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2022
Conference Programme

THE AUSTRALIAN
**LONELINESS
DIALOGUE**





Friends for Good is proud to present the third *Australian Loneliness Dialogue: Loneliness Across the Generations*.

The event will explore the impacts of loneliness for different age groups, specific cohorts and intersectionality – how loneliness impacts people at the intersection of marginalised groups.

The conference will be held on 17 May 2022 via online stream.

Sponsored by:



A very warm welcome to everyone on behalf of Friends for Good and our conference sponsor The Queensland Mental Health Commission.

Today is an opportunity to keep the conversation we all started in 2018 going, to keep the spotlight on loneliness and social isolation. Between then and now we have experienced the pandemic taking much away and forcing us to come face to face with many threats. Sadly, it has also brought into focus the loneliness felt by many, people of all ages and walks of life.

Our challenge at this event is to explore the intersections, to build our understanding and to work on the solutions. No mean feat! Thank you for contributing your skills and knowledge to this important dialogue.

Today is equally about the opportunity to get to know one another better, to network and to build our understanding of the people and the services who we work alongside. Our presenters are very much a part of this and we thank them sincerely for their time and expertise. Our talented team of staff and volunteers who have enabled this conference to happen are our silent achievers and their efforts are very much appreciated.

We hope that you enjoy the conference and there is something for you to take away. So, let's begin...

SPEAKERS & WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



Cormac Russell

Keynote Address

3.15pm – 4.15pm

Cormac is a social explorer, an author and a much sought-after speaker.

He is Managing Director and Founder of Nurture Development and a faculty member of the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute.

Nuture Development's ambition is to support the proliferation of inclusive, bottom up, community driven change and assist local communities to create the conditions where any neighbourhood can identify, connect and mobilise its assets to the benefit of the whole community.

Over the last 25 years, Cormac's work has demonstrated an enduring impact in 35 countries around the world. He has trained communities, agencies, NGOs and governments in ABCD and other community-based approaches in Africa, Asia, Australia/Oceania, Europe and North America.

His most recent book (Cascade Books, 2020) is: *Rekindling Democracy – A Professional's Guide to Working in Citizen Space.*



Stephanie Power

Panel Discussion
11.30am – 12.15pm

Stephanie Power works as a Research Assistant at the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland.

She currently supports the research, policy, and consumer engagement areas of the organisation.

She has previously worked in a university environment and has experience in qualitative health research within gerontology, psychology, applied linguistics and health communication.



Dr Barbara Barbosa Neves

Panel Discussion
11.30am – 12.15pm

Barbara Barbosa Neves (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer at Monash University.

She is a sociologist of ageing and technology. Her research focuses on understanding loneliness and social isolation among vulnerable groups of older people. She also studies the opportunities and challenges of technology-based interventions (communication apps, robotics, VR, AI) to tackle the phenomena.

Barbara's work on loneliness among frail older people living in aged care facilities and living alone has received awards in North-America, Europe, Japan, and Australia and it has been featured in the Australian and international media (such as CBC, ABC, The Guardian, SBS).



Dr Leah Sharman

Panel Discussion
11.30am – 12.15pm

Dr Leah Sharman is a Research Fellow in the School of Psychology at the University of Queensland.

Her research interests are broadly in the fields of Emotion, Health, Music, and Social Psychology.

Leah's postdoctoral research is aimed at understanding and evaluating community interventions to loneliness, with a focus on social prescribing in community centres and GP practices.



Nick Tebbey

Community – the Vital Source of Connection
That Improves All Relationships
10.15am – 10.45am

Nick Tebbey is the National Executive Officer of Relationships Australia, a leading not-for-profit provider of relationship support services for children, adults, couples, families and communities in Australia.

Nick has worked for a number of years in the social and community sectors, including as CEO of the Settlement Council of Australia, the peak body for migrant and refugee settlement services.

Prior to his work in the community sector, Nick worked as a migration lawyer in Canberra for over a decade and is a Fellow of the Migration Institute of Australia. He currently lectures in immigration law at the Australian Catholic University and works pro bono for the

ACT Legal Aid Commission's Migration Law Clinic.

In his role as National Executive Officer at Relationships Australia, Nick is proud to be leading a team, and representing a Federation of organisations across the country, that is committed to social justice and inclusion, and promotes respect for the rights of all people, in all their diversity, to live with dignity, and safety and to enjoy healthy relationships within their families and their broader communities.



