Overview

A survey of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) was conducted during late 2016. A structured template was sent to all Co-chairs, with a view to collecting information relating to: rationale, objectives, main activities during 2016, proposed activities during 2017, and current challenges. Text on activities during 2016, for uploading to the IASP website, and details of members’ names and email addresses were also requested.

The process of converting pre-existing TFs to SIGs, according to the new policy agreed at the 2015 IASP World Congress, was completed successfully during the year.

There was a considerable range of activities across the 10 SIGs (excluding the newly formed SIG on Risk, resilience and reasons for living) which returned completed templates. These included:

- Organisation of symposia, seminars and workshops at IASP, ESSSB and other conferences
- Publication and dissemination of news bulletins and newsletters
- Development and dissemination of guidelines
- Provision of evidence-informed advice and support to national and international organisations and agencies
- Involvement in international research collaborations
- Production of reports/journal articles/books
- Contributions to initiatives of the WHO and other organisations
- Establishment/completion of Task Forces undertaking specific, clearly defined tasks within a limited timeframe
- Surveys of SIG members on different topics
- Tutoring/mentoring of postgraduate students
- Establishment of Early Career Group.

The table below provides summarised and selective information for each SIG which returned a (fully or partially) completed template. (Additional information is available on request.)

Steve Platt      IASP Vice President
Caroline Daly    Central Administration Office
March 2017
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<tr>
<th>Name Co-Chairs (No. of Members)</th>
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<td><strong>Suicide in older adults</strong> Annette Erlangsen &amp; Sylvie Lapierre (135 members)</td>
<td>1. To create a network between researchers to facilitate joint research projects that focus on suicide in older adults. 2. To increase IASP’s involvement in suicide prevention of older adults. 3. To increase awareness and understanding about suicide in older adults.</td>
<td>1. Began systematic review of assisted death in older adults. PIs (Sylvie Lapierre and Dolores Angela Castelli Dransart) worked on literature review and analysis and drafting begun 2. An effort to set up a dedicated session at the ESSSB was made; however, not followed through by conference organisers.</td>
<td>1. Symposium on Suicide in Older Adults at the IASP World Congress, to include a network meeting 2. Discussions on new initiatives with group members 3. Network meeting, 2017 AAS conference.</td>
<td>None cited</td>
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<td><strong>The genetics and neurobiology of suicide</strong> Dan Rujescu (20 members)</td>
<td>1. To promote studies of genetic aspects of suicide ideation and behaviour among suicidologists and behavioural geneticists. 2. To provide a place where those interested in genetics of suicidal behaviour can network and stimulate the field with new studies and results.</td>
<td>Hosted a symposium at ESSSB 2016 (Oviedo) covering: - A Genetic Approach to Candidate Neurotransmitter Studies of Suicidal Behavior - Underlying molecular circuitry of miR-124-3p-mediated target gene impairment in depression - Suicide risk with antidepressants: clinical and biological predictors - Twin, adoption, and family studies of suicide - MAOA and MAOB polymorphisms in suicide - Interaction between genetic and epigenetic factors in suicidal behaviour - Contributions of neuro-imaging to our understanding of suicide risk - Brain Fiber Tract Analysis Using Diffusion Tensor Imaging Reveals Aberrant Connectivity in a Rat Model of Depression - Toxoplasma gondii infection (a potential risk factor for violent traits and suicidal behavior) - Effects of heritability, household, and nuclear household in the Old Order Amish.</td>
<td>1. Symposium at the IASP 2017 World Congress 2. Conduct a review on behalf of the SIG for Crisis.</td>
<td>None cited</td>
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<td><strong>Suicide and the media</strong> Daniel Reidenberg Thomas Niederkrotenhailer (44 members)</td>
