

Safe Spaces Standards Scoping Study Consultation

The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) has engaged the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) to undertake a scoping study for the design and development of national minimum standards for Safe Space services.

We seek your views on the safety and quality expectations for Safe Space services.

This consultation builds on previous work in this space, including interviews with relevant stakeholders from across the suicide prevention and health sectors.

At the end of the consultation, the Commission will provide a report to the Department on options for national standards for Safe Space services and an associated accreditation framework.

The following stakeholders are identified as having an important contribution to the scoping study:

- People with lived experience of suicidal thoughts, behaviours or crisis
- People with lived experience of emotional distress
- Family, chosen family, friends, and kin
- Lived Experience workforce
- Healthcare professionals
- Service providers
- Research leaders
- Funding providers and Commissioners
- Regulators.

The consultation will be informed by lived experience expertise. The Commission and partner organisations will jointly facilitate focus group discussions with lived experience representatives, including Roses in the Ocean, Lived Experience Australia, and the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum.

FEEDBACK

The Commission invites feedback via written submissions or participation in an online focus group. To submit a written submission, please send your response addressing the topic areas below to comms.forsafety@health.gov.au.

Register for a focus group at safeyandquality.gov.au/safe-spaces. Focus groups will be run under a privacy protocol that ensures all feedback will be de-identified.

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

About the Commission

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (Commission) leads and coordinates national improvements in the safety and quality of health care. The Commission provides health ministers with strategic advice on best practices to improve healthcare safety and quality and makes recommendations about priority areas for action.

The Commission also develops national initiatives to better inform, support and organise the delivery of safe and high-quality health care in Australia, contributing to improved health outcomes for consumers, their families and carers, and communities.

To learn more visit safetyandquality.gov.au.

Consultation Topics

Topic 1: What are the safety and quality expectations for Safe Spaces?

Safe Space services (also referred to as safe havens or safe haven cafés) are places where people experiencing suicidal distress can seek support from peers with lived experience in a non-clinical environment.

Common priorities for Safe Spaces include:

Priorities	Details
Lived Experience workforce	The service employs Lived Experience workers who draw on their lived experience to support guests
Trauma-informed	The service responds holistically to the guests' needs
Non-clinical environment	The service provides a warm and welcoming safe space that doesn't look clinical
Person-centred	The service is respectful of the guests' needs and values shared decision making
Inclusive and accessible	The service is accessible across extended hours, culturally appropriate, and provides for a diversity of guests
No-wrong-door approach	The services provides information and support that assists guests to navigate supports, including warm referral to other services
Transparent model of care	The service clearly communicates their particular model of care
Co-design	The model of care is co-designed with people who have a lived experience

QUESTIONS

- Of all the priorities for Safe Spaces, what are your priorities for a high-quality service?
- Are there any important priorities for Safe Spaces not listed?

Topic 2: How can national standards support Safe Space services?

There are a range of options that could form part of the design and development of national minimum standard for safe space services. Standards have been associated with several important outcomes, including:

- Prevention of harm
- Improvements in care
- Involvement of people with lived experience in service planning, delivery and evaluation
- Development of better governance systems
- Better value care.

QUESTIONS

- Are existing Safe Spaces meeting a consistent standard of care?
- What might be the benefits of having national standards for Safe Space services?
- What might be challenges for Safe Space services if national standards are introduced?

Topic 3: What Safe Space models could be included in standards?

There is no single Safe Space service model, which allows commissioners, funding providers, and community organisations to develop and tailor Safe Space services to meet local needs.

This flexibility has many benefits, but it can also make it difficult for potential guests to be certain they will receive a service consistent with their expectations and needs. The diversity of models also influences the regulatory and funding frameworks that govern existing and planned Safe Space services

QUESTION

- What service models should be included in Safe Space service standards?

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

Safety during the consultation

Before participating in the consultation consider your self-care during and after the discussion. For more information, please access [A Guide to Self-care and Readiness to be involved in suicide prevention](#).

If you need support, contact:

- Your support people including family, friends, peer or other mental health support
- **SANE Help Centre:** 1800 18 7263 or online chat (Mon - Fri, 10am - 8pm AEST)
- **Beyond Blue:** 1300 22 4636 (24/7) or online chat (daily 3pm - midnight AEST)
- To help plan ahead during a crisis see Beyond Blue's [Beyond Now safety planning app](#).

If you, or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 000, visit your nearest hospital or use any of the crisis helplines below.

- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 or text 0477 13 11 14 for 24 hour/7 day support
- **13YARN:** 13 92 76 24 hour/7 day
- **Suicide Call Back Service:** 24 hours/7 days telephone crisis support
- **StandBy Support After Suicide:** 1300 727 247 – 24 hours/7 days free telephone support
- **QLife:** 1800 184 527

For more information email comms.forsafety@health.gov.au.

The Safe Spaces Standards Scoping Study is funded by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care.

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