

16 September 2024

Check in on Your Mental Wellbeing this ‘Get Ready’ Weekend

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, is encouraging the community to prepare their mental wellbeing, as well as their homes, for the upcoming bushfire season.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay, said that while this upcoming ‘Get Ready’ weekend serves as a crucial time for our community to assess our risk and prepare our homes and properties, it is equally as important to check in and prepare ourselves and our families mentally. This is particularly relevant for those who have been affected by bushfires in the past.

“We have had a warm and windy start to spring, which may be causing people to be anxious. It’s natural to feel worried about the upcoming bushfire season and it’s important to acknowledge that these feelings are normal. It can be helpful to talk openly with family and friends and ask for help if needed.”

“If you or your family are experiencing unpleasant memories, feelings of sadness, or if you or your family’s stress is overwhelming and starting to interfere with your daily life, then it might be time to seek professional support.”

If you are unsure about what support you may need, Ms Reay suggests talking to your GP.

“GPs can refer patients to services in the area and can also look at other health factors that may be impacting your, or your family’s, overall wellbeing,” she said.

Another option is to call the Head to Health phoneline on **1800 595 212**, which helps you to find free or low-cost local mental health support in the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Lithgow and Penrith areas. The service is available Monday to Friday from 8:30am - 5:00pm, excluding public holidays.

“When you call the phoneline, you will be asked to enter your postcode so you can be transferred to a local mental health professional. These clinicians know our local region and will take the time to listen to your concerns and connect you with the most appropriate free local service in your area,” Ms Reay said.

Ms Reay added that it’s also essential to ensure our youth are supported.

“Natural disasters can profoundly affect young people's mental health and heighten their anxiety about future events. Providing accessible, free mental health services is essential in helping them process their experiences, alleviate their fears, and foster resilience in the face of uncertainty.”



headspace provides free early intervention support to young people aged 12-25 years across mental health, physical health, work and study, and alcohol and other drug needs. More information, including how to access this service and operation times, is available via www.nbmphn.com.au/headspace

“By integrating mental health into our preparedness efforts, we can ensure that we are not only physically ready for the bushfire season but also supported through it,” said Ms Reay.

More information on local services can be found at www.nbmphn.com.au/MentalHealth

For interviews or further information contact:

Bess Bosman

Manager – Media and Government Relations

T 0438 261 015

E Bess.Bosman@nbmphn.com.au

Or

Krystle Goulding

Communications & Media Officer

T 02 4708 8199

E Krystle.Goulding@nbmphn.com.au