

# batyr, smashing the stigma around mental health for young Australians through prevention and early intervention

batyr Federal pre-budget submission, 29 January 2021

## Executive summary

This proposal represents a submission from batyr for a Project involving delivery of evidence based preventative mental health education programs for young Australians (aged 14 - 29) designed specifically to break down stigma and increase help seeking behaviour through lived experience story sharing. The proposed Project will include a wrap around community approach including programs for young people and forums specifically targeted to parents, carers, teachers and community ambassadors. The proposed Project involves a national 3 year expansion plan requiring [\\$4,942,800 of government funding](#), where [over 142,500 young people and 7,500 adults](#) supporting them, are educated to build their mental health literacy and empowered with the knowledge and skills to reach out for help early when needed. [Together we can help over 150,000 Australians with preventative mental health support.](#)

In 2019, the Federal Government, through the Department of Health provided 2.8M funding for a 3 year project (2019 - 2021) to develop and create a digital mental health app, OurHerd for sharing stories of young people with lived experience with mental ill-health about their journey of resilience and recovery. This project will allow batyr to leverage that investment, by using the OurHerd app as a resource which can be provided at our programs and forums that are the subject of this proposal. At **Annexure A** we have included the media and press release links from 2019 federal government grant to batyr.



## The problem we are tackling - young people feel stigmatised about mental ill-health and often prefer turning to their peers for support during tough times

Two issues increasingly confront research into youth mental health. First, young people feel stigmatised when it comes to seeking help surrounding their mental health.<sup>1</sup> Second, they take action to seek help more when they hear stories of recovery from mental ill-health shared by peers, with shared life experiences to them, than by information shared by other adults (such as teachers and parents).

- 22.8% of young Australians (15-19 years) meet the probable serious mental illness criteria.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 out of 4 people with a mental illness report that they have experienced stigma.<sup>3</sup>
- Over **115,000 years of potential life are lost to suicide in Australia**, and it continues to be the leading cause of death for young Australians. Sadly **80% of youth suicide occur at ages of 15-17**,<sup>4</sup>
- 75% of mental illnesses emerge before a person has turned 25, sadly the majority will suffer silently. **Only 22% seek professional help**.<sup>5</sup>
- Teenagers and young adults frequently prioritise turning to peers for social and emotional support. Social networks and peer groups heavily influence whether young people choose to seek help and engage in appropriate treatments (for mental health)<sup>6</sup>
- Modelling recently released (by the Sydney University Brain and Mind Centre) indicated that the impact of COVID-19 could lead to a 50% rise in suicides in Australia. These results will continue over the next five years leading to a generational mental health crisis. 30% of these will be among young people (15-25).
- Mental illness is costing Australia about \$200-220 billion per year.<sup>7</sup>

## batyr – delivering prevention and early intervention through lived experience story sharing

batyr is a for purpose preventative mental health organisation, created and driven by young people, for young people. Our Vision is that All young people are engaged in positive conversations about mental health and empowered to reach out for support when needed.

batyr delivers evidence based preventative educational mental health programs in secondary schools (years 9 – 12), universities and via community outreach programs in Australia, designed to smash the stigma around mental health and educate young people on how to take proactive care early and how and where to reach out for help if needed. Batyr have found that unprecedented levels of success can be attributed to the peer-to- peer model we deliver. batyr trains young people with a lived experience with mental ill-health to speak about their personal journey to recovery, and start an honest, respectful and inspiring conversation with other young people.

<sup>1</sup> Mission Australia & Black Dog Institute 2018 [Can we talk? Seven year youth mental health report – 2012-2018](#)

<sup>2</sup> ABS, 2016, National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Result, Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>3</sup> Relationships Australia Surveys [October 2015: Mental health stigma](#) (survey of 2,600 people with experience of mental ill-health)

<sup>4</sup> ABS [Causes of Death, Australia, 2019](#)

<sup>5</sup> 'A Life Without Stigma' by Sane Australia (2013)

<sup>6</sup> Yap MBH, Reavley NJ, Jorm AF. [Where would young people seek help for mental disorders and what stops them? findings from an Australian national survey.](#) J Affect Disord. 2013;147:255–61.

