

Beacon to light up for suicide prevention

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FRIDAY is World Suicide Prevention Day, and to mark the occasion and shine a light on the issue of suicide in the community, the Wangaratta Beacon will be lit up in blue and yellow, the colours of Wangaratta's Grit and Resilience Program.



“World Suicide Prevention Day is an opportunity for us as a community to unite, build strength and connection with each other, as we show all members of our community that to prevent suicide requires us to become a beacon of light to those in pain,” Grit and Resilience Program coordinator Bek Nash-webster said.

The Beacon lighting was set to be part of a trifecta of mental health and suicide awareness events.

With Thursday's R U OK Day and Friday's World Suicide Prevention Day bringing the issue of suicide in the community to light, Wangaratta's Grit and Resilience Program was planning to host a community meeting in an effort revitalise the Wangaratta Suicide Prevention Network tomorrow evening at the Wangaratta Library.

However, due to restrictions surrounding gatherings, the event has been postponed to Thursday, September 23 at 5.30pm.

“Being so close to each other, World Suicide Prevention Day and R U OK Day, and then coupling that with the Wangaratta Suicide Prevention Network, it was just beautiful timing – and for Wangaratta to actually have a Beacon, it makes perfect sense.

“We couldn't believe our luck when that was happening, it was just so beautiful.

“It will be wonderful to see the Beacon lit up in Grit and Resilience colours.”

If restrictions around community gatherings remain as they are through to September 23, the Suicide Prevention Network meeting will be postponed to a later date, rather than moving online.

“Sometimes being online excludes people and if we want to create a safe place for conversations, then that's face-to-face,” Ms Nash-webster said.

“Some things within the Grit and Resilience program have been able to be moved online but we see that this being a very strong grassroots program, particularly the Suicide Prevention Network, then that face-to-face connection is vital.

“We’re more inclined to postpone than to actually move into a different modality.”

To keep up to date with upcoming events as well as rescheduled event times, follow the Grit and Resilience Program on Facebook and Instagram.