



# Not feeling like yourself after the bushfires?

## It can help to talk

It's normal to have strong emotional and physical reactions after a significant event.

There is no right or wrong way to feel – people can respond to the same event in very different ways.

### Some normal responses:

- You might feel anxious, overwhelmed or confused.
- You might feel sad, irritable or angry, or numb.
- You might feel unwell – headaches, difficulty sleeping, losing or gaining weight.
- Some people might increase their use of alcohol or drugs. Some may even think of harming themselves.

### Simple strategies can help like:



Getting enough sleep



Regular exercise



Talking to family and friends



Finding time to do something you enjoy each day



Talking to a professional

Talking to a professional can help you process your reactions and develop healthy coping strategies.

If you want some more support, if people you know are worried about you, or if you're still feeling unsettled even after a few weeks – it is a good idea to talk to someone. **Help is available.**

## What help is available in the Lithgow area?

### Get help through your local Recovery Support Service

The **Recovery Support Service** is a specialised local service assisting people impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires. If you need emotional, personal or practical support, the recovery support service can help.

Your own case worker can connect you with mental health support, counselling, disaster assistance, grants, other services and community resources. You do not need a referral to access these services – simply reach out via phone or email.

In **Lithgow** there are two services available:

Step by Step Recovery Support Service  
For community members:

Call **0417 298 832**  
Email [stepbystep@gatewayfamilyservices.org.au](mailto:stepbystep@gatewayfamilyservices.org.au)

Rural Recovery Support Service  
For primary producers and rural communities:

Call **0409 326 779**  
Email [southinland.recovery@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:southinland.recovery@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

## What help is available in the Lithgow area?


### Free counselling sessions


Lots of people are finding it helpful to talk to a counsellor after the fires. You might too.

Counselling can help you process powerful emotions such as grief or anger, deal with immediate causes of stress and anxiety, and identify options when making decisions.

The below services have been made possible by funding from **Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN)**.

Wentworth Healthcare is the provider of NBMPHN.

 headspace Bushfire Recovery Counselling (for young people aged 12 – 25). **Call 02 4720 8850**

 Bushfire Psychological Therapy Services. Up to 10 free sessions with a professional are available.

**Contact your GP and ask them to refer you through the PTS intake line.**

### NSW Mental Health Line

To connect to a **Bushfire Recovery Clinician**, or to seek professional mental health help and advice, you can call the Mental Health Line (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Farmers and business owners in bushfire-affected areas can also access **Farm Gate counsellors** and peer support workers on the Mental Health Line.

 **Call 1800 011 511**


### Other help


These local places can help connect you with support for your emotional and mental wellbeing.

 Your local doctor.

 Your local Aboriginal Liaison Officer. **Call 02 6350 2555**


 The Lithgow Community Mental Health Team at the Community Health Centre. **Call 02 6350 2555**

 Lithgow Information & Neighbourhood Centre: Child Youth and Family Counselling Service. **Call 02 6354 2077.**

 Your local Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) coordinator. **Call 0448 125 676**

### Support for emergency services workers


**Fortem Australia** provides free wellbeing activities and clinical support to first responders and their families.

 **1300 33 95 94**


 [fortemaustralia.org.au](http://fortemaustralia.org.au)


**Black Dog Institute** provides support for first responders and their loved ones, including free one-on-one sessions with mental health specialists Australia-wide and digital resources. Book a consultation online or over the phone:


 **02 8627 3314**

 [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/bushfire-support-service/consultation](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/bushfire-support-service/consultation)


### Online and phone services

 Lifeline's Bushfire Recovery Crisis Line supports people who have been affected by the bushfires through free and confidential support from a trained counsellor. **Call 13 HELP (13 43 57).**

 The Suicide Call Back Service provides free telephone, video and online counselling for anyone who is affected by suicide (including people who are feeling suicidal or are worried about someone who might be). **Call 1300 659 467.**

 Beyond Blue provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. **Call 1300 22 4636.**

 Visit [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au) for online support and resources.

 Visit [mentalhealthhelp.com.au](http://mentalhealthhelp.com.au) to access an easy to use online mental health navigation tool with local supports, services and programs.

## More information

Visit [recovery.serviceconnect.gov.au](http://recovery.serviceconnect.gov.au) for more information about the range of local support on offer if you have been affected by the bushfires.

National Recovery and Resilience Agency

