

SUICIDE PREVENTION

**692. Mr P. ABETZ to the Minister for Mental Health:**

Given that Suicide Prevention Week was launched today, and given that the state government made a significant commitment to suicide and self-harm prevention as part of its election platform, can the minister outline to the house how that commitment is being implemented?

**Dr G.G. JACOBS replied:**

I thank the member for Southern River for his interest in suicide prevention. Tragically, in Western Australia every year 300 people take their own lives, and 10 times that number harm themselves. The government made a commitment to present the Western Australian suicide prevention strategy. Some work had been done on it previously, but we have completed that work, and provided an action column, by which I mean a way to deliver this strategy into communities, whether they be the Aboriginal community of Balgo, the towns of Narrogin or Albany, the suburbs of Perth, or workplaces. It will be driven by a ministerial council. We have reduced the size of that council from more than 20 to 12 people from industry who have interests and expertise in all facets of society. They will drive the ministerial council headed up by John Franklin. It was my great pleasure yesterday to be involved in the council's induction. Today it was my great pleasure to release the suicide prevention strategy in Northbridge. The Liberal-National government has committed \$13 million over four years to drive that strategy into the community. It is important that we implement this strategy on the ground.

I draw the attention of members to the summary in the document. I will not allow this to be a document that sits on a coffee table and collects dust. This must deliver in order to reduce the very tragic toll of suicide on our community, which is greater than the intolerable road toll in Western Australia. The government is committed to this, and I have every confidence in the ministerial council to drive this strategy into the community. It is not a one size fits all strategy that sends people out into the community; it uses people who are already in the community. It may be the Act-Belong-Commit model, or a very interested father or mother with adequate training. We will use these people to bring together a community action plan to produce not only community resilience but also individual resilience to stop this intolerable toll.