

# Looking after your mental health and wellbeing



## A guide to support services

**phn**  
NORTH WESTERN  
MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative



Find a list of local services at  
[nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth](http://nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth)

Or call Medicare Mental Health  
**1800 595 212** to find the best mental  
health support for you.

# What is mental health and wellbeing?

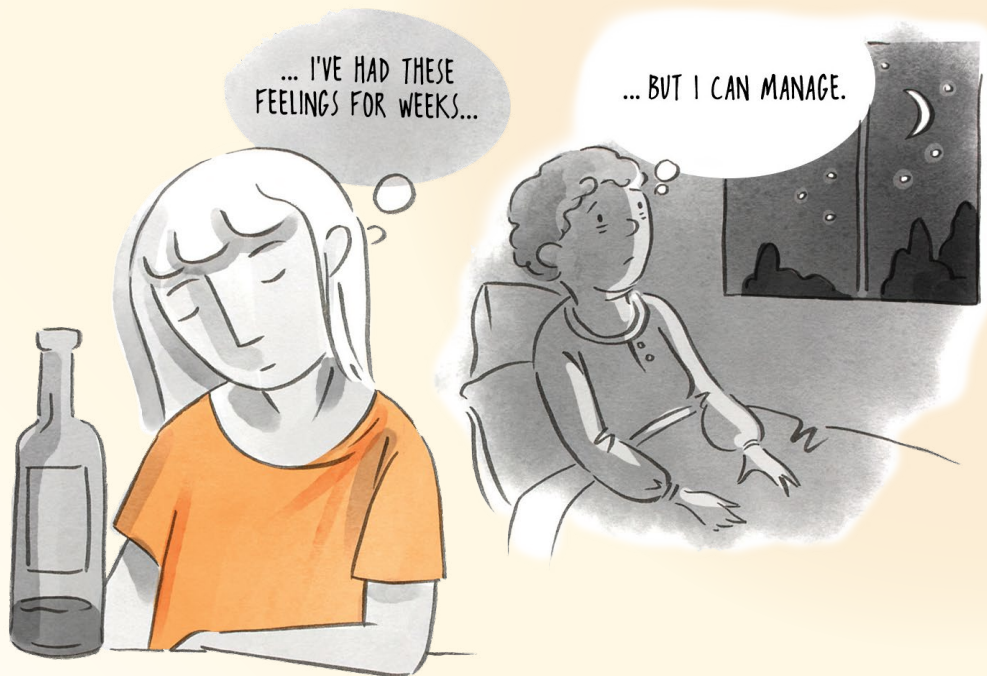
Your mental health and wellbeing influences how you think, feel, and behave in daily life. It also affects your ability to cope with stress, overcome challenges, build relationships, and recover from life's setbacks and hardships.

**Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.**



## **Are you worried about your mental health, or the mental health of someone you care for?**

If you are not feeling like your normal self or feel like something isn't right, maybe your mental health or wellbeing is not as good as it could be. It's more common than you think. Almost half of people living in Australia will experience some kind of mental health concern during their lifetime and it can affect anyone and any age.



## Signs that your mental health and wellbeing may not be at its best

- Feelings of fear, worry, panic or unease, some people have physical symptoms like sweating, racing heart and difficulty breathing at a normal pace
- Feeling sad, lacking energy and motivation
- Lack of enjoyment in the things you usually enjoy
- Feelings of hopelessness, negative about the future, wanting to give up
- Being very irritable or angry, you might be snapping at people
- Not wanting to be with people, and pulling away from activities and groups
- Feeling lonely
- Sleeping a lot more or a lot less
- Eating a lot more or a lot less.
- Using too much alcohol or drugs to get you through

Life can be full of ups and downs and at times we all experience feelings that are difficult to manage and can affect our behaviour, but if these are ongoing it is important to seek help as early as possible.



**Often the first step is the hardest, but it's really important to get help.**



Some people might experience serious symptoms.

