

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the first community newsletter from my office since I was elected as President of the Legislative Council on September 8th 2020.

I was honoured to be elected as President of the Legislative Council. I have always sought to uphold SA Parliament's standing as a democratic institution and the cornerstone of an accountable, transparent government in our state.

Due to my new role, I am no longer the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention but will carry on working in the area as a passionate advocate for suicide prevention. I will continue to work alongside groups and individuals towards reducing the rate of suicide in South Australia.

I welcome the opportunity to share insight about our work at a number of recent events this year and encourage you to read on for more information and updates from my office.

Hon John Dawkins MLC

President of the Legislative Council

Suicide Prevention Australia 17th Annual LiFE Awards

Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA) is a national peak body for the suicide prevention sector. SPA has been providing support to Australians for more than 25 years by supporting and advocating for continual improvement in suicide prevention policy, programs and services.

The Annual SPA LiFE Awards recognise the local individuals and grassroots organisations that work tirelessly in the suicide prevention field.

On September 10th Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt awarded John the SPA Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his sustained leadership contribution to suicide prevention. John is honoured to have been considered as a nominee and recognises the high calibre of candidates that would have been nominated for the award.

John appreciates that the work individuals and groups are doing through these challenging times is more important than ever and is proud to work with those advocating in the suicide prevention sector.



John pictured with his Lifetime Achievement Award

Events



John pictured speaking at the Annual General Meeting at Salvation Army Riverside Gawler

Gawler Suicide Prevention Community Group

The Annual General Meeting of the Gawler Suicide Prevention Community Group was held on September 13th at Salvation Army Riverside, Gawler.

John conducted the election of the office bearers and was pleased to introduce guest speaker Mr Nathan Bolton, a member of the Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention.

Mr Bolton spoke about his tours in Afghanistan and subsequent struggles with mental health following his service. Mr Bolton's account of his tours, personal experience with mental health and wellbeing, and journey to recovery were inspirational messages of hope for everyone.

Congratulations to new Chairperson Ms Lee-Anne Bennett, who succeeded Cr Cody Davies in the role; long-serving Secretary and new Vice Chairperson Ms Robyn Stecker, who was awarded the group's first Life Member Award; and new Secretary Ms Karen McColl.

National Walk for Mental Health

National Mental Health Month is an initiative of the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA).

This campaign aims to facilitate positive and non-judgemental discussion surrounding the important topic of mental health and wellbeing in Australia through reducing stigma, educating and raising awareness.

On October 18th John spoke and launched the National Walk for Mental Health as part of the MHFA National Mental Health Month activities.

The event was held in the Angus Gardens in the city along the River Torrens and was hosted by MHFA and Multicultural Communities Council of SA.

John pictured speaking at the National Walk for Mental Health



Planning Day

John was honoured to participate in the SA Suicide Prevention Planning Day with members from the Premier's Council on Suicide Prevention and the Issues Group on Suicide Prevention on August 12th hosted by Ms Lucy and Mr Darren Golding at their winery Golding Wines in Lobethal.

The day provided the opportunity for both the Premier's Council and Issues Group on Suicide Prevention to workshop ideas together and be updated on the recent Wellbeing SA transition.

The community focused suicide prevention work of the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist in SA Health transitioned to Wellbeing SA on August 12th 2020.

The Office of the Chief Psychiatrist will maintain a role in suicide prevention but with a focus on specialist mental health services. The South Australian Suicide Prevention Networks will now be administered by Wellbeing SA.

The Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention will continue its work as it previously has and work closely in collaboration with both the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist and Wellbeing SA, with the primary focus being to reduce the rate and impact of suicide in our communities.

John was also very grateful and appreciative of Ms Karen McColl and Ms Tanya Malins for their great work in organising the event. This followed on from their great commitment and dedication throughout their work with John.