Luke Walsh

I'm Stranded – Exploring Mental Health and Loneliness with Young People

10.45am – 11.30am

Luke Walsh is the Community Engagement Coordinator at headspace Nundah & headspace Woolloongabba.

At headspace, Luke focuses on supporting young people with their mental health and wellbeing, raising awareness of early intervention, fighting the stigma of mental ill-health, and enhancing the social and emotional wellbeing of the voiceless in our community.

He fosters collaborative networks and partnerships with health and community service agencies, public and private schools, tertiary education providers, government

organisations, and young people interested in working with headspace.

Luke draws upon his background in psychology and education to meet the diverse needs in mental health advocacy.

Luke has previously enjoyed a career in the music industry as a performer, song writer and audio engineer.



Phoebe McKenna-Plumley

International Research Into Loneliness

2.15pm – 3.00pm

Phoebe is an ESRC-funded PhD student at the Centre for Improving Health-Related Quality of Life, School of Psychology, Queen's University Belfast.

She previously completed her BA in Psychology at NUI Galway and MRes in Social Science Research at Queen's University Belfast.

Her PhD research focuses on loneliness across the lifespan, with a specific interest in the subjective experience of loneliness and its dimensions (namely social, emotional, and existential dimensions).



Luqmaan Waqar

International Research Into Loneliness
2.15pm – 3.00pm

Luqmaan is a PhD Psychological Academic Research candidate at King's College London.

His research investigates the quantitative and qualitative association between loneliness and social isolation among young adults and postgraduate research students (PGRs).

The findings from these studies will inform the development and evaluation of an intervention to reduce loneliness among PGRs.



Marlee Bower

International Research Into Loneliness
2.15pm – 3.00pm

Marlee Bower is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Matilda Centre at the University of Sydney.

She has a Bachelor degree in Psychology (Hons) at the University of Sydney and completed her PhD in Community Psychology and Translational Health Research in 2019 from the Translational Health Research Institute (Western Sydney University). Her thesis provided an intersectional analysis on the experience and effects of loneliness amongst people with a lived experience of homelessness within the Greater Sydney region. Marlee has experience working

on evaluations of services for people experiencing homelessness, including housing, healthcare and psychosocial supports, and has worked in homelessness strategy at a state government level. She has also worked in research and policy for an independent statutory government agency providing oversight of adult correctional and Juvenile Justice centres in NSW.



Dan Ball

Loneliness in the Workplace

12.45pm – 1.30pm

Dan spent 12 years working in IT, running himself into the ground and “hiding” anxiety from his co-workers.

Burning out after a series of meetings, plagued by brain fog and pre-meeting anxieties, he felt alone. Just one conversation with anyone in his industry who understood would have made all the difference. Finding that person was the hard part.

Dan and the team at By Mind Side now dedicate their time to advocating the benefits of peer support programs for happy, healthy workplaces, and developing technology which intelligently connects people across workplaces and industries who have shared experience and interests. Meaningful connections in the workplace, without the barrier of the four office walls.



Dr. Stephen Carbone

Wellbeing and Prevention in the Mental Health Field

1.30pm – 2.15pm

Dr Stephen Carbone is the CEO and Founder of Prevention United a mental health charity that specialises in the promotion of mental wellbeing and the prevention of mental health conditions.

Stephen has extensive clinical experience in mental health having worked as a GP and as a medical officer in Victoria’s specialist mental health services. Stephen also has considerable experience in mental health policy and service development, having held roles in the Victorian Department of Health and various non-government mental health organisations.

Stephen is focused on championing the importance of tackling the underlying risk and protective factors that shape our mental wellbeing, alongside efforts to strengthen our mental healthcare system.



Bhavik Kapadia

Mindfulness and Meditation

3.00pm – 3.15pm

Born and raised within an Indian culture in the pristine paradise country of Fiji, Bhavik started learning yoga and meditation in his early years while still in primary school.

As a regular meditation practitioner for over 10 years now, he is passionate about sharing this knowledge for mindful living.

Bhavik is a lawyer by qualification, a Senior HR Advisor by profession and a Meditation teacher by interest and passion.



Lachlan McNab

Master of Ceremonies

The subject of mental health and loneliness is very close to Lachlan's heart.

He graduated from Macquarie University with a BA-Psychology in 2015, following which he worked in the arts sector for a number of years: primarily as a stage/production manager, but also as a performer.

After realising the effect that the isolating nature of his work was taking on his mental health: he left the sector (which he still very much loves and advocates for), and now works in corporate sales & business development.

