



# BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

UPDATE for  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

NEPEAN BLUE MOUNTAINS PHN

## Bushfire Psychological Therapy Services

From 4 February 2020 our Psychological Therapy Services (PTS) will be extended to include people significantly impacted by bushfires, including emergency services personnel and their families.

This new stream is being funded through the Federal Government's Mental Health Response to Bushfire Trauma program and as such, different referral criteria will apply.

### Who is it for?

- Any individual in the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Lithgow or Penrith region experiencing **high levels of distress** resulting from bushfires. For example, people who have experienced loss of property, loss of business income, or have experienced significant mental health impacts as a result of threat of bushfire, which could be from past trauma.
- As we have a finite amount of funding for this initiative over the next 18 months, it is important that people most in need are able to access this service. The impact of the recent bushfires must be a **significant contributor** to a person's deterioration in mental health if they are referred to this service.
- Individuals must be referred by their GP, psychiatrist or paediatrician
- Individuals are entitled to up to **10 free face-to-face sessions** until June 2021
- **No** Centrelink issued pension or Health Care Card is required
- **No** Mental Health Care Plan is required, however GPs may choose to complete one at their discretion
- Where appropriate, couples or family members who meet the eligibility criteria may be referred and seen together rather than individually
- Individuals currently receiving services under other PTS streams are eligible for sessions under this new stream
- Consumer does not require significant clinical care co-ordination and support.

**Exclusion Criteria:** People with low levels of distress which does not require psychological therapy interventions but who would benefit from low intensity CBT based coaching sessions. These people should be referred to the New Access coaching program or other relevant services.

### How to refer patients?

GPs must call the PTS intake line on **1800 223 365** and complete the PTS referral form available on our website.

**MORE:** [www.nbmphn.com.au/HCP/PTS](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/HCP/PTS)

### Other mental health services

For people experiencing mild to moderate distress from the bushfires, there are other clinical services and wellbeing initiatives that may be appropriate, with both GP and self-referral options available.

**MORE:** [www.nbmphn.com.au/BushfireHealthSupport](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/BushfireHealthSupport)

**OR:** [www.nbmphn.com.au/BushfireResponse](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/BushfireResponse)

For any questions or concerns please contact:

**1800 223 365** or email **PTSManger@nbmphn.com.au**