<sup>7</sup> [Inquiry report - Mental Health](#) Productivity Commission (2020)



batyr advocate that when it is done right, the storytelling of lived experiences can be a powerful tool to prevent mental ill-health incidences and promote strategies to live mentally healthy lives.

batyr collaborates with several not-for-profit partners for cross-referral and service pathways. By engaging with organisations such as, ReachOut, Lifeline and Headspace we are able share information, and avoid duplication or competition for scarce resources. We provide follow-up service recommendations if students need further professional support.

Since inception in 2011, Batyr have empowered over 250,130 young people to engage in positive conversations about mental health and feel empowered to reach out for support, across NSW, VIC, ACT, QLD, and SA, creating a generational change in how we talk about mental health.

We are proposing training 142,500 young Australians, each with lived experiences of mental-ill health and recovery, to receive mentoring and training to share their stories of recovery and resilience. These stories will then be shared via targeted events, alongside promotion of mental health literacy to promote help-seeking, to other young people to inspire hope and help-seeking.

batyr have smashed the stigma surrounding mental ill-health for over 260,000 young Australians since our inception in 2011. We are proud of how our peer-led safe story-telling programs have created positive behavioural and social changes in young people around their understanding and acceptance of mental health and social issues.

## batyr programs are based on three pillars



### 1) Stigma reduction through sharing of lived experience

We know that reduction of stigma and discrimination is important, as it is singled out as one of eight key priority area in the National Mental Health Commissions Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan, 2019. This Plan also states that “people with a lived experience of mental illness are a central part of effectively tackling stigma and discrimination. Providing effective role models using peer-based interventions”. It is this model that sits at the core of batyr programs, and a key factor that differentiates us from other school based programs.

batyr trains young people with a lived experience with mental ill-health how to speak about their personal journey to recovery, and start an honest, respectful and inspiring conversation with other young people. We take these young people into schools, alongside trained facilitators, to share their story in a safe environment. We have one of the most robust and supportive programs in Australia. We have found unprecedented levels of success in this model. On average, following a batyr programs, 65% of students indicating increased intentions towards help seeking, compared to a national average of 22%.

## 2) Prevention and early intervention through mental health education

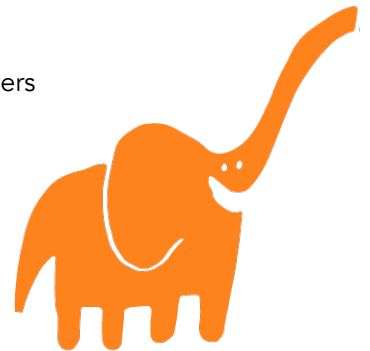
The National Mental Health Commission's 'National Report 2019' cited investment in early intervention and prevention services as being key to preventing mental health issues later in life. In 2019, the National Mental Health Commission also released the results of economic modelling that proposed a saving of \$37.1m, over ten years, to the Australian economy through investing in prevention and early intervention for young people to prevent mental ill-health.

batyr programs encourage five constructive behaviours:

- 1. Look Out:** What are the signs you can look out for in yourself or a friend early.
- 2. Get Talking:** How to start the conversation about mental health and types of questions to ask.
- 3. Listen Up:** It's not necessary to have all the answers, simply listening makes a difference.
- 4. Reach Out:** Empowering self-help. Education on ways to reach out.  
Demystifying professional services available and providing pathways to professional care.
- 5. Take Charge:** How to take proactive self-care. How to build resilience.

Our program supports positive behavioural and attitudinal change that empowers young people to connect with peers and other services, including clinical services, crisis services and GPs. batyr collaborates with several not-for-profit partners for service pathways, including ReachOut, Lifeline, and Headspace.

Through our early intervention services, batyr equips young people with knowledge and skills to take proactive care of their wellbeing, ultimately easing pressure on services and crisis supports in the longer term.



## 3) Training and employment pathways for young people with lived experience of mental ill-health

Batyr train young people with a lived experience of mental ill health how to share their story at batyr@school programs through our Being Herd program. Being Herd is a workshop run over 2 days that brings together a small group of young people between 18-30 years old.

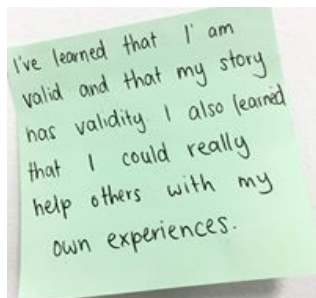
Many Being Herd participants go on to be employed by batyr as speakers at our school programs, in turn providing local community employment and contributing to the development of a consumer workforce within mental health services.



