

National Disaster Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework

About the Framework

The National Mental Health Commission is leading the development of a national framework to guide a coordinated approach to support mental health and wellbeing in the context of national disasters. The Framework will improve how governments, services and the community work together to support people's mental health and wellbeing before, during and after disasters

The Framework will set out best practice support for mental health and wellbeing and clarify the responsibilities of those responding to people's trauma and stress. The focus is two-fold:

1. Providing mental health services and wellbeing activities during and following disasters
2. Rebuilding thriving communities to support good mental health and wellbeing

Why?

Drought, cyclones, floods and bushfires are among the many disasters Australia experiences. In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic occurred alongside these, compounding their impact.

Research has taught us more about the consequences of disasters. Individuals and community mental health is likely to be affected in the short term; for some, there can be ongoing challenges.

The Australian Government's role in disaster situations has grown. The Framework will provide an agreed, approach to disaster mental health and wellbeing support.

Who?

The Commission will work with state, territory and the Australian Government to engage individuals, communities and organisations in the development of the Framework including:

- ✓ People in areas affected by disasters
- ✓ Responsible government agencies (such as Emergency Management Australia, state and national bushfire, flood and drought agencies)
- ✓ Health agencies, Primary Health Networks, Local Health Districts
- ✓ Local government
- ✓ Non government organisations such as Red Cross and Lifeline, Rotary
- ✓ Mental health researchers and experts
- ✓ People with lived experience of mental health, and people who care for them

Funding and Time-frame

The Framework is funded from the Australian Government's [\\$76 Million Bushfire Mental Health Response Package](#) provided for the 2019-2020 fires. However, its scope is preparation for, relief during and recovery from all national disasters.

The final Framework is expected to be **released in June 2021** with interim drafts available for comment earlier.

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Australian Government
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