<td>1. To improve linkages between suicide experts and media professionals. 2. To systematically review research about suicide and the traditional as well as social media, to identify gaps in knowledge, to develop a research agenda to address these gaps, and to encourage relevant research. 3. To identify, collect and collate media guidelines and examine and report on their content, development and implementation. 4. To work collaboratively with media professionals to develop recommendations for developing and implementing media guidelines. 5. To work collaboratively with media professionals to promote media guidelines. 6. To work on prevention of suicide using online media. 7. To provide a body of experts that can provide comment on issues regarding suicide and the media.</td>
<td>1. Hosted 2 symposia at ESSSB16 and 1 at the Asia-Pacific conference on Media Recommendations and Safe Reporting Practices. 2. Development of a book with contributions from SIG members on Media and Suicide: International Perspectives on Research, Theory and Policy, with a projected date of release of spring 2017. 3. Forming TF to assist the updating of the IASP/WHO media recommendations (2008). Group process scheduled to be finalised by end of 2016, with option to extend until April 2017. 4. Development of media recommendations for Bloggers, currently at advanced draft stage. 5. Social Media Guidelines, currently at advanced draft stage.</td>
<td>1. Finalise tasks remaining from 2016 2. Provide an update on implementation strategies on Media Recommendations. 3. IASP statement on suicide and the media which distinguishes the international focus of the SIG from national efforts of within-country organisations 4. Host symposia at suicide-related conferences.</td>
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| **Postvention (suicide bereavement)**  
Myfanwy Maple  
(84 members) | 1. To hold a meeting of members at biannual world congress, to evaluate past activities and plan future goals and activities.  
2. To ensure appropriate representation of postvention at IASP and similar conferences.  
3. To contribute to the IASP newsletter.  
4. To ensure appropriate communication between members, with the TF established under the SIG umbrella.  
5. To identify initiatives to be undertaken by TFs, to be subsequently reported to the Board of IASP. | 1. Completion of the taskforce on bereavement and postvention research – a systematic review (under review with *Crisis*) and a brief survey of current activities (also under review with *Crisis*).  
2. Ongoing contributions to the IASP newsletter.  
3. TF on congress participation actively involved in organising a postvention stream at World Congress.  
4. A call for expressions of interest sent out to SIG members and others to partake in a TF to look at best Practice Guidelines in the field of postvention. | 1. Commence development of a TF on international best practice guidelines for postvention  
2. Continue to participate in the IASP newsletter  
3. Participation in the World Congress in Malaysia (possible pre-congress workshop). | None cited. |
| **Helplines best practice**  
Alan Woodward  
John Draper  
(43 members) | 1. To pursue a shared interest in helplines and related online and social media services for suicide prevention.  
2. To make substantive contribution to improved understanding, practice or policy relating to the operation, effectiveness and impact of helplines and related online and social media services for suicide prevention. | 1. Continued exchange of communication with SIG members  
2. A survey of members asking for nominations for TFs was issued. | 1. TF formation to begin.  
2. Symposium proposals for IASP World Congress 2017. | Time constraints and capacity have prevented further work to re-configure the online forum for SIG members in 2016. |
| **Culture and suicidal behaviour**  
Erminia Colucci  
Joseph Osafo  
(54 members) | 1. To share resources and information relevant to the topic of culture and suicidal behaviour (including publications and funding opportunities)  
2. To discuss ideas and provide suggestions around culturally sensitive suicide research and prevention activities  
3. To increase awareness and advocate for a greater consideration of culture in the understanding of suicidal behaviour and the development of suicide prevention strategies  
4. To represent a point of reference for individuals and organisations seeking expertise on the SIG theme and sub-themes  
5. To seek financial support to initiate and carry out specific research and prevention projects and organise themed meetings/conferences/ workshops. | 1. Organised a symposium at ESSSB16 conference in Oviedo  