- Behaving in a very different or unusual way
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't really there
- Hurting themselves or considering ending their life
- Thoughts about hurting others

**If you, or someone you care for, are experiencing any of these serious symptoms you should seek help urgently.**

The good news is that there is help available.



**This guide can help you to find out more about how and where to find the help you need.**

### **Local services and online support**

You can find a range of local services and support online. The [NWMPHN website](http://nwmpnh.org.au) is a good place to start in terms of finding the right help for you.

Services have been grouped to make it easier to find the ones you need. It includes services for everyone; families, young people, men, LGBTIQ community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from multicultural backgrounds, refugees and asylum seekers and carers.

**[Visit nwmpnh.org.au/mymentalhealth](http://nwmpnh.org.au/mymentalhealth)**





# How are you feeling?

I have been having these feelings or concerns for weeks, but I am still able to manage my daily life.



## Find the right help for you

### Self help

Establish a regular sleep pattern, eat healthily and take regular exercise. All these things are known to have a positive effect on your wellbeing.

Find time to do activities that you enjoy or make you feel relaxed such as reading, listening to music or doing something creative.

Connecting with friends, family and community can also help lift spirits. Consider volunteering if you have some spare time.



## Speak with someone you trust

A good starting point is to talk about your feelings and worries with someone that you trust: a friend, family member, teacher or colleague.

## Online support

There are a range of online mental health services which you can use – when it suits you – at your own pace. Options include mobile apps, online information resources and programs that you can enrol in.

## Counselling

You could speak with a trained counsellor. They are available over the telephone, through online chat, at your local community health service or in a private counselling service.

## Peer support

It could also be helpful to talk with other people who have experienced similar mental health and wellbeing issues. There are a number of online forums and groups available. More information can be found by visiting [nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth](http://nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth)

## Where to go for help

### GP

Your GP (general practitioner) is a good place to start. They can support you with self-care, find other support and provide counselling. Book a longer appointment so that you can have a good discussion about your feelings and concerns.

### CAREinMIND™ Wellbeing Support Service

Offers free 24/7 online and phone counselling for people living, working or studying in Melbourne's northern, central and western suburbs. Call **1300 096 269** visit [careinmind.com.au](http://careinmind.com.au)

### Medicare Mental Health

A trained mental health professional will take your call and find the services and supports to best suit you. Call **1800 595 212** or visit [medicarementalhealth.gov.au](http://medicarementalhealth.gov.au)

The Medicare Mental Health website lists a large range of digital resources. Visit [medicarementalhealth.gov.au](http://medicarementalhealth.gov.au)

### healthdirect

You can find counselling and community health services near you by visiting [healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)

### Employee Assistance

If you are employed, you may have access to an Employee Assistance Program through your workplace – talk to your employer and find out.

# How are you feeling?

My feelings and symptoms are more serious and having an impact upon my daily life. I am not feeling able to maintain my routine, attend work or school or enjoy the things that usually make me happy



## GP

Your GP can provide counselling and support. They can create a mental health treatment plan for you and can help you with medication or refer you to a mental health professional.

