

URGENT Media alert – responsible reporting on Osmington shooting

11 May 2018

Please cascade to all editorial staff

Mindframe reminds media of responsible reporting on the recent shooting in Osmington, Margaret River, Western Australia and urges promotion of help-seeking information for distressed viewers.

We ask media to refrain from linking the motivations of the perpetrator to mental illness until motives have been established. Research shows us that less than 4% of mass shootings have any links to mental illness. Many violent people have no history of mental illness and most people with a mental illness have no history of violence.

One in four people in Australia will also experience a mental illness in a 12 month period, and stigma can lead to some not seeking help through shame or fear that stigmatising reporting can amplify. Phrases such as ‘crazed gunman’ and ‘psychopath’ can contribute to this.

Murder-suicides are extremely rare in Australia but it is inevitable that such events are reported and it is arguably in the public interest to examine the circumstances surrounding these types of deaths. **As with other suicides evidence suggest there is a potential risk of copy-cat behaviour, so media should proceed with caution when reporting.**

The sudden and shocking nature of murder-suicides can have a profound impact on the communities in which they take place and the traumatic effects may last for a long time (including those media professionals covering story) so please add help-seeking info to your stories.

Help-seeking

- Lifeline 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au (24/7)
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
- MensLine Australia 1300 789 978 www.mensline.org.au
- *beyondblue* 1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au
- For digital mental health - **Head to Health** www.headtohealth.gov.au
- **Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800** www.kidshelpline.com.au (24/7)
- Online Clinical support and information - **headspace 1800 650 890** www.headspace.org.au
- Mental Health Information for young people and families - **Reachout** www.reachout.com

Self-care for news rooms and journalists here: www.mindframe-media.info/for-media/promote-help-seeking-information/looking-after-yourself

More information here: [Mindframe website](http://www.mindframe-media.info).

The *Mindframe* project team:
Tel: 02 4924 6900 (0427 227 503)
mindframe@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Twitter: @MindframeMedia