

Preventing Māori suicide focus of upcoming webinars

MEDIA RELEASE

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For many, New Zealand's high suicide rates – especially for Māori – can seem overwhelming. Suicide among Māori is a complex issue, and most people don't know how they can help.

For those who want to learn about Māori suicide prevention, a free series of live and interactive webinars will be broadcast in 2013.

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) is hosting the three webinars in collaboration with the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor Māori, Victoria University of Wellington.

The webinars will address the issue of Māori suicide from an indigenous perspective. Presenters are respected Māori who will speak from their own personal and professional experiences in Māori suicide prevention.

"We hope that these webinars will increase understanding of what can be done to prevent suicide, and increase viewers' capacity to help vulnerable people in their own whānau and communities," says MHF Chief Executive Judi Clements.

The webinars will appeal to any one interested in Māori suicide prevention, including kaimahi/professionals from a range of sectors who work with Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, hāpori Māori and individuals.

"Whānau is pivotal... it is the key to suicide prevention," says Dr Nicole Coupe, who will be co-presenting the third webinar in March with Dr Lynne Russell.

"For Māori, culture is the centre-point of being connected... whānau will bring them back to their language, their whakapapa, their whenua, their marae. Connecting Māori with whānau is how we can bring them back to life."

The webinar series will be an "an important platform and vehicle for examining how we respond to Māori suicide as whānau, hapū, and iwi," says Keri Lawson-Te Aho, presenter of the first webinar.

The webinar schedule is:

- **Preventing Māori suicide: What do we need to do?** 29 January 2013 with Keri Lawson-Te Aho from 12:30 pm – 1pm
- **Preventing Māori suicide: Involving whānau and community** 19 February 2013 with Di Grennell and Michael Naera 12:30 – 1pm
- **Preventing Māori suicide: Improving care and intervention** 19 March 2013 with Dr Nicole Coupe and Dr Lynne Russell. 12:30pm-1pm

Webinars are online seminars which allow presenters to interact with an audience live over the internet. Find out more and register for the webinars online at <http://www.spinz.org.nz/page/323-webinars>

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About Suicide Prevention Information New Zealand (SPINZ)

Founded in 1999, SPINZ is a non-government, national information service promoting high quality information and resources to promote safe and effective suicide prevention activities.

Part of the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, SPINZ is contracted by the Ministry of Health to provide its services, in alignment with the New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.

The SPINZ website (www.spinz.org.nz) has a wealth of resources available to people who are in crisis, as well as those who wish to learn about suicide prevention, or how to respond when someone they know is at risk.