



# Mental Health Supports for Bushfire

Activity Work Plan  
2020 — 2024

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# BF - 1 - Frontline Emergency Distress and Trauma Counselling Activity

## Program Key Priority Area

Mental Health

## Aim of Activity

Provide immediate counselling and other mental health services/interventions to support the needs of people experiencing distress or trauma as a result of the 2019-2020 bush fires and 2021 floods in the NCPHN region including emergency response and front-line personnel.

## Description of Activity

- Trauma and distress counselling through appropriately qualified mental health clinicians for individuals, families and emergency personnel affected by the bushfires – up to 10 sessions through the following modalities: face to face, telephone, or video-telehealth.
- Free counselling sessions at or through referrals from Service Australia, LGA Recovery Centres, Evacuation Centres, BlaizeAid Camps and other services providing recovery information and support.
- Provide psychological brief intervention sessions to individuals and small groups by appropriately qualified mental health clinicians.
- Provide trauma debriefing/information sessions to communities, volunteer groups and employers/employees in fire affected regions to enhance skills for wellbeing and understanding the mental health issues associated with bush fire trauma and recovery.

## Needs Assessment Priority

NCPHN Needs Assessment 2019/20-2021/22

### Needs Assessment Priorities

Older People

Chronic Disease

### Needs Assessment Priorities

Mental Health

## Target Population Cohort

Individuals and/or families, emergency personnel and front-line volunteers affected by the 2019-2020 bush fires

Indigenous Specific	No
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## Coverage

Whole Region

## Consultation

- Mid North Coast LHD
- Northern NSW LHD
- Services Australia
- Local Government
- Office of Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW)
- Community Volunteer Groups
- BlaizeAid
- Rural Fire Service

## Collaboration

- Connect to Wellbeing Service (NCPHN Intake and Referral Service) – intake and referrals to mental health practitioners for trauma counselling services and telehealth services
- MNC & NNSW LHD – Coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region
- Local Government Bushfire Coordinator's - Coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region
- Services Australia – accept referrals and ensure coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region
- Community Volunteer Groups - Coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region.

## Activity Milestones Details/Duration

Activity Start Date	
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Activity End Date                      30/06/2021

Service Delivery Start Date	November 2019
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Service Delivery End Date	June 2021
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## Procurement approach

Combination of:

- Continuing Service Provider/Contract Extension
- Expression of Interest

Is this activity being co-designed?	No
Is this activity the result of a previous co-design process?	No
Do you plan to implement this Activity using co-commissioning or joint-commissioning arrangements?	No
Has this activity previously been co-commissioned or joint-commissioned?	No
Decommissioning	No

## BF - 2 - Bushfire Trauma Response Coordinators Activity

### Program Key Priority Area

Mental Health

### Aim of Activity

Bushfire Trauma Response Coordinator – Coordinate services for communities and people impacted by the bushfire and floods to help them navigate access to the services they need. Develop coordinated linkages with other government and non-government agencies and services to ensure integrated service pathways.

### Description of Activity

#### Continuing Activities

- Engage with communities, agencies, and committees to understand the community context
- Recognise the complex and dynamic nature of emergencies and communities
- Undertake collaborative planning with key stakeholders to clarify roles, plan services, promote coordination and avoid duplication in response and recovery.
- Use community-led approaches that are responsive and flexible, engaging communities and empowering them to move forward
- Implement a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs
- Effective communication with affected communities and other stakeholders
- Recognise, support and build on community, individual and organisational capacity.
- Plan programs which respond to the requirements of the community in collaboration with health partners
- Ensure resources are applied efficiently, rather than in an ad hoc manner
- Promote services and service pathways to support service navigation
- Forecast outcomes and evaluate effectively to inform future work

### Needs Assessment Priority

NCPHN Needs Assessment 2019/20-2021/22

#### Needs Assessment Priorities

Mental Health

## Target Population Cohort

Communities, individuals and/or families, emergency personnel and front-line volunteers affected by the 2019-2020 bush fires and 2021 Mid North Coast floods.

