

Important information from South Eastern NSW PHN

COORDINARE, as the Australian Government's **Primary Health Network (PHN) for South Eastern NSW**, has a support role in the immediate response to the bushfires and a growing role as the region recovers.

We have bushfire support information available on our website, through the special link bushfiresupport.info, and this has been summarised below:

Coping with the stress of bushfires

The devastating bushfires have proven to be an upsetting and stressful time for many people. Anyone directly or indirectly affected by the fires can have these feelings and for the majority of people, these feelings will begin to disappear after a short period of time.

With thanks to Lifeline, here is a list of things you can do to take care of yourself and your wellbeing, or that of someone you care about:

- **Recovery takes time.** It is important to allow yourself time to process your circumstances and regain a sense of normality. There are things you can do to heal and rebuild.
- **Recognise when it's getting too much.** Watch out for signs of stress and get extra support when things become overwhelming. Allow yourself extra time to get things done.
- **Talk.** Release your emotions and tension by talking to someone you trust. This can help put things into perspective. It's likely your neighbours, friends and family are experiencing similar feelings.
- **Develop an action plan.** Decide who's going to do what and when. Summarise your financial situation and discuss your options with your bank to alleviate stress of any financial concerns.
- **Take care of yourself.** Eat well, exercise and sleep. Try to get back to your normal routine when you feel ready. Wherever possible, schedule extra time for things you enjoy and find relaxing.
- **Get help - lean on family and friends.** Strong support networks can provide emotional or practical support. Explain your needs and tell them how they can help. Make a list of places to go to for help e.g. financial assistance, emotional support, your GP, counselling services.
- **Consider professional help.** If you don't feel some return to normal after four weeks, seek professional help.
- **Support children.** Provide comfort, limit children's exposure to media coverage of the fires, allow them to talk or ask questions, but do not force them. Return to normal activities as soon as possible.

COORDINARE's commissioned mental health and suicide prevention programs in South Eastern NSW

COORDINARE funds a number of no-cost mental health services in the region, including:

- **Royal Far West:** video counselling for **0-15 year olds and their families**. Call 02 8966 8500.
- **headspace:** service for **12-25 year olds**. Bega 1800 959 844, Goulburn (02) 4824 4944, Queanbeyan (02) 6298 0300, Nowra (02) 4446 7300, Wollongong (02) 4220 7660, Batemans Bay interim bushfire service 1800 718 383 or e-headspace (online web chat) call 1800 650 890.
- **CatholicCare Bushfire Support Counselling:** will help individuals, families and communities impacted by the bushfires. Sessions available via telehealth services. View their flyer at <https://bit.ly/39GEOII> or call 1800 068 698 to make an appointment.
- **Grand Pacific Health:** face-to-face or phone counselling available to South Eastern NSW residents. Call 1800 228 987.
- **Katungul Aboriginal Corporation Regional Health & Community Services:** call Narooma 4476 2155, Bega 6492 0532 or Batemans Bay 4488 4050.
- **Rural Outreach Mental Health Service:** will support people living with complex mental health issues via specialist mental health treatment. Contact info@romhs.com.au or call 02 4421 7525.

View the **full service list** at <http://bit.ly/MHsupportSENSW>. We will continue to update this list as services change.

Need help to navigate and access services?

- **The National Bushfire Recovery Agency** Bushfire Recovery Connect website helps you to connect to the support you need. Go to: <https://recovery.serviceconnect.gov.au/>
- **Recovery Support Services** can link you to your own personal recovery support worker who can help you navigate and access services and support. Call:
 - Bega Valley: 64992345
 - Eurobodalla: 44747434
 - Shoalhaven: 1800 663 863
 - Snowy Monaro: 64523450
 - Queanbeyan–Palerang: 0428 777 453

Other no-cost mental health support options

- **Call an existing helpline:**
 - If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call **Triple Zero (000)** or visit your nearest hospital emergency department.
 - **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 also have dedicated bushfire recovery support line on 13 43 57 <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>
 - **Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636 <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
 - **MensLine Australia:** 1300 78 9978 www.mensline.org.au/
 - **Kids Helpline** (for 5-25 years): 1800 55 1800 <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

- **NSW Mental Health Line:** 1800 011 511 farmers and business owners in bushfire-affected areas can access Farm Gate counsellors and peer support workers.
 - **GriefLine:** 1300 845 745 <https://griefline.org.au/>
 - **Qlife:** 1800 184 527 <https://qlife.org.au/>
 - **Disaster Welfare Assistance Line:** 1800 018 444
 - **Law Access NSW Disaster Response Hotline:** 1800 801 529
- **Remote Psych telehealth:** video counselling for anyone impacted by bushfires. Call 03 5222 4789.
 - **Anglicare:** face-to-face, telephone or skype counselling across Illawarra, Shoalhaven, South Coast, Southern Highlands for children and adults. Call 1300 651 728 or email counselling@anglicare.org.au
 - **Relationships Australia:** individual and family counselling is available in Relationship Australia's Bega and Moruya offices. Call 6122 7100 to book.
 - **Lifeline:** tool kits and information on recovering after a bushfire at www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/recovering-after-a-natural-disaster
 - **Red Cross:** disaster recovery information available at <http://bit.ly/3cosYUM>. Tips for taking care of yourself and helping others, as well as advice on managing distress available in seven languages at www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/looking-after-yourself
 - **Australian Government's Head to Health website** for online and phone supports, resources and treatment options. Go to www.headtohealth.gov.au
 - **Black Dog Institute:** resources to help cope at <https://blackdoginstitute.org.au/bushfire-support>

Additional support

The **Local Health District** has no-cost bushfire counselling:

- In **Southern NSW** call 1800 011 511
- In the **Shoalhaven** call 4424 7888.

Or speak to your local **doctor**.