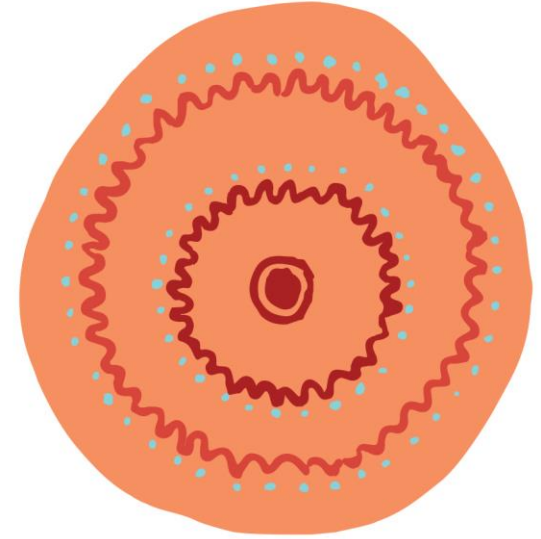




Australian Government

National Mental Health Commission

**Making
Connections
with your
Mental Health
and Wellbeing**



Kununurra, WA

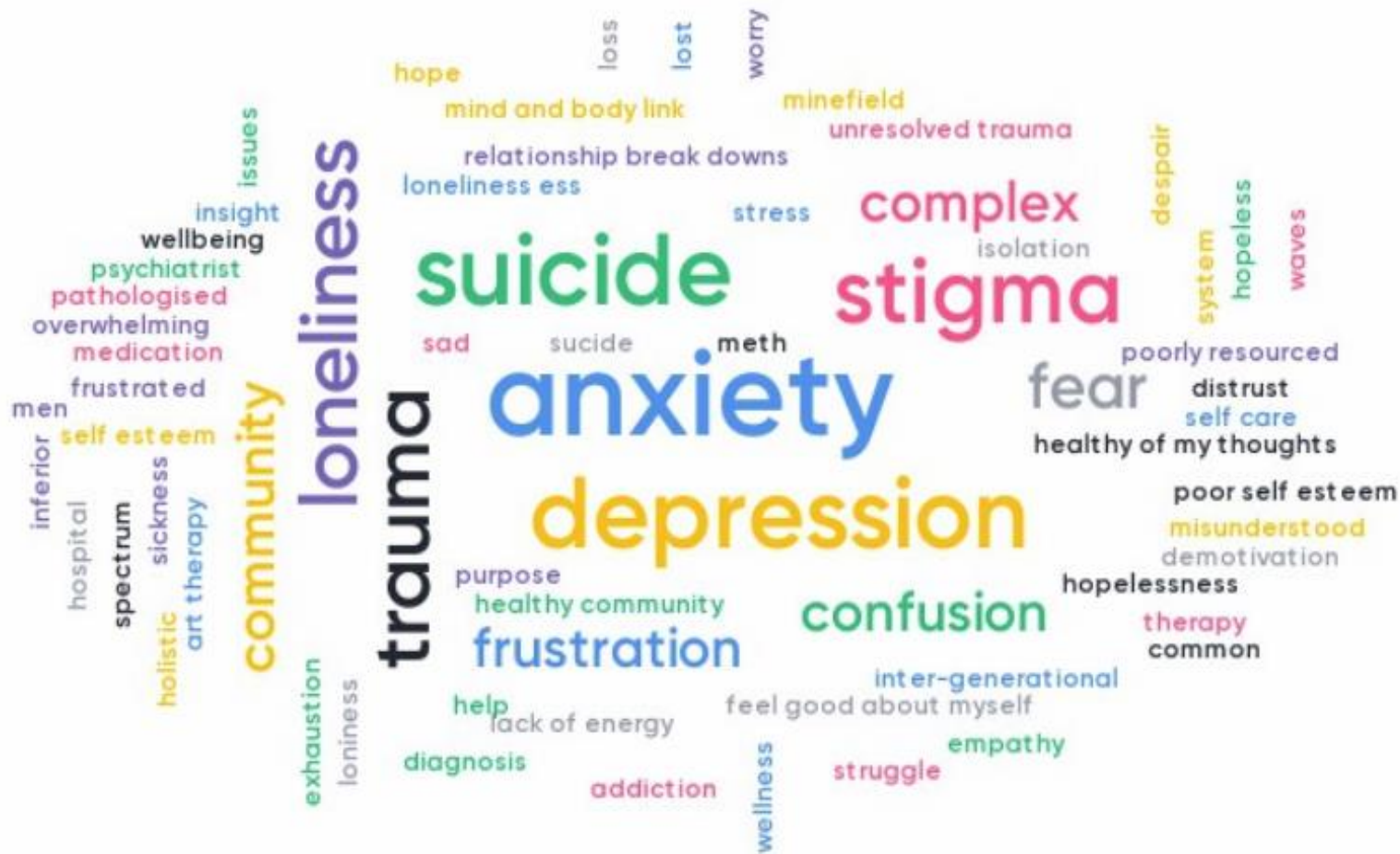
15 July 2019

30 Participants

This snapshot identifies key points from the
Town Hall Meeting

Content from all Town Hall Meetings is being
collated by the Commission

Exploring Mental Health



Participants were asked to share 3 words that come to mind when thinking of mental health:

- Anxiety, depression and suicide came up as the most common responses
- Trauma, stigma and loneliness were identified as common responses
- Confusion, complex, frustration and fear were mentioned often

Help Seeking

Participants were asked what stops them or someone they know from seeking help.

Responses included:

- Stigma, and the fear of being judged
- Lack of confidentiality, fear of repercussions and knowing the service providers personally in a small town
- Limited services available – scope, variety, wait-lists, not available at time of need, nothing after hours, GP not available or under time pressures
- Transience of both community and service providers, unable to build a relationship, drive-in drive-out services – who's here today, fatigue of retelling your story to new clinicians
- Process driven by the dominant culture, not listening about cultural healing and culturally appropriate services
- Feeling unable to access services that are felt to be dominated by one family group
- English is not the clients' first language in remote areas
- Education missing – people do not believe they have a mental illness because its symptoms are normalised
- Don't know where to go or who to go to, compounded by previous poor experiences

Big Ideas or Initiatives

Participants were asked for one big idea or initiative to improve mental health in their community.

Direct comments included:

- '24 hour centre open to everyone that is safe, accessible, non judgemental, where people are free to voice their opinions without fear of recrimination'
- 'That mental health treatment plans for Aboriginal people offer the options of the inclusion of traditional cultural healing. And where the option is accepted, that all efforts be made collaboratively for the benefit of the patient'