2. Nominated a new co-chair- Dr Joseph Osafo and a secretary in the same university. | 1. Organise a symposium and IASP SIG meeting at next IASP Asia-Pacific. | IASP mailing list has not been set up. SIGs must have an online presence and this requires an active website with an accessible and available webmaster. |
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<td><strong>Prevention of intentional pesticide poisoning</strong>&lt;br&gt;Keith Hawton&lt;br&gt;Michael Phillips&lt;br&gt;Melissa Pearson (30 members, list 26 potential members to be approached)</td>
<td>1. Collate evidence, knowledge and information on the epidemiology, characteristics and prevention of intentional pesticide poisoning.&lt;br&gt;2. Facilitate collaboration between different projects currently underway.&lt;br&gt;3. Promote research and links between research projects.&lt;br&gt;4. Develop innovative research methodologies to evaluate different types of interventions.&lt;br&gt;5. Act as a focal point for the dissemination of information on the prevention of pesticide poisoning.&lt;br&gt;6. Identify potential funders that could support an IASP-supported multi-country project.</td>
<td>1. IASP newsletter update published July-Aug 2016.&lt;br&gt;2. Presentation at Asia Pacific Meeting 2016 Tokyo by Michael Phillips.&lt;br&gt;3. Restriction of access to lethal means.</td>
<td>Development of programme for Asia Pacific IASP 2017 meeting Malaysia.</td>
<td>Significant issues of availability of co-chairs hindered progress in last 6 months of 2016. Unable to meet to progress agenda due to last minute unavailability for Asia conference.</td>
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<td><strong>Nomenclature</strong>&lt;br&gt;Diego De Leo&lt;br&gt;Morton Silverman (8 members)</td>
<td>To move towards an international standardisation of terminologies that may render research more comparable across the globe, economise investment efforts and favour meta-analytical evaluation.</td>
<td>1. The continued tutoring of a PhD candidate focusing the topic of the PhD on nomenclature. On this Prof. de Leo and the candidate have generated a paper that has been accepted in <em>Suicide &amp; Life-Threatening Behavior</em> (“Contemporary Nomenclatures of Suicidal Behaviors: A Systematic Literature Review”).&lt;br&gt;2. An Editorial in <em>Crisis</em> was produced entitled: “Why there is a need for an international nomenclature and classification system for suicide”, <em>Crisis</em>, 37:83-87, 2016.&lt;br&gt;3. A chapter was published in the International Handbook of Suicide Prevention, 2nd edition, entitled: “Challenges to defining and classifying suicide and suicidal behaviors”.</td>
<td>1. Paper and review articles under preparation&lt;br&gt;2. An initial questionnaire to be circulated among a limited number of culturally diverse countries in order to verify the usefulness of this investigative tool.</td>
<td>The nature of the task (standardising the nomenclature) is itself challenging.</td>
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<td><strong>Risk, resilience and reasons for living</strong>&lt;br&gt;Danuta Wasserman&lt;br&gt;Bruce Bongar&lt;br&gt;Maurizio Pompili. Maryke Van Zyl is SIG coordinator (14 members)</td>
<td>1. To study the warning signs of suicidal behaviour and protective factors that may vary or remain consistent cross-culturally.&lt;br&gt;2. To adapt various measures used for the assessment of suicide risk to different cultures, providing clinical information to inform prevention programs within at-risk cultural groups.</td>
<td>1. The SIG was initiated in 2016&lt;br&gt;2. Co-Chairs took part in the SIG biannual call November 2016.</td>
<td>1. To develop the Cultural Reasons for Living (C-RFL) with a Native American youth and LGBTQ-youth, with the goal of creating an international version.&lt;br&gt;2. Engage in quarterly online meetings.&lt;br&gt;3. Present research findings.&lt;br&gt;4. Submit collaborative publications in Oxford University Press.&lt;br&gt;5. Engage in collaborative fund raising and grant writing.&lt;br&gt;6. Have an annual review of progress and activities.</td>
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| **Suicide and the workplace**  
Sally Spencer-Thomas  
Allison Milner  
Katrina Witt  
(41 members) | 1. To expand scholarship exploring suicide and workplace issues.  
2. To develop model policies and protocols for workplaces to adapt.  
3. To share promising practices of suicide prevention programs and training.  
4. To develop a community of researchers and practitioners interested in workplace suicide prevention. | 1. Mates in Construction  
Published 4 journal articles and one report on the topic (information available on request).  
