INFORMATION CARD ON SUICIDE:

Many of us may not know what to do when someone presents as suicidal, nevertheless there are some things that we can do to assist someone who is feeling suicidal.

Possible warning signs:

- Loss of interest in previously pleasurable activities
- Withdrawal from friends and social activities
- Giving away prized possessions
- Increased 'accident proneness' and self-harming behaviours
- Problematic behaviour and substance misuse
- Portraying a sense of hopelessness
- Apathy in dress and appearance, or a sudden change in weight
- A sense of feeling trapped
- Sudden and striking personality changes
- No reason for living, no sense of purpose in life

Possible risk factors:

- Mental health problems
- Social or geographical isolation
- Family discord, violence or abuse
- Financial stress
- Family history of suicide
- Bereavement
- Substance abuse
- Prior suicide attempt

What you can do to help someone who is feeling suicidal:

- Listen to them and don’t interrupt
- Stay with the person if they are at high risk
- Help to encourage them to talk about how they are feeling
- Tell someone else. If you are unsure of what to do next, you can ask for help
- Don’t panic
- Get help from professionals
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Let them know where they can get other help
- Provide reassurance, but do not dismiss the problem
- Provide contact numbers and assist them to ring if necessary

Facts:

- Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people, second only to motor vehicle accidents
- In Australia suicide accounts for 2.5% of all male deaths and 0.7% of all female deaths (ABS, 2007)
- More than two thousand Australians take their own lives every year

INFORMATION CARD ON SUICIDE:

How you can help someone help themselves:

A person who is feeling suicidal may not know how to deal with the situation. Notes below provide a brief outline on how someone who is feeling suicidal can help themselves keep safe

Seeking help early: Talking to someone else can help you work through your feelings
- Setting yourself goals: This can help make you feel in control and lets you work towards something
- Delaying any decisions to end your life: You might feel differently once you have had the chance to think about what you are doing
- Avoid being alone: Try and stay with a family member or friend to help you through what you are feeling
- Develop a safety plan: This can help ensure that if you are feeling down, you know what you can do to pass through this feeling for example having a family member or friend you can call
- Avoiding drugs and alcohol when you are feeling down: Substance misuse can make you feel worse and make you want to do things that you normally would not do
- Talk to someone: Like writing, talking to someone you trust can help you work through how you are feeling and can provide you with further assistance on where to get help
- See your local doctor or a specialist: Sometimes it may be easier to talk to a stranger rather than someone you know. A GP or specialist can help make sure you get the best treatment and care

Primary contacts for Corrections Staff for organisations that can help:

Northern CATS: 1300 650 925
Whittlesea Community Mental Health Service: 9409 9510
Northern Hospital: 9219 8000
Darebin Community Mental Health Centre: 9416 6800

Other organisations that can help:

- Kids helpline 1800 551 800; www.kidshelplineline.org.au
- Suicide helpline (Vic): 1300 651 251, www.suicideline.org.au
- SANE Helpline: 1800 18 7236 www.sane.org
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
- Local Community Centre