



Your emotional and mental wellbeing

Easy Read factsheet



How to use this factsheet



The National Bushfire Recovery Agency (NBRA) wrote this factsheet.

When you see the word 'we', it means the NBRA.

We wrote this factsheet in an easy to read way.

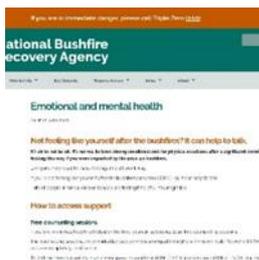
We use pictures to explain some ideas.

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.

We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 15.



This Easy Read factsheet is a summary of another document. This means it only includes the most important ideas.

You can find the other factsheet on our website.

www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au/recovery-support/mental-health

You can ask for help to read this factsheet.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

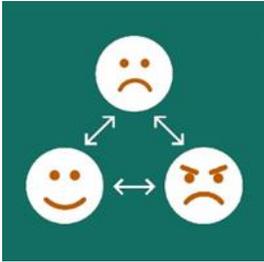


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Mental and emotional support after the bushfires



Last summer, bushfires caused a lot of damage in Australia.

You might live or work in a place affected by a bushfire.

You might have had strong feelings since the bushfires.

You might have felt:

- sad
- upset
- angry
- frustrated
- worried
- different to how you normally feel.

Some people might experience many feelings.

Other people might not feel much.

However you feel, remember, it's ok to feel that way.

You can talk to your family and friends about how you feel.



Talking about how you feel:

- is important
- can help.

You might find it helpful to talk to someone who has been trained to support people with their emotional and mental wellbeing.

The Australian Government has set up extra support for you.

If you feel different emotions after the bushfires, we can help you:

- get support
- talk to someone.



Support to help you feel better



It is important to get support to recover from the bushfires.

People who live in places badly affected by the bushfires can get free **counselling** sessions.

Counselling can help you:

- talk about your emotions
- with stress and anxiety
- with your relationships
- with your decision making

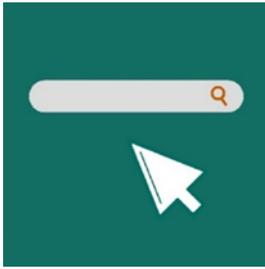


Free counselling sessions might be:

- in person
- by **telehealth services**.

A telehealth service is a phone or video call with a counsellor or health care worker.

Telehealth is an option for people who can't visit a counsellor in person.



Your local Primary Health Network (PHN) can help you find free counselling in your area.

You might need help even if you don't live in an area that has been affected by the bushfires.

You can still contact your local PHN to find out what support you can get.

To find your local Primary Health Network, you can use the locator tool at health.gov.au/phn.

You can ask someone to help you find the tool, such as a:

- friend
- family member
- support person.



You can also call the Services Australia Disaster Hotline.

180 22 66

Ask for counselling options.



Talk to a mental health expert



People who live in places badly affected by the bushfires can claim money back from **Medicare** for up to 10 **psychological therapy** sessions.

Medicare is a system run by the Australian Government to help people pay for health care.

Psychological therapy is similar to **counselling**, but looks at feelings, thoughts and behaviours. It can help you learn new skills to deal with stressful and difficult situations.

You don't need a:

- letter from your doctor
- mental health treatment plan.

You can book directly with an eligible:

- psychologist
- **occupational therapist (OT)**
- social worker
- doctor (also called a GP which stands for General Practitioner)



An occupational therapist (OT) is someone who helps you learn ways to do everyday tasks.

But you must have your sessions with someone who is **eligible** for the Medicare claims.

If someone is eligible, it means they can take part in something.

You can ask someone to help you, such as a:

- friend
- family member
- support person
- doctor (also called a GP which stands for General Practitioner).



You can visit the Australian Psychological Society website to find a psychologist who is eligible.

www.psychology.org.au/Find-a-Psychologist

You can visit the Australian Association of Social Workers website to find a social worker who is eligible.

www.aasw.asn.au/find-a-social-worker/search/



You can visit the Occupational Therapy Australia website to find an OT who is eligible.

www.otaus.com.au/find-an-ot

You can visit the websites above to find services that are right for you.

Some websites have a search function you can use.

You may need extra support to understand which services are right for you.

You can ask someone to help you, such as a:

- friend
- family member
- support person
- doctor (also called a GP which stands for General Practitioner).



Call a support service



There are other support services you can call if you need help.

Services Australia Disaster Hotline

1800 22 66

Lifeline's Bushfire Recovery Crisis Support line

13 HELP (13 43 57)

MensLine

1300 78 99 78

Beyond Blue

1300 224 636

GriefLine

1300 845 745

Suicide Call Back Service

1300 659 467

Kids Helpline – telephone counselling for young people aged 5 to 25

1800 551 800

Qlife

1800 184 527



If you don't speak English or you need someone to help you understand these services, call **131 450**.



Other types of support



There are many different types of support, such as:

- financial support to help you have enough money or look after the money you have
- support for your emotional and mental wellbeing
- support for the community and from the community.

You may be able to get financial, emotional, and community support.

This support might help you feel better.

To find out if you can get more support, call the hotline in your state:

- Victoria
1800 560 760
- South Australia
1800 302 787
- New South Wales
13 77 88



- ACT
13 22 81.

You can visit our website to find out more about recovery assistance.

www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au.

You can ask someone to help you, such as a:

- friend
- family member
- support person.



Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.

Counselling

Counselling can help you:

- talk about your emotions
- with stress and anxiety
- with your relationships
- with your decision making

Eligible

If you are eligible, you can join in and take part in something.

Medicare

Medicare is a system run by the Australian Government to help people pay for health care.

Occupational therapist (OT)

An occupational therapist (OT) is someone who helps you learn ways to do everyday tasks.



Psychologist

A psychologist is a mental health expert you can talk to about:

- how you think and feel
- ways to help you feel better.

Psychological therapy

Psychological therapy looks at feelings, thoughts and behaviours. It can help you learn new skills to deal with stressful and difficult situations.

Telehealth services

A telehealth service is a phone or video call with a counsellor or health care professional.



Contact us

You can contact us at

www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au/talk-us/contact-nbra