

# **Self-harm assessment and management**

**Capital Health Network**

**Mental Health Expo**

# Overview

1. Self-harm data
2. Vulnerable Population groups
3. Self-harm Assessment
4. Self-harm management

# What is Self-harm?

Self-harm – very broad term used to refer to the intentional inflicting of painful, destructive or injurious acts, on oneself, generally without intent to die.

# How do people Self-harm?

- cutting
- overdose
- burning
- scratching

# Self-harm in Australia

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016, *Healthy Communities: Hospitalisations for mental health conditions and intentional self-harm in 2013–14*
- Age-standardised rates of *hospitalisations for mental health intentional self-harm* (same-day and overnight admissions) across *Primary Health Network areas, 2013–14*



# The ACT story

Rate of intentional self-harm hospitalisations per 100,000 people, age-standardised

Primary Health Network area	2013–14	50	100	150	200	250	No. hosps. <sup>a</sup>	Bed day rate <sup>b</sup>
National rate	150						33,956	805
Australian Capital Territory	127						490	742

Key:

a Number of intentional self-harm hospitalisations

b Rate of intentional self-harm bed days per 100,000 people, age-standardised

# Common reported reasons for self-harm

- Physical pain substitution for emotional suffering
- Stress management
- Eliciting help and care
- Demonstrative purposes

# At Risk Populations

- Mental illness
- Adolescents
- Females
- Trauma background



# Self-harm assessment

- Self-harm behaviour (e.g frequency, previous attempts, plans)
- Mental health history background
- Situational factors (e.g. Home environment, bullying)
- Trauma background
- Protective factors

# Immediate risk

- Does the level of self-harm require emergency medical attention?
- If not, what steps are in place to mitigate risk of escalation of behaviours at least in short-term?

# Management

- Psychoeducation
- Safety Plans (e.g use of healthier coping strategies)
- Formalised therapies (DBT, CBT etc)
- Psychosocial supports
- Medication