

## Talking About 'It'

**GWYMAC Inc**



### Gwymac partnered with the Country Women's Association of Bundarra and Farm-Link to host a get-together to talk about 'it' - suicide prevention, mental health and wellbeing in the bush!

#### The issue

Addressing the need for social connectedness in a rural environment where isolation and distance can be more challenging than normal has been a common issue raised by multiple Landcare groups in the Inverell region. Quite often in agriculture, the physical and financial health of families and businesses receive more attention than the mental health of the people responsible for sustaining these elements. Gwymac has been actively involved in promoting and supporting workshops and events that result in improved mental health and wellbeing for landholders in our region. Continuing to support community groups and partner organisations has been identified as a priority under 'Community, Communication & Engagement' in Gwymac's Annual Plan 2016-2017.

#### The solution

Gwymac partnered with the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health based at the University of Newcastle to deliver the Suicide Prevention Skills Workshop (SPSW) via their Farm-Link Health and Wellbeing Program in association with the Bundarra Branch of the Country Women's Association (CWA). The workshop was held at the CWA rooms in Bundarra, about 40km south of Inverell and drew participants from as far away as Atholwood, about 70km north of Inverell. This particular course focussed on suicide prevention, but the overall emphasis was on health and wellbeing and provided information on how to recognise and help others who may be experiencing mental health challenges.

#### The impact

The SPSW workshop had a direct impact on all participants as some of the issues were quite confronting and 100% of attendees indicated that they either knew directly or knew of an acquaintance who had suffered from mental health issues at one time or another. Gwymac has now connected with a new group of rural women who had previously had limited contact with Landcare and were unaware of the multi-faceted roles that a Landcare network can play in the local community. A number of the workshop participants have now received direct assistance from a support group that they were unaware existed prior to the workshop so talking about 'it' had a significant impact within the Bundarra community.



### Key facts

- Gwymac recognises the importance of mental health and wellbeing, particularly in regional areas.
- Assisting community members to connect with mental health services.
- Contributing to the resilience of local communities.

### Project Partners



The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Program that enables the promotion of these case studies on the Gateway, is funded by the NSW Government and is supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW

