

MEDIA RELEASE

Look after your mental health this holiday season

6 December 2017

The festive season can be a time of increased stress and pressure for many people, for a variety of reasons. Murray PHN would like to remind the Benalla community that support is available for those who need it.

The holiday period can intensify feelings of loneliness, increase financial worries, strain relationships and also make people feel pressured to have a “perfect” Christmas experience.

Murray PHN CEO, Matt Jones, said that there is often an expectation that the Christmas season is a time where everyone feels joyful, but not everyone does.

“Whether people live with mental illness throughout the year or not, we know that the holiday season is a time that can cause distress for many people,” Mr Jones said.

“It’s important that those who are struggling with the holiday season know how to get help and support, and also that members of the community look out for one another,” he said.

Around half of all Australians will experience mental health issues at some point in their lives. Mental health, including suicide prevention, is a key priority for Murray PHN.

The organisation has partnered with the Victorian government to implement a pilot place-based suicide prevention project in Benalla, one of 12 locations in the state where the trial is taking place.

Chair of the Benalla Mental Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee, Scott Upston, said that raising awareness of mental health issues and support services is important to help build a resilient community.

“We want those who are struggling with the festive season to know that they shouldn’t be reluctant to ask for or accept help,” Mr Upston said.

There are a number of places available to get help over the holiday season. These include:

- StandBy 24/7 support number: 0439 173 310
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- headtohealth.org.au
- Mental Health Crisis Line: 1300 783 347

Contact details

For more details, Caroline Hamilton, Communications Specialist, e: chamilton@murrayhn.org.au or t:.0449 257 776.