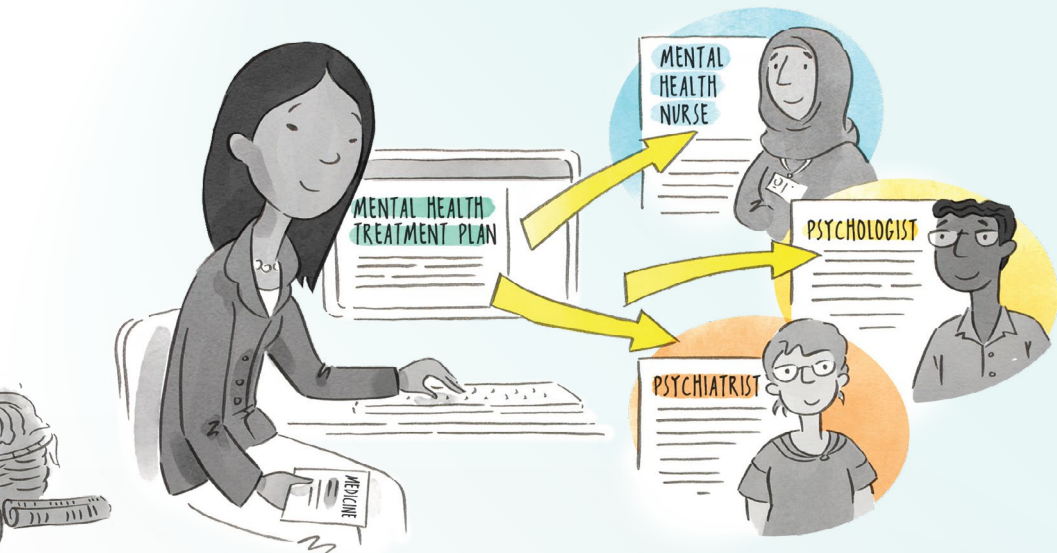
Book a longer appointment so that you can have a good discussion about your feelings and concerns.

## A counselling referral

Your GP can refer you to a number of free or low-cost mental health professionals such as a psychologist or mental health social worker.

## Find the right help for you





## Psychosocial support services

Psychosocial support can help people with severe mental illness. Practical support helps people by sorting out things that effect mental health like: social life, money, housing or physical health problems. Your GP can refer you to these services.

## Psychiatrist

Your GP might also refer you to see a psychiatrist who is a specialist doctor in mental health and can work with you to develop a management plan for recovery.

## Private services

If you prefer to see a mental health professional or psychologist privately, you don't need a referral from a GP.

However if you see your GP you might be eligible for a mental health treatment plan which provides Medicare subsidised visits.



## Where to go for help

### Medicare Mental Health

A trained mental health professional will take your call and find the services and supports to best suit you.

Call 1800 595 212 or visit [medicarementalhealth.gov.au](http://medicarementalhealth.gov.au)

This is not a crisis service.

### Mental health professionals

You can find mental health professionals in your area by visiting the Service Finder at [healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)

# How are you feeling?



My symptoms are severe. I am really struggling and I need more help urgently.

## Find the right help for you

### Specialist mental health services

Specialist mental health services are available to support people who are seriously affected by their mental illness. They provide both emergency and planned assessment and treatment in either a community service or at a hospital.

If your need is urgent, contact specialist mental health services directly or your GP can do this for you.



## Where to go for urgent help

### Specialist mental health services

For urgent support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These provide you with immediate telephone access to an experienced mental health clinician who can assist to determine the type and urgency of response needed. This is a free service.

Urgent support phone numbers are based on local government areas, depending where you live:

- Brimbank, Hume, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Merri-bek  
Call: **1300 874 243**
- Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong and Wyndham  
Call: **1300 657 259**
- Macedon Ranges  
Call: **1300 363 788**
- Yarra  
Call: **1300 558 862**

### Lifeline

Free, 24 hour crisis counselling service. Call **13 11 14** or Text 0477 131 114 Visit [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)



## If you have immediate concerns

...about the wellbeing or safety of yourself or someone you care for go to your closest **Emergency Department**

If your – or someone else's – life is in immediate danger call emergency services on **000**



# Find the right help for you



## Local services online

You can find a range of local services and support online. Services have been grouped to make it easier to find the ones that meet your needs.

Visit [nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth](http://nwmphn.org.au/mymentalhealth)



## Get someone to help you

**Medicare Mental Health** is for anyone of any age, in Australia. A trained mental health professional will answer your call, provide advice and direct you to the best support for you.

Call [1800 595 212](tel:1800595212) or visit [medicarementalhealth.gov.au](http://medicarementalhealth.gov.au)

## Was this resource useful? We value your feedback.

NWMPHN is committed to providing the community with information that is both accurate and useful.

If you have feedback about how this guide can be improved, please provide this via our feedback form at [nwmphn.org.au/feedback](http://nwmphn.org.au/feedback)