Indigenous Specific	No
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## Coverage

Whole Region

## Consultation

- Mid North Coast LHD
- Northern NSW LHD
- Services Australia
- Local Government
- Office of Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW)
- Resilience NSW
- Community Volunteer Groups
- BlaizeAid
- Forestry Commission of NSW
- Rural Fire Service
- Dept. Primary Industry

## Collaboration

- MNC & NNNSW LHD – Co-design and coordination of bush fire and response coordinator and associated services with PHN throughout the region
- Office of Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW) - Coordination of bush fire response services with PHN throughout the region
- Local Government Bushfire Coordinator's - Coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region
- Services Australia –coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region
- Community Volunteer Groups - Coordination of bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region.

## Activity Milestones Details/Duration

Activity Start Date	17/01/2020
Activity End Date	30/06/2022
Service Delivery Start Date	February 2020
Service Delivery End Date	June 2022

## Procurement approach

- Continuing Service Provider / Contract Extension
- Expression of Interest

Is this activity being co-designed?	No
Is this activity the result of a previous co-design process?	No
Do you plan to implement this Activity using co-commissioning or joint-commissioning arrangements?	No
Has this activity previously been co-commissioned or joint-commissioned?	No
Decommissioning	No



## BF - 3 - Expansion of Mental Health Services Activity

### Program Key Priority Area

Mental Health

### Aim of Activity

Expand current mental health services in bushfire and flood affected areas to support individuals to access low intensity short to medium mental health and wellbeing support.

### Description of Activity

- Service navigation
- Low intensity support through the commissioned New Access Support Services
- Provision of brief intervention strategies/counselling

### Needs Assessment Priorities

NCPHN Needs Assessment 2019/20-2021/22

#### Needs Assessment Priorities

Effective support, care and treatment

### Target Population Cohort

Individuals and/or families, emergency personnel and front-line volunteers affected by the 2019-2020 bush fires

Indigenous Specific	No
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### Coverage

Whole Region

### Consultation

- Mid North Coast LHD
- Northern NSW LHD
- Services Australia
- Local Government
- RAMHP

- Education Department
- NCPHN Commissioned Providers

## Collaboration

New Access Service (Bolton Clarke) – expansion of low intensity service to support bush fire affected areas in NCPHN

RAMHP - Coordination of low intensity bush fire response services with NCPHN throughout the region

## Activity Milestone Details/Duration

Activity Start Date	17/01/2019
Activity End Date	30/06/2022
Service Delivery Start Date	January 2020
Service Delivery End Date	June 2022

## Procurement approach

### Continuing Service Provider / Contract Extension

Is this activity being co-designed?	No
Is this activity the result of a previous co-design process?	No
Do you plan to implement this Activity using co-commissioning or joint-commissioning arrangements?	No
Has this activity previously been co-commissioned or joint-commissioned?	No
Decommissioning	No

# BF - 4 - Supporting Communities in Recovery Community Grants Activity

## Program Key Priority Area

Mental Health

## Aim of Activity

Provide support and facilitation expertise to bush fire affected communities to provide activities and services to build resilience, social connectedness, suicide prevention and recovery within their own environment through a community grants program.

## Description of Activity

- Plans for recovery activities will include representatives of those who were affected by the bushfire event in every stage of the recovery process.
- Interventions based on enhancing existing strengths of the individual family and community and on building resilience.
- Using and enhancing existing services as this ensures sustainable support for those affected.
- Using community-led approaches that are responsive, flexible, engaging communities and empowering them to move forward
- Support development of community led mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and healing programs.
- Evidenced by need identified from within the local community.

