

AB007. Death literacy— developing a tool to measure the social impact of public health initiatives

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Abstract: This presentation provides an overview of the development of the death literacy concept and of our recent research work to develop a death literacy benchmarking tool. The concept of ‘death literacy’ has four components; skills, knowledge, experiential learning and social action and all provide a framework for behavioural and systemic change. This tool will provide a national benchmark of death literacy in the general population, providing a way to measure the social impact of existing and new public health initiatives. The purpose of the GroundSwell Project (GSP)

is to create a more death literate society, one where people and communities have the practical know-how needed to plan well for end of life. This means shifting focus from “talking about it” to transforming this conversation into one of deep community engagement, social action, insight and empowerment. Being death literate strengthens our ability to care, creating compassionate communities. This tool will provide a national benchmark of death literacy in the general population and will provide a way to measure the social impact of existing and new public health initiatives. Our goal is develop a tool that can be used by a number of stakeholders—funders, government and services.

Keywords: Death literacy; public health; compassionate communities

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