

let's talk managing stress during drought



Rural communities are resilient and resourceful with people relying on being able to solve problems and overcome challenges. However in drought or dry conditions, there are often factors that are out of our control and that can cause significant stress. When we are busy or stressed, looking after our mental and physical health can often be forgotten but it is important to manage our health to ensure that we can make clear decisions and cope with other stressors in our life.

Signs that someone may be stressed:

- Anger or irritability
- Worry or nervousness
- Loss of concentration
- Loss of interest
- Low energy
- Social withdrawal
- Relationship issues
- Unusual headaches and body aches
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Increased drug or alcohol use

When someone is under prolonged stress, they may have difficulty making decisions regarding their finances, stock or relationships. If someone is showing signs of being stressed, it is important to talk about it and take action as soon as possible.

Having a conversation:

When having a conversation, chat to the person in a comfortable place about what you have noticed and why you are concerned. You do not need to fix their problems but you need to listen to their concerns and reassure the person that there is help available.

Ways you can start the conversation:

"I haven't seen you around much lately, ...what's been happening?"

"Things have been tough, how are you coping?"

"There's been a lot going on, how are you managing?"

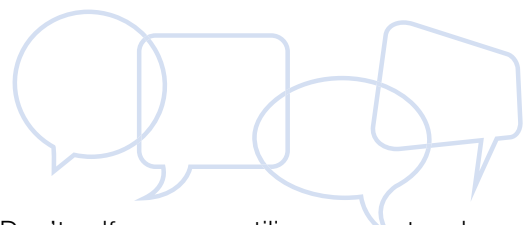
"I've noticed that..., how are you going?"

If the person is showing signs of stress, then encourage them to take action

Looking after yourself

In tough times we also need to remember to look after ourselves. Taking care of yourself is important, as it will increase your capacity to deal with stress.

- Try to have some time out
- Do things you enjoy
- Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours
- Don't self assess – utilise your networks and seek advice from professionals to make more informed decisions
- Reflect on the good stuff
- Eat well, sleep well and only use alcohol in moderation



If you or someone else is in immediate danger call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

How to take action...

GP – Contact your local general practitioner (GP)

Health Direct – www.healthdirect.gov.au

Look up health services in your area.

NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511

24/7 telephone line providing advice and referral.

Lifeline – 13 11 14

24/7 confidential telephone line for crisis support.

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

24/7 telephone line for anyone affected by suicide.

Alcohol Drug Information Service –
1800 250 015

24/7 confidential telephone line providing advice, referral and support.

Salvation Army Rural Chaplains –
02 9466 3544

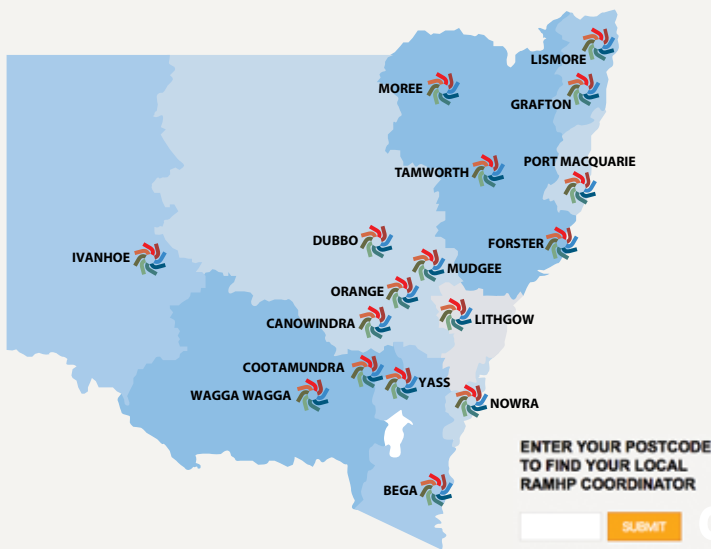
Conducts home visits to provide emotional or practical support and assistance.

Head to Health – www.headtohealth.gov.au

Find Australian mental health services and resources.

CRANplus Bush Support Services – 1800 805 391

24/7 confidential telephone line for rural and remote health professionals and their families nationwide and community workers in drought affected communities in NSW.



Further drought support:



DPI Drought Hub – www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub

Provides information on services and supports available to prepare for and manage drought.

Rural Resilience Program – www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/rural-resilience-program

Links farmers to services and initiatives to build personal and business resilience through Rural Resilience Officers and Rural Support Workers.

Local Land Service – 1300 795 299

www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Provides services and knowledge in regards to agricultural production, animal health, pest and disease management and environmental threats.

NSW Rural Assistance Authority – 1800 678 593

www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Provides information on financial assistance to primary producers and small businesses in rural NSW.

Rural Financial Counselling Service – 1800 686 175

Provides free information and assistance on financial position, budgets and submitting applications to primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses.

Farmer Assistance Hotline – 13 23 16

Provides information and advice to Australian farmers and their partners about the Farm Household Allowance.

Business Connect – www.industry.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry-in-nsw/businessconnect

Provides independent business advice to small businesses in NSW, with the first four hours free.

Find your local RAMHP Coordinator

VISIT www.ramhp.com.au

RAMHP has Coordinators based across NSW who are able to provide specialist knowledge and support for people experiencing mental health concerns.



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W: www.ramhp.com.au