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Suicide attempters seeking treatment from the emergency department: the WHO START study

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The World Health Organization Suicide Trends in At-Risk Territories (WHO-START) study is a cross-country project that aims to establish suicide research and prevention agenda within countries of the Western Pacific. In the Australian context, this involved implementing a recording system for non-fatal suicidal behaviours within hospital emergency departments. The aim of this presentation is to present the results of the monitoring study (component one) in two hospital campuses on the Gold Coast, Queensland. Records of non-fatal suicidal behaviours were identified through a search of Emergency Department Information System (EDIS). Data obtained from these files included age, gender, method of suicide, and date of presentation to the Emergency Department. This presentation will show the main characteristics of suicide cases, including age, gender and method of suicide. The WHO START study contributes to understandings of suicide in the Australian context as it provides information on those persons who actively seek treatment for non-fatal suicidal behaviours. The results of this study are important for the design of targeted suicide prevention as they demonstrate the main groups 'at risk' of non-fatal suicidal behaviours in Australia.