Conservatively, there are over 2,000 suicides in Australia annually, over a quarter of which occur in Victoria. Suicide is the leading cause of death for males aged <45 years and females aged <35 years, and the 15th leading cause of death overall. Efforts to prevent suicide have been stymied by inadequate data sources.

In recognition of the need for more accurate and comprehensive information regarding suicide, four key partner organisations are involved in a project to evaluate the Victorian Suicide Register (VSR). The VSR is a database of all suicides occurring in Victoria from 2009, which was designed and built by the Coroners Prevention Unit at the Coroners Court of Victoria. The database is managed by the court and is integrated into its processes for reporting on reviewable and reportable deaths. Data contained in the VSR are derived from multiple sources, including police reports, post-mortem reports, witness statements and coroners’ findings.

In this presentation we will describe the implementation and evaluation of the VSR, including the role of the coroner and coro-nial court processes in case identification and data collation. We will use preliminary data to highlight the way comprehensive information on all suicides occurring in Victoria provides the best possible evidence base for suicide prevention.

Dr Jeremy Dwyer is a case investigator in the Coroners Prevention Unit, Coroners Court of Victoria, and is a core member of the team that designed and built the Victorian Suicide Register.

Dr Georgina Sutherland is a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Mental Health. She has worked in partnership with the Coroners Court of Victoria for the past three years examining the intersection of the legal and health systems.