
4. Train and mobilise key people across the sector who can be identified and approached for help. These will be people who come into frequent contact with members of the construction industry. Eg site managers, foreman, inspectors, suppliers.....	Create a network of people who are trained to recognise the risk factors and have access to resources and services as required to support people. In order to be effective training must be continuous and sustained ideally as part of a professional training plan

	Provide support networks for the trained people to utilise
5. Develop a support network within the local construction sector	Seek out and provide training to staff in the construction sector who are willing to support/mentor those in need
6. Strengthen the relationships and access to GP's, health sector and NGO's.	GP network TDHB mental health services Counsellors Tui Ora Taranaki retreat Problem Gambling
7. Develop a specific Postvention response for Taranaki construction sector	Develop local construction response Connect to national suicide bereavement counselling service
8. Establish a sustainable model	Partner with national initiatives 0800 number Develop local oversight group Employ local coordinator for sector Seek out innovations in other areas Evaluate and monitor

PROCESS EVALUATION OF ACTIVITY TO DATE

What did you do?	How well did you do? (Quality)
Identified and approached key stakeholders in the local construction industry, to discuss current data trends for construction workers	From January 2019 NPiS has approached and met with 9 representatives/groups from the local construction industry. All stakeholders approached acknowledged and wanted to further analyse the unique challenges that the construction industry currently face and have expressed commitment to working with NPiS to identify a local strategy to enhance mental wellbeing.
NPiS organised a seminar for construction industry workers with Nigel Latta on enhancing Mental wellbeing to further raise awareness.	Seminar successfully held on 11 th October. Was a sold out event (158 attendees from local construction industry). (See appendix 1) Event was sold out, and positive feedback was immediately received from attendees through a number of separate networks. Seven local companies provided sponsorship to help bring this event to Taranaki. Also as a result of this seminar, a meeting was organised for 31 October with key industry representatives to initiate the development of a local model for enhancing mental wellbeing.

	<p>Anecdotally the seminar started a number of very positive conversations in a number of construction workplaces about how to better look after the mental wellbeing of all staff.</p>
<p>Following the Nigel Latta session, the next stage included NPiS drafting a proposed model to be used as a basis for discussion at a meeting with identified key stakeholders in October.</p> <p>Meeting held with 5 key stakeholders on 31st October where next steps were identified.</p>	<p>Proposed framework drafted by NPiS (see above).</p> <p>At the meeting future actions were agreed, including investigating related programmes such as MATES in Construction. The other outcome of this meeting was commitment towards the future proposed development of a mentoring style project, based on the Taranaki Rural Support Trust Model, with trained peer supporters within the local construction industry. This will be progressed in 2020, to be initiated by key stakeholders, holding a strategizing session with key stakeholders to begin framework development and implementation</p>

NEXT STEPS

A meeting was held in December 2019 with 5 key industry stakeholders and Construction Health and Safety New Zealand (CHASNZ) to discuss the rollout of the Mates in Construction programme. Those present advocated for Taranaki to be considered as part of this programme's rollout in some form. As a result of this meeting, CHASNZ are now aware of the group's interest in being involved as well as recent work which has occurred locally in related to mental wellbeing in construction. A challenge is Mates in Construction has never been implemented in a regional setting.

Industry reps have indicated an interest to continue working on a local model for construction. The recent media coverage in February 2020 is evidence that this is happening independently of NPiS which is a success factor (see appendix 3).

RISKS AND MITIGATION

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of activity without NPIS input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify leadership within the industry • Identify and work with industry influencers to ensure effective engagement. • Reinforce on a regular basis that to be a sustainable project this must be an industry led response. • Provide a support/advisory role as opposed to leading. • Regularly refer to the Rural Support Model as a successful model of an industry led project.
Key stakeholders unable to find sufficient funds to initiate project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an application to TSB Community Trust for seed funding.
Lack of trust in mental health crisis services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships so that referrals are responded to promptly

RECOMMENDATIONS

- NPIS to keep working with local key industry leaders and CHASNZ to provide support where needed and advocate for progress on an industry-led framework for mental wellbeing
- NPIS to investigate options for specific training/personal development for the construction industry on suicide prevention and mental wellbeing.
- NPIS to link in Taranaki Rural Support Trust where required as a successful example of a sector-run model for wellbeing.
- NPIS to continue document activity related to this project and develop an evaluation plan to measure future progress.

APPENDIX ONE – MEDIA COVERAGE JUNE 2019

Taranaki builder urges tradies to ask for help with their mental health

Brianna McIlraith 13:50, Jun 18 2019



ANDY JACKSON/STUFF

Builder Campbell Mattson is urging tradies to speak about if they're struggling.

A Taranaki builder is urging tradespeople to drop the macho image and not be afraid to ask for help with their mental health.

Campbell Mattson, owner of Location Homes and president of the Master Builders Association Taranaki branch believes tradespeople need to talk to each other more as mental health in the construction industry continues to decline.

"It's been proven in studies, that mental health and suicide in the construction industry is a huge and growing problem," he said.



ANDY JACKSON/STUFF

Mattson said he suffered depression as he tried to get his building company through a recession.

Mattson said although there were lots of reasons why mental health issues were so prevalent in the industry and the "macho" culture on work sites made it harder for them to open up.