## Needs Assessment Priorities

NCPHN Needs Assessment 2019/20-2021/22

### Needs Assessment Priorities

Less avoidable harm

## Target Population Cohort

Communities affected by the 2019-2020 bush fires in NCPHN region

Indigenous Specific	No
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## Coverage

Whole Region

## Consultation and Collaboration

Mid North Coast LHD	Northern NSW LHD	Services Australia
Local Government bush fire Recovery Officers	Office of Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW)	Community Volunteer Groups
BlaizeAid Camp Coordinators	Forestry Commission of NSW	Rural Fire Service – local brigades
Dept. Primary Industry – local offices	Dept Education and local schools	Red Cross - local branches

- Plan and facilitate programs which respond to the requirements of the community
- Ensure resources are applied efficiently, rather than in an ad hoc manner
- Understand community need and expectation

## Activity Milestone Detail/Duration

Activity Start Date	01/03/2020
Activity End Date	30/06/2021
Service Delivery Start Date	April 2020
Service Delivery End Date	June 2021

## Procurement approach

- Expression of Interest
- Not Yet Known

Is this activity being co-designed?	Yes
Is this activity the result of a previous co-design process?	Yes
Do you plan to implement this Activity using co-commissioning or joint-commissioning arrangements?	No
Has this activity previously been co-commissioned or joint-commissioned?	No
Decommissioning	No

## Co-design or co-commissioning comments

Co-design with the communities affected by bush fire is the cornerstone for building social connectedness, community empowerment and better outcomes as a result.

Therefore, a community development approach for co-design is imperative. This will ensure that the activities will be in the community context by recognising and supporting the strengths of the community.

## BF - 5 - Community Wellbeing and Participation Activity

### Program Key Priority Area

Mental Health

### Aim of Activity

Deliver a program of activities that builds social connection and resilience to support bushfire and flood impacted communities effectively respond to and recover from natural disasters.

### Description of Activity

Work closely with local government, recovery agencies, communities, NBRA and National Mental Commission to identify the needs of communities. Identify relevant community-based activities to support mental health and community wellbeing with a focus on social connection and resilience-building. Co-design where appropriate and commission relevant activities. Monitor and evaluate to inform future planning.

### Needs Assessment Priorities

NCPHN Needs Assessment 2019/20-2021/22

Needs Assessment Priorities
Population health
Good mental health and wellbeing
Culturally safe, appropriate and high-quality services
Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to high quality, culturally appropriate health care, including primary care and care coordination services.

Mental Health

### Target Population Cohort

Communities affected by the 2019-2020 bush fires and 2021 floods in North Coast NSW

Indigenous Specific	Yes
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### Indigenous specific comments

Aboriginal communities were among the worst fire-affected in 2019-20. Aboriginal communities have specific socio-economic vulnerabilities as well as extraordinary strengths and resilience. These

communities have received limited attention in disaster response and recovery processes. Through the Healthy North Coast Aboriginal Health team, we will collaborate with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Medical Services and communities to design Indigenous-specific activities to support participation, healing and mental wellbeing.

## Coverage

Whole Region

## Consultation

Local Government	National Bushfire Recovery Agency	Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW)	Resilience NSW
Community Volunteer Groups	BlaizeAid	Rural Fire Service	Dept. Primary Industry
Dept Education	Red Cross	National Mental Health Commission	Department of Aboriginal Affairs

## Collaboration

Local Government, National Bushfire Recovery Agency, Emergency Management Committees (MNC and NNSW), Resilience NSW - Contribute to needs assessment

ACCO – co-design activity with Aboriginal communities

## Activity Milestone Details/Duration

Activity Start Date	01/04/2021
Activity End Date	30/06/2022
Service Delivery Start Date	July 2021
Service Delivery End Date	June 2022

## Procurement approach

Expression of Interest

Is this activity being co-designed?	Yes
Is this activity the result of a previous co-design process?	No

Do you plan to implement this Activity using co-commissioning or joint-commissioning arrangements?	No
Has this activity previously been co-commissioned or joint-commissioned?	No
Decommissioning	No

### Co-design or co-commissioning comments

Activities in Aboriginal communities will be co-designed with relevant stakeholders. Additional co-design may be undertaken for particular cohorts or locations depending on needs assessed.