



**Media Release – 26 August 2019**

## **CHIEF CORONER RELEASES PROVISIONAL ANNUAL SUICIDE FIGURES**

Chief Coroner Judge Deborah Marshall today released the annual provisional suicide statistics, which show the suicide rate slightly increased in the last year.

In the 2017/18 year the rate was 13.67 deaths per 100,000 people; that has increased to 13.93 in 2018/19.

In the year to 30 June, 685 people died by suicide, compared to 668 the year before - an increase of 17 deaths by suicide.

“I extend my condolences to the families and friends of those who died by suicide in the past year,” Judge Marshall says. “We acknowledge the pain many communities are feeling as a result.”

There was an increase in the number of young people dying by suicide, particularly in the 15-19 age range (up from 53 to 73) and the 20-24 age range (from 76 to 91). Both rates increased from 16.88 to 23.14 and from 21.21 to 26.87 respectively.

There was also an increase in the Maori and Pacific Island suicide rate. The Maori suicide rate increased from 23.72 to 28.23 (142 to 169 deaths), and the Pacific Island rate from 7.77 to 11.49 deaths per 100,000 people (23 to 34 deaths). There was a drop in the European rate though, from 13.94 to 13.46 (down from 462 to 446 deaths).

“The reasons people make this decision are numerous and depend on many factors: their early life experiences at home and at school, their employment status, their mental health, their economic and health status, their sense of belonging, their sense of purpose, their worldview and more.

“It’s up to all of us to look out for our family, friends and neighbours – to ask how they’re going and coping with pressures in life, and offer our support, to offer hope.

“Because there is hope. I’m encouraged by the suicide prevention initiatives taking place, the conversations people are having, and the success stories of individuals who battled with suicidal thoughts but have come through stronger the other side.

“We mourn those who died by suicide, but for those listening who are in the midst of pain, suicide doesn’t have to be how your story ends. The truth is there is always another option, there are people you can speak to, there’s something more to live for.”

Ends

Please note:

The information provided relates to provisional suicide figures and will slightly differ from the Ministry of Health figures. They include active cases before Coroners where intent has yet to be established therefore may eventually be found not to be suicides. In addition, Ministry of Health figures are recorded by calendar year.

Media Contact: Jerram Watts – 027 291 3518