He joined Friends for Good last year as the media spokesperson and a FriendLine operator, and now advocates for the exceptional work they do in freeing Australians from loneliness – a mission which has never been more timely and valuable.

PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



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Community – the Vital Source of Connection That Improves All Relationships

10.15am – 10.45am

In 2018, Relationships Australia conducted research that demonstrated that poverty, unemployment and poor relationships are significantly associated with loneliness.

This presentation will showcase the outcomes of this research and highlight how addressing intergenerational loneliness also leads to improvements in all relationships, which will support us through an uncertain future.

It will also discuss a promising opportunity to use the power of community to address loneliness, improve all kinds of relationships and increase resilience during ongoing challenges facing the Australian community.

Presented by



Nick Tebbey
Relationships Australia

I'm Stranded – Exploring Mental Health and Loneliness with Young People

10.45am – 11.30am

This forum will explore the experiences and views of young people in relation to loneliness.

Some brave young people will broach this subject and openly share their perspectives through safe story telling. Clinicians will also participate in this session to add their views and ideas.

This open discussion will be insightful and heartfelt.

Presented by



Luke Walsh
Headspace

Panel Discussion

11.30am – 12.15pm

An interactive discussion where you can join the conversation along with our panel members with the topic: 'Exploring Loneliness Across the Lifespan'

Panel members



Stephanie Power

Council on the Ageing Qld



Dr Barbara Barbosa Neves

Monash University



Dr Leah Sharman

University of Queensland

Workshop: Loneliness in the Workplace

12.45am – 1.30pm

Do you believe that remote working decreases our opportunity for in-person connection?

Whilst we may enjoy the flexibility of working from home, doing so for 5 days a week becomes cumbersome and isolating for most.

COVID-19 has given us the opportunity to reshape our work life, and co-work with others based on many similarities - generation,

demographic, location, job role, industry, interest and hobby - rather than just because we work for the same company.

The future will see the lines between work and life blur. It is imperative that it does, if we are to prevent loneliness in the workplace and permeating into the community.

Presented by



Dan Ball

By Mind Side

Workshop: Wellbeing and Prevention in the Mental Health Field

1.30pm – 2.15pm

This workshop will explore the promotion of mental wellbeing and the prevention of mental ill-health, and provide some practical examples of strategies to achieve these two important outcomes.

Presented by



Dr. Stephen Carbone

Prevention United

International Research Into Loneliness

2.15pm – 3.00pm

A short overview of new research in the field. Topics include a systematic review of qualitative literature across the lifespan, a systematic review of the association between

loneliness, social isolation and mental health among young adults and understanding and evaluating community interventions to loneliness.

Presented by



Phoebe McKenna-Plumley

Queens University, Belfast



Luqmaan Waqar

King's College, London



Marlee Bower

University of Sydney

Schedule

17 May 2022

9.50am – 10.00am	Welcome, Acknowledgment of Country	12.45pm – 1.30pm	Workshop: Loneliness in the Workplace Dan Ball
10.00am – 10.15am	Opening Address Queensland Mental Health Commission	1.30pm – 2.15pm	Workshop: Wellbeing and Prevention in the Mental Health Field Dr. Stephen Carbone
10.15am – 10.45pm	Community – The Vital Source of Connection That Improves All Relationships Nick Tebbey	2.15pm – 3.00pm	International Research Into Loneliness Phoebe McKenna-Plumley, Luqmaan Waqar & Marlee Bower
10.45pm – 11.30pm	I'm Stranded – Exploring Mental Health and Loneliness with Young People Luke Walsh	3.00pm – 3.15pm	Mindfulness and Meditation Bhavik Kapadia
11.30pm – 12.15pm	Panel Discussion Stephanie Power, Dr Barbara Barbosa Neves & Dr Leah Sharman	3.15pm – 4.15pm	Keynote Address Cormac Russell
12.15pm – 12.45pm	Lunch	4.15pm – 4.30pm	Plenary Session & Close



Sketch Group

Throughout the conference we will have the Sketch Group remote scribing. An illustrator will digitally capture our presentations, panels discussion and workshops – live!

Attendees will be able to watch the illustration come to life in real-time and share the visual summary.

Important Information

Tickets

Tickets are available at:

friendsforgood.org.au/TALD22

Tickets can be reallocated to another delegate providing Friends for Good is notified before 10 May 2022.

Cancellations can be issued providing Friends for Good is notified before 13 May 2022. A full refund will be provided less the booking fee.

Attending

The conference will be hosted via the Hopin platform, a browser based service online. No applications or downloads are required.

A link will be provided to ticket holders closer to the event.