## Batyr interventions focus on stigma reduction through sharing of lived experiences

batyr has an impressive track record of success having empowered over a quarter of a million young Australians to engage in positive conversations about mental health and feel empowered to reach out for support. batyr trains young people with a lived experience with mental ill-health how to speak about their personal journey to recovery, and start an honest, respectful and inspiring conversation with other young people. We take these young people into places where young people gather, alongside trained facilitators, to share their story in a safe environment. We have one of the most robust and supportive programs in Australia.

- Young people are 3 times more likely to have intentions towards help seeking following participation in batyr programs, compared to a national average of 22%.
- Evidence suggests that erasing the stigma of mental illness can be accomplished by adopting targeted approaches to stigma change in conjunction with affirming attitudes and behaviors that promote opportunities for people with mental illness.<sup>8</sup> As such, all batyr programs are designed in collaboration with young people and mental health professionals, to overcome the top 3 barriers to help-seeking; 'stigma and embarrassment', 'fear', and a 'lack of support'.<sup>9</sup>
- Anti-stigma interventions have the greatest impact when contact is targeted, local, credible and continuous.<sup>10</sup> All of the batyr storytellers are aged under 30 years of age and have relatable experiences which seek to inspire other young people to have the language and knowledge of how to seek-help themselves.
- Research suggests Australia adopting a person-centred mental health system, as recommended in the recent Productivity Commission report, which advocates to support people with experience of mental ill-health "to live well within their communities, managing their own mental health where possible."
- Schools provide a setting with unparalleled reach and coverage of young people, in which preventive interventions can be readily administered due to the structured nature of the setting.<sup>11</sup>
- Investing in reducing stigma and discrimination is essential and is one of 8 key priority areas in the National Mental Health Commissions Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan, 2019. This model sits at the core of batyr programs, and a key factor that differentiates us from other youth-orientated programs.
- The National Mental Health Commission's 'National Report 2019' cited investment in early intervention and prevention services as being key to preventing mental health issues later in life.



<sup>8</sup> Corrigan, Morris, Michaels, Rafacz et Rusch; Published in Psychiatric Services (2012)

[Challenging the public stigma of mental illness: a meta-analysis of outcomes studies.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Mission Australia & Black Dog Institute 2018 [Can we talk? Seven year youth mental health report – 2012-2018](#)

<sup>10</sup> Corrigan; Br J Psychiatry. 2012 [Research and the elimination of the stigma of mental illness.](#)

<sup>11</sup> Public Health Information Development Unit data.

## The programs that we will deliver as part of this Project

- **Being Herd Speaker Training Program (18 - 29)** - our Being Herd speaker training workshops are a 2 day training program, which trains 10-12 young people aged 18 to 30 with a lived experience of mental ill health and recovery, how to share their story in a structured, inspiring and safe way, alongside our skilled facilitators. These speakers go on to become the cornerstone of our flagship programs [batyr@school](#) (for youth in secondary school education aged approx. 13 to 17 years of age) and [batyr@uni](#). Each speaker on average will reach more than 1,000 young people with their story.
- **batyr Secondary School Programs (14- 18)** - a 90 minute program which included young, relatable speakers engage the students with their stories of hope, resilience and courage in their experiences with mental ill-health. The program encourages five constructive behaviours: Look Out, Get Talking, Listen Up, Reach Out and Take Charge. Trained facilitators educate students on the support networks and services available to them (including school services), and empower students to reach out for help when needed. These programs can be delivered face to face or online (through [batyr Online](#)).
- **Parent Forum & Teacher PD** - a 90 minute program for parents on how to better support young people, to ensure the whole community have greater awareness and understanding and are better equipped to support students and lead by example when it comes to managing mental health.
- **batyr Community Forum** - a 90 minute community based program which includes young people and their parents, carers, teachers, families. These programs are run in conjunction with local sporting or community clubs and include lived experience speakers & our 5 tips.

batyr programs can be delivered face to face or digitally. Our digital programs have been designed to be flexible to the changing educational environment that schools are facing, particularly during COVID-19. We work with schools to find a solution that suits their needs. whether programs are delivered face to face or digitally. What it means for the schools is that we can continue to service school right now as well as into the future.



Maddie learned to share her story at a [Being Herd](#) workshop and felt proud of her story for the first time, she has now been a batyr speaker for 6 years.

