



Equipping primary care to identify

Many people experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviours visit their doctor in the weeks or days before suicide.

Equipping general practices with the skills and resources to identify and support people in distress is one of the most promising interventions for reducing suicide, potentially by 6.3%. This can be done through universal screening of every adult presenting to a general practice and by providing suicide prevention training for all general practice staff.

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general practices already using StepCare screening

COORDINARE is working with the Black Dog Institute to implement their StepCare screening tool in five general practices in the Illawarra Shoalhaven.

StepCare is a short iPad-based questionnaire that screens people for depression, anxiety, substance use and suicidality. It is being used in general practice to help doctors identify people who may be suicidal and connect them with the appropriate care.

How are we supporting practices to use StepCare screening?

COORDINARE has been doing a lot of work to help general practices embed StepCare screening. This includes:

- tailored support and resources
- regular feedback to practices, GPs and patients
- free suicide prevention training for practice staff
- facilitation of a StepCare community of practice

This work is helping to ensure that GPs know when someone is struggling, so they can connect them with supports.

"When a patient did a follow-up screening, we were alerted they had severe symptoms. Although their GP no longer worked at our practice, we had a process in place to monitor the GP's inbox. We immediately flagged the patient with another doctor who followed up with them straight away." - General Practice Nurse

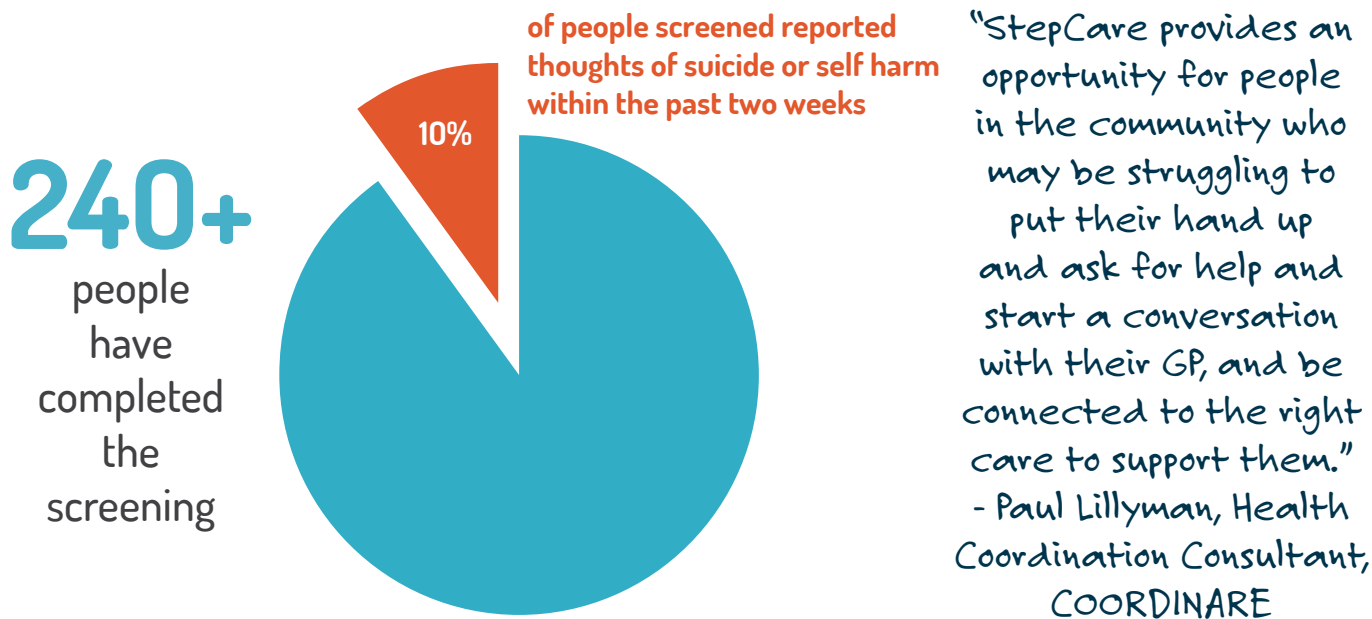


and support people in distress



What has the screening found so far?

Preliminary findings from StepCare screening has reinforced the potential value of screening in general practice.



StepCare screening is helping GPs identify people who are suicidal, or experiencing mental health problems who weren't likely to have otherwise spoken to their GP about these problems. This creates opportunities for GPs to talk to these people about their mental health and connect them with available supports.