On September 22nd, Mr Dan Cregan MP, Member for Kavel and Community Resilience, was appointed as the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention. Karen and Tanya are continuing their roles under Dan's leadership.



Clare Valley Festival of the Lamb

The inaugural Clare Valley Festival of the Lamb was a multi-day festival held between September 16th - 22nd, featuring and celebrating the first buds of the vines and the premier time for new season lamb.

On September 17th John spoke on the subject of mental health and wellbeing at the Industry Lunch, which was held at Hillview Estate, Auburn.

The Office of the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention also attended and handed out regional-based mental health and wellbeing resources to attendees to help raise awareness.



John pictured with Ms Sandy & Mr Rob Royal from the Clare Valley Lions, which sponsored the festival.

Life in Mind National Communication Charter Signing

On July 21st John was delighted to welcome a number of Parliamentary colleagues to sign the Everymind Life in Mind National Communications Charter in the Old Chamber of Parliament House.

The signing of the certificate is representative of the pledge to enact the **eight core principles** of the Charter for the unified approach to mental health and suicide prevention:

- **Make mental health, wellbeing and suicide prevention a national priority**
- **Use appropriate, person-centred and respectful language in all communication**
- **Share nationally consistent information and messages**
- **Work together to maximise our efforts and resources**
- **Use The Charter as a guide for strategic communications, advocacy and awareness raising**
- **Acknowledge those with lived experience of mental ill-health or lived experience of suicide**
- **Respect the diversity of experience of those affected by mental ill-health or suicide**
- **Promote crisis services and help-seeking information**



John with Parliamentary colleagues signing the Charter



John pictured next to the Charter displayed in Parliament House

Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee: Aboriginal Languages in SA

On June 2nd, as the then Presiding Member, John tabled the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee (ALPSC) South Australia Aboriginal Languages report in the Legislative Council.

SA is privileged to be home to around 46 different Aboriginal languages. The report recognises and celebrates the languages and custodians of these languages, who have lived in SA for tens of thousands years.

The inquiry found that languages play a crucial role in connecting Aboriginal people to culture, kinship and country.

The hope of the committee is that the report will lead to a better understanding of the power of Aboriginal languages to improve and develop the local community.

ALPSC Executive Research Officer Dr Ashley Greenwood ably assisted the committee throughout the inquiry and provided support in all stages of the report.

Roxby Downs & Coober Pedy Trip

John has been a frequent and familiar visitor to the Far North of SA since his entry to the Legislative Council in 1997.

John visited Roxby Downs and Coober Pedy from August 17th-18th as part of his role in promoting the establishment of Suicide Prevention Networks in SA.

In Roxby Downs, John met with Mr Roy Blight, CEO; Ms Sasha Yantewo, Community Team Coordinator; and Ms Michelle Hales, Group Manager, Governance & Community to discuss the potential establishment of a Suicide Prevention Network.

In Coober Pedy, John met with Ms Margaret Mackay, Editor of the Coober Pedy Regional Times, and with Mr Tim Jackson, Administrator and Mr Dean Miller, CEO to discuss local matters of the District Council of Coober Pedy.

Eyre Peninsula Trip

In late July John spent time on the Eyre Peninsula travelling to communities including Elliston, Tumby Bay, Cowell, Cummins, Kimba, Lock and Port Lincoln.

John met with District Council of Elliston Mayor Malcolm Hancock and community members to discuss the potential joint establishment of a Suicide Prevention Network in Elliston and Lock.

He spent some time with the Cummins Our Town Project Committee and the Empowering Lower Eyre Suicide Prevention Network at the Cummins Hotel, discussing their current and upcoming initiatives.

John also met with Mentally Fit EP at the West Coast Youth and Community Services in Port Lincoln. Mentally Fit EP aim to promote mental fitness in their local community by partnering with local services and businesses. At the meeting they discussed what is making an impact in the region through the eyes of people with lived experience and what they would like to see changed moving forward, touching on local services, the predicament of COVID-19, and people in crisis.

