

## Supports for local communities impacted by the conflict in Gaza

22 May 2024

A new 12-month grants program, launching in July 2024 will fund local organisations to deliver supports which build resilience and social connectedness for members of our community suffering from loss, anxiety and elevated levels of distress caused by the violence in Gaza.

Four Sydney-based Primary Health Networks (PHNs) – Central and Eastern Sydney, Northern Sydney, South Western Sydney and Western Sydney PHNs – are working together with local communities and organisations on the Australian Government-funded grants program.

The grants aim to deliver projects and programs to increase mental health literacy, encourage proactive help-seeking, reduce isolation and stigma and enhance the ability of local services to provide culturally-informed care.

We have undertaken a robust consultation to identify organisations which are providing programs and support and/or who have capacity and community knowledge to best support the mental health needs of the affected communities. These organisations will be invited to apply for grants.

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN CEO Nathalie Hansen says, “We know this conflict has had a significant impact on people’s mental health and wellbeing and we look forward to seeing how this funding can help people from all across Sydney.”

Northern Sydney PHN CEO Kevin Barrow says, “With Sydney being such a multicultural city, conflicts overseas will naturally impact many people living here. Those people’s mental health and well-being are at the forefront of the PHN’s collaborative and local community approach. The funding will help alleviate the stresses and losses experienced by people impacted by the Gaza crisis.

South Western Sydney PHN CEO, Dr Keith McDonald PhD, says the distress and uncertainty the conflict had caused was relentless, and he “looked forward to working with our neighbouring PHNs to fund services which are able to provide comfort during such a challenging period”.

Western Sydney PHN Acting CEO Michelle Quinn says, “As Primary Health Networks (PHNs), it is essential that we are able to respond to new and developing mental health needs across all parts of our community. This grants process has provided an opportunity for a number of Sydney PHNs to cooperate to deliver funding and support effectively to the groups most impacted by the events in Gaza.”

If you need help now, there are already valuable resources available to support you. These include:

- [Head to Health](#) 1800 595 212: mental health support.
- [Transcultural Mental Health Line](#) (1800 648 911): culturally specific and in language mental health support
- [NSW Health mental health service directory](#)
- [How to report hate crimes to NSW Police](#)

- **NSW Service:** for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Services ([NSW STARTTS](#)) 9646 6800: mental health supports for community members from refugee backgrounds. STARTTS also offer the Witness to War hotline from Monday to Friday: 1800845198
- [Information from Red Cross about what to do after a distressing event](#)
- [Headstart](#): a mental health services directory and service navigation tool

## National helplines

- Lifeline: call [13 11 14](#) (24/7) OR text [0477 131 114](#) (6.00 pm - 12.00 am, seven days)
- Kids Helpline (for children and young people five to 25 years): [1800 551 800](#) (24/7) OR chat online
- Beyond Blue Support Service: [1300 224 636](#) (24/7) OR chat online
- MensLine Australia: [1300 789 978](#) (24/7) OR chat online
- GriefLine: [1300 845 745](#) (12.00 pm to 3.00 am, seven days)