2. Smartphone intervention for unemployed construction workers-  
Published two pieces of research on this topic (information available on request).  
http://contactconnect.incolink.org.au;  
3. Empirical studies on suicide in particular at risk employed groups  
Published 6 journal articles and one report on the topic (more information available on request).  
4. Brian Mishara, Cécile Bardon have recently completed research on assessing best practices in helping railway personnel involved in a critical incident, of which the outcomes will be presented at upcoming IASP conferences.  
5. Sally Spencer-Thomas has published research and information on:  
www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org; and worked on the development of ‘Breaking the Silence’: Suicide Prevention in Law Enforcement” and also worked on a White House briefing on men and health featuring Man Therapy and Working Minds. | Several members hope to attend the upcoming congress in Malaysia and present research findings.  
There are plans to present results at several domestic conferences.  
In Australia, we have several competitive tenders in to expand our research and intervention activities. | Distance and communication issues among those in the SIG |
| **Clusters & contagion in suicidal behaviour**  
Ella Arensman | 1. Share information on definitions and the methodologies used in identifying clusters and contagion in suicidal behaviour.  
2. Share information obtained in research into clusters and contagion in different countries and facilitates comparative international research.  
3. Share information on policy, response procedures and prevention strategies for clusters and contagion in suicidal behaviour from different countries and compare effectiveness.  
4. Increase awareness of clusters and contagion in suicidal behaviour and associated risk factors.  
5. Share and transfer expertise across countries when clusters in suicidal behaviour emerge.  
6. Facilitate international collaborative grant applications to progress international comparative research, prevention and policy in this area.  
7. Act as an expert group for individuals and organisations seeking information and advice. | 1. Provided evidence briefs on clustering and contagion of suicide and self-harm.  
2. Provided advice on queries relating to suicide contagion, clustering and media reporting nationally and internationally.  
3. Developed proposal for a pulse system for early identification of emerging suicide clusters and obtained funding for a PhD research project for 4 years. The pulse system has been recommended for implementation in other countries.  
4. Presented updates of research into suicide contagion and clustering at national and international conferences, including the 7th IASP Asia Pacific Conference on Suicide Prevention, Tokyo, 18-21st May 2016.  
5. Facilitated consultation for delegation of representatives of suicide research and prevention from Japan. | Invite a new Co-Chair for the SIG.  
Re-launch of the SIG at the IASP World Congress in Malaysia, 18-22nd July 2017.  
Workshop at the National Conference of Suicide Prevention Australia, 26-29th July, Brisbane.  
Facilitation of international collaboration and capacity building. | Limited capacity to pro-actively approach potential members for the SIG. It is intended to address this at the re-launch and with the support of a new Co-Chair. |
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<td>Early career group</td>
<td>1. To encourage and provide a platform for knowledge exchange between group members and experts in suicidology. 2. To encourage and develop collaboration and networking nationally and internationally. 3. To provide information to members on available career-related opportunities, including jobs, conferences and funding. 4. To actively participate at IASP and other conferences in the area of suicide prevention. 5. To connect group members with SIGs in their area of interest.</td>
<td>1. Official set-up and EC approval of the group. 2. Group meet at ESSB 2016 conference. 3. Group had article in November 2016 newsletter encouraging membership. 4. Group held regular (approximately monthly) calls to organise plans. 5. Group engaged with SIG co-chairs regarding matching group members to SIG activities. 6. Agreed and submitted to CAO a group calendar of activities. 7. Agreed and submitted ECG website content.</td>
<td>1. Reach out to potential members via organised pathways-University affiliations, National Representatives, Research Gate, LinkedIn etc. 2. Produce a regular group newsletter. 3. Host biannual webinars between group members and experts in suicidology. 4. Send out periodic emails to the group concerning activities and opportunities. 5. Create of a presence on social media-Twitter. 6. Promote the group at various conferences, potentially including a group launch at World Congress. 7. Develop (in collaboration with the webmaster) and maintain the group’s web presence. 8. Seek guidance from AAS about the establishment of their similar group. 9. Connect group members, who wish to offer their assistance, to IASP SIG chairs.</td>
<td>None cited</td>
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