

Common issues people seek assistance with include:

- Stress, anxiety, depression
- Bereavement, loss, and grief
- Not coping well with change, uncertainty or financial pressure
- Frequently feeling angry
- Worries about children or family
- Relationship difficulties
- Coping with separation
- Not being able to sleep properly
- Increasing dependence on alcohol to cope
- Not being able to adjust to a change in health
- Relationship conflict
- Struggling with the effects of a traumatic experience
- Mental health problems

Community Education

Community groups and organisations are welcome to suggest issues and topics they would like to see addressed through community education (within the general brief of the Drought Response Program). Time permitting, we will endeavour to assist with education for small or larger groups if arrangements for attendees, venue, and catering can be handled locally.

To fit in with other program activities, it will be important to commence discussion of ideas and needs well ahead of any envisaged event.

To make enquiries contact the program clinician, details below.

The "Options for Change" project is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under the *Mental Health Support for Drought Affected Communities* Initiative.

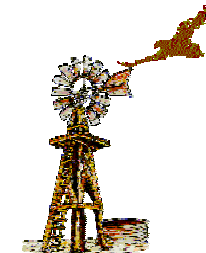
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Options For Change

Building the capacity of rural and remote communities for mental health and wellness, through local options of: counselling, psychotherapy, community education, and mental health support



Flinders & Far North
Division of General Practice

What is Counselling and Psychotherapy?

Both counselling and psychotherapy focus on how people experience, seek to cope with and respond to their everyday lives and life events. Counselling and psychotherapy employ special kinds of communication, provide relevant information, offer strategies and employ techniques to enable people to:

- Make sense of difficult experiences and problems
- Cope in situations of significant transition and change
- Cope with personal, relationship, or family crises
- Better manage thoughts and emotional responses
- Learn new patterns of behaviour
- Focus on solutions and to achieve personal mastery
- Make more informed decisions and choices
- Discover helpful problem solving options
- Discover meaning in circumstances that appear not to make any sense or to lack meaning
- Achieve change and an improved quality of life and relationships

Counselling and psychotherapy are a valuable resource for addressing personal, family, relationship, and mental health issues.

Both counselling and psychotherapy share similar skills and draw on knowledge from a number of sources, such as psychology, social science, biology, and philosophy. However, when an issue, problem, or condition is particularly challenging, and may respond to a process of specific therapy, *psychotherapy* can go several extra steps in providing assistance.

Are sessions strictly confidential?

Anything communicated by you in sessions is treated with the same privacy and confidentiality as medical information. Every effort will be made to protect your right to privacy. No information about you or your personal circumstances will be passed on to another professional or agency without your written permission (accept where there is a legal requirement to do so).

If I am experiencing difficulties, when is the right time to seek assistance?

Getting help early is very important. It's always better to tackle problems early. Waiting until a problem becomes overwhelming can not only take much more time and effort to remedy, but can also cause unnecessary suffering along the way.

Does the service cater for men?

Yes, and it recognises the need to appreciate men's issues and experience from a uniquely male perspective. Understanding and working respectfully and effectively with men requires an approach that is mindful of gender differences; 'one size does not fit all'. Men generally experience their physical and emotional lives, and the expectations of workplace and society, differently to women. Appreciating potential difference in the way that men and women tend to think, feel, behave, and view such things as relationships, intimacy, coping and so on, is vital to working effectively with both genders.

Should I see my GP first?

If you have a medical problem or health concern and you sense that this may be affecting your emotional or psychological well-being, yes, see your GP first.

Do I need a doctor's referral?

A doctor's referral isn't required, but it may be useful for your doctor to know that you have sought counselling or psychotherapy.

How can I make an appointment?

You can make an appointment at a **medical centre** in:

- Leigh Creek 08 8675 2018
- Hawker 08 8648 4172
- Quorn 08 8648 6338
- Orroroo 08 8658 1222
- Jamestown 08 8664 1078

Home visits can also be arranged, if considered a beneficial or needful option, due to isolation, personal or family circumstances. Contact reception at your local health clinic to make a home visit appointment, allowing as much notice as possible, and giving clear travel directions.

If for any reason you are unable to attend your appointment, please be sure to notify the medical centre as soon as possible.

Is there a cost for this service?

No, this service is being provided free for individuals, families in drought affected rural and remote areas through funding made available by the Department of Health & Aging.