READ MORE:

- * [**Workplace pressures contributed to construction sector suicides, report finds**](#)
- * [**Time to put the 'health' into Health and Safety**](#)
- * [**Master Builders can step in to help customers of Taranaki building firm caught up in drug raid**](#)

"So for a guy in the building trade to turn around and say 'hey I'm not feeling well, I think I'm depressed and I'm struggling' that's very uncommon," he said.

"So one of the things we're trying to bring up as a discussion is whether you are struggling with mental health issues, or whether you see someone struggling, the most important thing to do is to reach out and talk about it."

In May Site Safe, an organisation that advocates for health and safety in the construction industry, released a report reviewing 300 coroners closed-case files of suicides among construction industry workers that occurred between 2007 to 2017.

It found 32 per cent of all cases were related to workplace pressures, such as job insecurity and stress to meet deadlines.

"The issues are that we don't automatically reach out to someone who we see is in trouble. But also the other way round is we don't reach out very well to our mates and say we're in trouble," Mattson said.

He'd operated a business through two recessions and in the first one, at only 24-years-old, he had to lay off half his staff in three weeks, which caused him distress.

"I would say looking back I was depressed. I was probably depressed for three or four months and it was only through the support of my wife I got through that."

He said as tradespeople needed to be easier on themselves and on others, and remember they were only human and humans make mistakes.

Mattson said having fun and teasing each other on work sites was fine as long as people understood the impact it could have was not always as they intended.

"It's all good and well to have fun and give each other a bit of stick. But backing it up with empathy and being careful that the words you say aren't having a long term negative affect on someone."

WHERE TO GET HELP

1737, Need to talk? Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor

Lifeline – 0800 543 354 or (09) 5222 999 within Auckland

Samaritans – 0800 726 666

Suicide Crisis Helpline – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

thelowdown.co.nz – or email team@thelowdown.co.nz or free text 5626

Anxiety New Zealand - 0800 ANXIETY (0800 269 4389)

Supporting Families in Mental Illness - 0800 732 825.

Alcoholics Anonymous - 0800 AA WORKS, or aa.org.nz.

If it is an emergency or you, or someone you know, is at risk call 111.

Stuff

APPENDIX TWO – FLIER FOR NIGEL LATTA SEMINAR



Enhancing Mental Wellbeing in the Construction Industry

A breakfast seminar with
Nigel Latta for
Construction Industry workers

FRIDAY 11 OCTOBER - 7:00AM-8:30AM
BREAKFAST SERVED FROM 6:45AM

NEW PLYMOUTH CLUB
55 GILL STREET, NEW PLYMOUTH

\$25 per person - breakfast provided
Register at www.eventspronto.co.nz/latta

More info contact Alisha Stone on:
manager@npis.org.nz or 027 227 2677

Proudly supported by



APPENDIX THREE – MEDIA COVERAGE FEBRUARY 2020

Taranaki tradies moves to address mental health issues in the construction industry

Leighton Keith 07:30, Feb 05 2020



ANDY JACKSON/STUFF

Location Homes Taranaki managing director Campbell Mattson is working to address the construction industry's high rate of suicide.

An initial move to get Taranaki tradespeople to drop macho attitudes and take steps to address mental health issues has snowballed.

In 2019 the region's master trades for building, plumbing, painting, joinery and electricians held an event with comedian and mental health advocate Mike King for its members in the construction industry, which has one of the highest rates of suicide in the country.

The initiative raised \$7000, which has been donated to the Taranaki Retreat, a suicide prevention refuge, but more importantly has resulted in greater awareness of the problems and increased steps being taken to address them, Campbell Mattson, owner of Location Homes Taranaki and president of the region's branch of the Master Builders Association, said.



ANDY JACKSON/STUFF

Taranaki Master Builders Association president Campbell Mattson is encouraging all tradies to have "courageous conversations" about mental health.

Mattson said the retreat, set up by Jamie and Suzy Allen, did a fantastic job and deserved all the help it could get.

READ MORE

* [Taranaki builder urges tradies to ask for help with their mental health](#)

* [Taranaki Retreat: a pathway out of the darkness](#)

"Without people like Jamie and Suzy and all of the sponsors that they've got around them there would be a lot more people who wouldn't be amongst us any more," Mattson said.

ADVERTISEMENT

Advertise with Stuff

"I don't think that they can get enough support."

Mattson, who has helped close associates through dark times, said a macho culture still existed within the trades.

A working group had been established to form an organisation to provide industry-wide support, guidance and a framework for those struggling or who wanted to help, he said.

It was not always easy to spot people grappling with mental health issues including depression, and Mattson was shocked when he learnt the truth about someone he considered a tough, resilient character.

"What I didn't know is that they felt like a failure and completely alone.

"It is a wake-up call to realise that people who are near to you are feeling that there is no other option but to pull the pin on this thing called life."

Initially his offers of support were met with anger but Mattson said it didn't take long to break down the barriers and he encouraged others to instigate "courageous conversations".

"There is a high chance you will meet resistance or hostility initially but in my experience there's a lot to be talked about afterwards.

"It's the men or the ladies who are willing to take the risk of being rejected or ridiculed to start the conversation, they are the ones who will break through.

He suggested taking small steps, showing empathy and letting others know you were available to talk.

"You don't have to start by diving in and trying to solve all of their problems."

On Tuesday the presidents of the five Taranaki master trades visited the retreat to see the work first hand.

Stuff

- -
- -
- -
- -