"I am more confident in who I am as I can positively reflect on my past. Nowadays, I proudly share my story as I hope to contribute to changing the negative stigma surrounding mental health."



Tom had always felt like an outcast at school, but after seeing a [batyr@school](#) program he felt understood and was inspired to become an advocate for mental health.

"I am confident in myself and my story. I know I am supported personally and professionally. batyr has shown me that mental health is something that I am passionate about and that we can all take charge of; no one is less than anyone else."



Yoosuf felt validated for the first time through [Being Herd Pathways](#) and has found real value in the mentoring program.

"I understand myself more. I found a reason to get up early in the morning, start working early, and, overall, give more structure to my life as a more passionate, empathetic and appreciative human being."

## What we suggest next for maximum impact - project delivery plan and budget

Our project roll out plan is as follows:

2021	2022	2023
<p>We will deliver the following national roll out across NSW, VIC, SA, QLD, ACT</p> <p>300 x student mental health programs</p> <p>28 x Parent/ Teacher Forums</p> <p>15 x Community Forums</p> <p>12 x Being Herd Speaker Training Workshops</p> <p>Year 1 of the Project will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension into regional areas including disaster relief</li> <li>• Partner with research entity to develop impact measurement framework and initiate research</li> </ul>	<p>We will deliver the following national roll out across NSW, VIC, SA, QLD, ACT</p> <p>325 x student mental health programs</p> <p>32 x Parent/ Teacher Forums</p> <p>20 x Community Forums</p> <p>14 x Being Herd Speaker Training Workshops</p> <p>The Project will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and measure impact of program</li> <li>• Reflect and evaluate</li> </ul>	<p>We will deliver the following national roll out across NSW, VIC, SA, QLD, ACT as well as extension into other States.</p> <p>375 x student mental health programs</p> <p>40 x Parent/ Teacher Forums</p> <p>20 x Community Forums</p> <p>14 x Being Herd Speaker Training Workshops</p> <p>The Project will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and measure impact of program</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anticipated Reach:</b></p> <p>40,000+ young people</p> <p>2000+ Adults supporting young people</p>	<p><b>Anticipated Reach:</b></p> <p>42,500 Young people</p> <p>2,250 Adults supporting young people</p>	<p><b>Anticipated Reach:</b></p> <p>50,000 Young people</p> <p>2,800 Adults supporting young people</p>



## Budget and cost breakdown

Year	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>				
Government Contribution	1,482,840	1,606,410	1,853,550	<b>4,942,800</b>
School and community contributions	150,000	162,500	187,500	500,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1632,840</b>	<b>1,768,910</b>	<b>2,041,050</b>	<b>5,442,800</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program Design & Development	272,716	295,442	340,987	909,055
Program Planning, Management & Evaluation	683,791	740,774	854,740	2,279,305
Evaluation, Measurement & Reporting	160,165	173,515	200,210	533,890
Ongong Speaker Support	56,700	66,150	66,150	189,000
Resources (stationary and merchandise)	30,300	32,826	37,879	101,005
Allied Mental Health Professionals	8,400	9,800	9,800	28,000
Marketing and promotion	58,440	63,310	73,050	194,800
Program Facilitators	90,905	98,480	113,634	303,019
Paid Program Speakers	147,180	159,445	183,977	490,602
Travel	43,288	46,895	54,111	144,294
Incidentals (5% of total)	80,949	87,694	101,187	269,830
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1632,840</b>	<b>1,768,910</b>	<b>2,041,050</b>	<b>5,442,800</b>
Reach	45,000+ young people 2000+ Adults supporting young people	47,500 Young people 2,500 Adults supporting young people	50,000 Young people 3,000 Adults supporting young people	142,500+ young people 7,500+ adults supporting young people 150,000 participants



## Annexure A - Media from 2019 Federal Government Announcement

batyr in the media

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/jun/10/scott-morrison-pledges-28m-for-school-based-mental-health-program>

Media release:

[https://www.batyr.com.au/media\\_centre/scott-morrison-attends-first-batyr-program/](https://www.batyr.com.au/media_centre/scott-morrison-attends-first-batyr-program/)

## Our partners

Trusted by a number of philanthropic funders who trust in the impact of our work, and invest in our mission. Trusted by Government departments including the NSW Department of Education to reach drought-affected NSW; the VIC Government to support international students, the NSW Department of Health to support inpatients in mental health hospitals, and the Federal Government for a 3 year digital story platform project.



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