



Prioritising Mental Health – natural disaster assistance

The Government will provide additional mental health services and support for people affected by recent natural disasters. People living in Northern and Western Queensland impacted by the recent floods will receive increased access to mental health services and support. People affected by the fires in Tasmania and drought affected farmers in the Gippsland region will also receive access to additional mental health support. This complements work already under way in drought affected areas under the Government's \$21.9 million Empowering our Communities Program. These services will be delivered by local Primary Health Networks.

Phoenix Australia's Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health will also receive funding to provide both immediate and longer term disaster recovery support, including to health practitioners, helping them to care for their communities as they get back on their feet. These investments put in place the extra support needed as people deal with the uncertainty, stress and anxiety that natural disasters bring.

Why is this important?

Ensuring people can access immediate mental health support in times of disaster is a priority for the Government. In the same way we have national disaster recovery plans, we need to include mental health recovery, because it is not just the impact today we need to help address – it's also the ongoing challenges people face.

As communities recover from the recent natural disasters – including droughts, floods and fire – some people will be at risk of developing significant mental health conditions and it is important that they have access to specialised care.

Who will benefit?

People living in areas affected by these natural disasters will benefit from additional mental health support.

How much will this cost?

This will cost \$5.5 million from 2018–19 to 2021–22.