



## Accessing Public Mental Health Services and Psychosocial Services in the 'Triangle'

### Frequently asked questions

**Q. Can my Bushfire Case Manager assist with linking me with support agencies?**

A. Your Bushfire Case Manager or your GP can both assist to link you with support agencies in the area. Bushfire Case Managers are knowledgeable in services available and referral pathways.

**Q. I haven't seen anyone for counselling yet and feel that I am ready to talk to someone. Where would I go to find a counselor or a Psychologist?**

Contact Mitchell Community Health Service (MCHS) on 1300 773 352 and discuss your needs. The Service Access and Care Coordination (SACC) worker will assist you to link with an appropriate counselor or Psychologist.

**Q. I have no idea how to maneuver my way around the services in the fire effected areas. Who can help me to find what I am looking for?**

A. Contact MCHS or Goulburn Valley Area Mental Health Services (GVAMHS) and either service will be able to assist with discussing your needs and referring you to an appropriate agency/service that will best suit your needs.

Both GVAMHS and MCHS are signatories to The No Wrong Door policy. If you are not sure who to contact, give either agency a ring and your needs will be discussed and you will be provided with assistance to be linked with appropriate services in the area.



**Q. What if I ring about a friend I am concerned about?**

A. You will be asked if your friend is aware that you have made the call. If yes, you will be asked to put them on the phone to continue with the Triage process. If no, you will be asked about the reason for being concerned about your friend. If there are any risk factors, an assessment can be arranged. You may be asked to take your friend to a local hospital. If they refuse to attend and there are concerns about your friend's safety, the police will be asked to assist for the purpose of organising an assessment.

**Q. If I am concerned about the mental health of myself, family member or friend, who should I ring?**

A. There are 2 main pathways to receive assistance or advice.

1. Contact MCHS on 1300 773 352. If it is outside of business hours or the staff are on other calls you will be asked to leave a message on the answering machine and one of the SACC team will ring you back. You will be asked questions about your concerns and you will be directed to an agency that can provide you with help.

2. Contact GVAMHS during office hours on 5735 0333 and speak to the Triage worker. You will be asked questions about your concerns and you will be advised to either attend a more appropriate agency to receive assistance or an appointment will be made to assess your need for service from GVAMHS. All after hours calls should be directed to GVAMHS on 1300 369 005.



**Q. What if I experience a 'crisis' during the night?**

A. Contact the after hours number at GVAMH, 1300 369 005. You will be assessed over the phone by the after hours Triage worker and if appropriate the on-call worker will be contacted to do an after hours assessment. If the person being referred will be safe overnight, an appointment will be arranged for an assessment as soon as it is required. If the person being referred is not likely to be safe overnight and is refusing to attend the local hospital for the purpose of a Mental Health Assessment, it may be necessary to request the assistance of the Police or Ambulance to ensure the safety of the individual.

**Q. What if I ring for help for my friend and they haven't given permission but I think they may be considering suicide?**

A. Contact GVAMHS and you will be asked to provide information relating to your concerns. In this case permission is not required from your friend, however, you must be prepared to give the details of your friend so action can be taken to arrange an assessment.

**Q. When is MCHS and GVAMHS in the 'Triangle' area?**

A. MCHS is located within the 'Triangle' 5 days per week. Staff can be seen at the Marysville Temp. Village hub however if there is no-one there when you arrive, there will be contact info on the door.

GVAMHS is in the area every Tuesday and Friday on a regular basis but can be accessed 24/7 for crisis intervention if required.



**Q. Can you home visit or see me in a neutral place?**

A. GVAMHS can complete initial assessments at the Alexandra Community Centre, Marysville Medical Centre, Buxton, or the Marysville hub. Following the initial assessment, home visits can be arranged if appropriate.

MCHS can see individuals at the Marysville hub, Alexandra Community Health Centre, Taggerty Rooms or home visits can be arranged if appropriate.

**Q. If I am concerned about my child/children, who should I speak to?**

A. Discuss your concerns with your child's school. The school will be able to refer your child to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinician working in the schools within fire effected areas.

Alternatively, you can contact Carmel Pati, Team Leader, CAMHS on Ph: 5735 0300 to discuss any concerns you may have about children.

**Q. What if I have a friend who seems to be experiencing Post Traumatic Stress symptoms?**

A. Contact MCHS, 1300 773 352 to be linked with the Austin Post Trauma Victoria (PTV) Service or another suitable practitioner.

**Q. What if I need to see a Doctor to discuss my mental state or review my medication?**

A. GVAMHS and PTV both have a Psychiatric Registrar that are available for these reasons.

The GVAMHS doctor will see individuals who have been assessed by GVAMHS and require ongoing support.

The PTV's doctor can review any person in the community but they need to be referred via MCHS.

Your GP should be your first point of contact if possible.