



## BACKGROUND

**Please note: content contained in this document may be triggering as it relates to suicide and suicide prevention. Please be mindful in choosing whether or not to read and engage with this opportunity right now. If you feel any distress as a result of this document please reach out to the supports around you.**

Recent research into youth suicide prevention has shown that young people commonly experience feelings of not belonging or feeling that they are a burden to others.

Orygen is putting together a randomised controlled trial (RCT) that we are calling Affinity that is designed to help young people address and reduce feelings of not belonging or being a burden.

As part of this study, we are convening a youth steering group (YSG) to contribute to a range of different parts of the trial development and conduct. Young people who are part of the YSG will be able to provide insight and understanding from their own experiences and those of their peers.

Please note that you will not be asked to disclose anything about your own experience with suicide, suicidal thoughts or behaviours that you are not comfortable to share.

who we are looking forYoung people who are:

- aged between 15 and 25;
- located anywhere in Australia;
- interested in joining a group of others with similar experiences to help provide input on the development and conduct of a research trial for at least six months;
- would feel comfortable talking about their experiences related to belonging and perceived burdensomeness, and reviewing trial documentation to ensure appropriateness of language and content; and
- have lived experience of suicide ideation.

## WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY?

Young people will have the opportunity to contribute their opinions and insights into the development and running of a randomised controlled trial for peers who are living with active or recent suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

For example, one of the YSG's first activities will be to contribute to a focus group by discussing their experiences of, and thoughts about, belonging and burdensomeness. This will take place in a small group setting via Zoom.

Discussing experiences can be as detailed or as brief as you feel comfortable with. For example you may choose to say whether or not you have ever felt like a burden, or if you have felt like you did or didn't belong in a group. You may choose to provide more detail like saying who you have felt you burdened, the ways they made you feel burdensome, or how you've been made to feel like you didn't belong. Steering group members may also choose to share experiences of how feeling like a burden or not belonging related to thinking about suicide.

Other activities will include review and feedback on participant information and consent forms to ensure that they are worded appropriately for the participant demographic, as well as review of intervention content once developed.

It is expected that the YSG will meet monthly for the first six months of the trial, with an opportunity to extend after that. A minimum of 80 per cent attendance rate by each member is preferred. We are hoping for a group of four young people.

Participants are able to change their mind at any time and withdraw from involvement in the YSG, and they will be fully supported in their decision.

## WHAT DOES THIS INVOLVE?

Young people who express interest in participating will be invited to become a founding member of the Affinity RCT youth steering group. For the first year, once every four weeks a 1.5 hour group meeting will be held with the intention of gaining YSG members input on a variety of matters regarding the development and running of the trial. The meetings will be conducted via Zoom to facilitate ease of participation. YSG members will also be asked about their preferred time and day of the week for the meeting to be run.

The first meeting will involve introductions amongst group members and trial staff, as well as a discussion about the YSG members experiences of, and thoughts about, belonging and burdensomeness.

Participants will contribute to how the Affinity RCT can best engage young people with the new comic-based therapy modules the study team will be producing. For example, the study team will present a range of ideas that it has developed, and we ask participants for feedback on them. In particular, the study team is keen to receive youth participation input related to how ideas should best be integrated into the study.

Participants will be reimbursed for their time at the requisite hourly rate as determined by the Orygen youth participation team for all involvement in the YSG.

## WHAT MIGHT BE SOME OUTCOMES OF MY INVOLVEMENT?

Outcomes of the involvement:

- The information you share and contribute will be used to improve the therapeutic materials used in the trial.
- Your review of information to be shared with trial participants will help us ensure that the language and tone is appropriate for them.

## WHAT SUPPORTS WILL I HAVE ACCESS TO?

In the event of feeling distress as a result of attending any of the focus groups, participants will have access to a youth mental health clinician for debriefing for up to two weeks after the group session concludes.

If you require any support with your participation in this activity you can also contact Tharindu Jayadeva (he/him), the National Youth Participation Program Manager, at [tharindu.jayadeva@orygen.org.au](mailto:tharindu.jayadeva@orygen.org.au) or the National Youth Participation team at [youthparticipation@orygen.org.au](mailto:youthparticipation@orygen.org.au).

## WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?

Staff members of the Affinity trial who will be involved:

- Principle Investigator and Senior Youth Mood Clinic Clinician – Associate Professor Simon Rice (He/Him).
- Affinity Clinical Trial Coordinator – Derek English (He/Him).

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

If you have any questions or would like to participate please contact:

Derek English, Clinical Trial Coordinator, at [info@orygen.org.au](mailto:info@orygen.org.au) any time during the week. Derek will respond between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

The opportunity to participate will close at 5pm AEST 16 June 2022.

## QUESTIONS

For any questions please contact: Derek English via [info@orygen.org.au](mailto:info@orygen.org.au)