John also met with Beacon of Hope Tumby Bay and District Suicide Prevention Network, Lincoln Alive! Port Lincoln Suicide Prevention Network, Kimba Mental Health and Wellbeing Group and Cowell Wellbeing Group Suicide Prevention Network.



John pictured with Mentally Fit EP
at the West Coast Youth &
Community Support

Rotary Club of Gawler Meeting



John pictured with President Mark Smeaton and his certificate

October marked 30 years since John was inducted as a member of the Rotary Club of Gawler. After the first two decades as an active member he has been privileged to continue his association with the club as an honorary member since 2010.

On October 19th, John had the opportunity to speak to the club about his role as a Member of the Legislative Council. At the end of his talk he was presented with a certificate and informed that a donation would be made to PolioPlus to mark the occasion.

Walker Place Official Opening

On August 3rd the Town of Gawler Mayor Karen Redman and John officially opened the redeveloped Walker Place.

The redevelopment created a pedestrian friendly plaza with upgrades to landscaping, amenities, car parking and vehicle access.

The Walker Place Redevelopment is the first element of a \$2.2million Town Centre focused project to be completed at a cost of approximately \$1.5million.



John pictured with Mayor Karen Redman at the opening of Town of Gawler

Welcoming Futures Program

John was privileged to join graduates of the Welcoming Futures Program for dinner and to view their exhibition at Sparkke at the Whitmore on September 30th.

The exhibition showcased images of the students at work and in the studio, accompanied by statements outlining their stories of arrival, experiences living in South Australia, and what community means in our state.

John is delighted to continue his involvement with the leadership development program and the inspiring young people who have benefited from participating in it.



John pictured with graduates of the Futures Program and Ms Alexandra McGee



John pictured with his Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia, at Government House, on September 8th 2020.



John pictured with Professor John Williams (Director), Dr David Plater (Deputy Director) and SALRI Researchers Ms Madeleine Thompson & Ms Anita Brunacci, acknowledging the finalisation of the regulations relating to the Surrogacy Act. SALRI delivered a report at the request of the Attorney-General in late 2018 which formed the basis of the Government legislation which passed both Houses last year.



John attended the 2020 TAB Adelaide Cup with Greyhound Racing SA Chairperson Mr Grantley Stevens, Mr Adrian Pederick-Member for Hammond, Mr George Kairouz and other connections of the Adelaide Cup winner, Golden Night.



John with Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development David Basham and Guest Speaker Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC at the Finnis Liberal SEC AGM in Victor Harbor.

Contact

If there is anything that the office of the President of the Legislative Council may be able to assist with, please do not hesitate to contact us via

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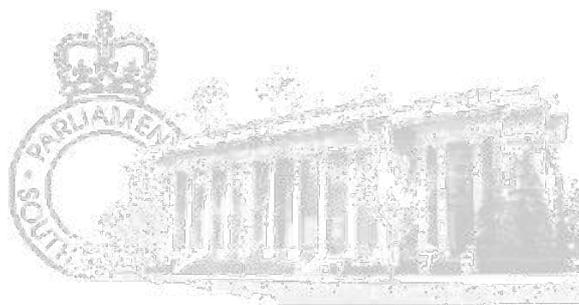
Wellbeing Resources

- SA COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line **1800 632 753**
- Mental Health Services **131 465**
- Beyond Blue **1300 224 636**
- Lifeline **13 11 14**
- Mensline Australia **1300 659 467**
- Suicide Call Back Service **1300 032 186**
- Kids Help Line **1800 551 800**
- Regional Access (Rural) **1300 032 186**
- Aboriginal Mens Line **1800 435 799**



StandBy- Support after Suicide

Talking to children and teenagers about suicide can be difficult. StandBy have written activity books to help. Find out more about their free resources on their website: www.standbysupport.com.au



Authorised by Hon John Dawkins MLC,
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