

MEDIA RELEASE

Supporting bushfire affected communities

16 January 2020

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones has welcomed the additional mental health support announced by the Federal Minister of Health, Greg Hunt in Wodonga yesterday.

The announcement came on the back of a national \$76 million bushfire relief package that was released on 12 January.

The Federal Government has allocated Murray PHN almost \$2 million that will be used to fund additional mental health nurses, bushfire trauma coordinators and community grants in the north east region.

Mr Jones said that the PHN has been working with affected general practices and other local health services during the past few weeks, along with local, state and national governments.

“Our role as a primary health network has been to coordinate information sharing about service arrangements, issues and needs and importantly to ensure that efforts are integrated and tailored to each community.

One such local need has been for additional mental health support.

“The impacts of bushfire can be extremely devastating, causing a range of physical, mental, emotional and behavioural reactions.

“It is important people have somewhere to turn to if they need it, which may even be in weeks or months from now”, he said.

As an initial response, Murray PHN has commissioned APMHA HealthCare to deliver face-to-face and phone counselling.

Murray PHN will continue to play an important role in supporting providers and communities in the bushfire risk, recovery and post recovery phases.

APMHA can be called between 9am-6pm Monday to Friday on 1300 514 811. If you need urgent support, please call lifeline 24/7 on 13 11 14.

For more information and resources, visit: <https://www.murrayphn.org.au/bushfires> or <https://apmha.com.au/bushfires/>

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