- 'More regular culture camps and an in-town, trauma informed, healing centre where services can come together to service the community. A space that promotes wellbeing and is safe and inviting'
- 'That there be funding by government for the development of cultural healing projects'
- 'Measure Gross National Wellbeing to determine policy and spending'
- 'Connection to country and intergenerational transfer of knowledge programs like the communities run in the Tanami Desert, culturally driven process by community and Elders'
- 'Mental health liaison worker with Police for acute situations'
- 'Implement Closing the Gap and then address the other problematic life circumstances, including food poverty in remote communities'
- 'Alcohol restrictions, no more binge drinking'

The Developing Vision

Participants were asked for key aspects to be included in the vision of a new system. Responses included:

- Respect for Elders' collaboration and remuneration for their contributions
- Complexity of the system
- Community accountability to 'walk with the Government'
- Co-design for different situations
- Simplicity for the users
- Intergenerational, two-way and life skills

Perceptions in 2030

Participants were asked for input on how they would like people to perceive mental health and suicide prevention in 2030.

Direct comments included:

- 'Rename it to Mind Health not Mental Health'
- 'No big deal if a colleague is unwell, just like if they have the flu'
- 'With a focus on mental health for life rather than mental illness prevention'
- 'Mental health checks and seeking help become a norm'
- 'Survival and recovery is celebrated'
- 'Culturally appropriate services are the norm'

Thank You, Kununurra

The Commission thanks the community for their comments and suggestions on improving our mental health system

Ways to stay connected:

- ✓ Attend a Town Hall meeting
- Read the snapshots from your community and other communities in Australia
- Take the survey online (coming soon)
- Follow us on Facebook (@NMHCAustralia) and Twitter (@NMHC)
- Join the conversation online using #ConnectingWithYou

