

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



In acknowledgment of the strain Covid restrictions are likely to have on Tasmanians mental health we have made a \$4 million commitment to support the mental health and wellbeing of Tasmanians during this challenging time.

This includes moving to establish a dedicated 1800 phone number operated by Lifeline Tasmania for the Tasmanian community to call in and receive mental health support, and provide a reach out service for older Tasmanians and industry sectors significantly impacted.

We are working to have this new service up and running as soon as the technology and staffing arrangements are in place. Our expectation at this stage is the service will be up and running by the end of April.

We have also provided funding to increase our capacity to provide mental health advice, support and referral for Tasmanians living in rural and remote areas through Rural Alive and Well; provide targeted support for Tasmania's migrant community; increase our capacity to provide mental health support for Tasmanians living in supported accommodation; and adapt Tasmania's pharmacotherapy program to the challenges of COVID-19.

We are also supporting community based mental health and alcohol and drug service providers to use technology to keep vulnerable Tasmanians connected through a \$450,000 technology grants fund that opened for applications on Wednesday 15 April 2020.

COVID-19 is presenting challenges we have never had to deal with before, and while we must stay physically distanced during this time, it is important to stay connected.

I am encouraging all Tasmanians to check in and talk with each other, reach out to family, friends and neighbours, and make sure they are there for others they care about. Maintaining a daily routine, engaging in activities and hobbies and exercising in a safe and secure way, and using trusted media outlets to get accurate information is also important to keep Tasmanians mentally healthy.

Tasmanians are encouraged to seek help if they feel that they or a loved one are not coping.

A range of telephone and online based supports are available through:

- Beyond Blue (1300 22 46 36)
- Lifeline Australia (13 11 14)
- Rural Alive and Well (1300 4357 6283)
- Mens Line Australia (1300 78 99 78)
- Kids Helpline (1800 551 800)
- Alcohol and Drug Information Service – (800 811 994)
- Family Drug Support - for those seeking help for a loved one – (1300 368 186)
- Alcohol and Drug Services – (1300 139 641)
- Quitline – (13 78 48)
- Tasmanian Service Directory - <http://www.atdc.org.au/service-directory/>

For more immediate support for people experiencing significant mental health problems, our Mental Health Services Helpline is available 24/7 on 1800 332 388, and in an emergency call triple zero.

The Tasmanian Government's dedicated COVID-19 website coronavirus.tas.gov.au/keeping-yourselfsafe/mental-health-support is a valuable online resource for mental health information and services.

The Stay Healthy, Stay Connected Facebook page is also a great online community where Tasmanians can get ideas, information and support on how to look after our physical and mental health during this time.

Also in the Wellbeing space, the Government intends on providing grants to those in the alcohol and other drug sector to directly address Covid-19 responses, such as through public health messaging around excessive drinking or smoking.