

Drought Assistance Initiatives

Name of initiative	Sustaining Community Wellbeing: Community and Workforce Skills Development
'No Bull' training	The 'No Bull' counselling approach uses direct, honest, jargon free communication style that can more effectively engage and support farmers to identify and act on experiences of stress and potentially anxiety and depression which maybe impairing their decision-making capacity. A special training module has been developed for field and frontline staff in services such as DPI, DSE and other rural industry organisations where staff are working closely with farmers who maybe distressed. This training will be offered in each region and your organisation will be contacted with dates and venues.
'VFF Looking after your Neighbour Networks'	A locally based approach will see 'drought' counsellors working closely with local VFF branches in building their mental health literacy and support networks was developed as a partnership between VFF, Bouverie Centre, LaTrobe University, and Department of Human Services. VFF branches can contact their closest counsellor through the Drought Personal support line and/or information will be provided directly to VFF branches.
Additional Mental Health First Aid training	Some additional resources have been provided to each rural region to provide more Mental Health First Aid courses in local communities. Mental Health First Aid is a 12 hour course aimed at community members, customers service staff, teachers and other people who work directly with rural communities and groups. It builds participants knowledge in identification of mental health difficulties in family, neighbours, customers, students etc; enhances listening and problem solving skills; and provides service information on organisations that people can be referred to.

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Mental Health Promotion Short courses

Networks of rural services have been provided with a VicHealth Mental Health Promotion Short courses. These assist organisations and groups like community health, local government, sports assemblies, arts councils and community agencies, to plan and develop together ways of better protecting and promoting the health of communities. Some areas have already had a course and others yet to be delivered. If you would like to participate or find out the outcomes of a recently held course contact you local Primary Care Partnership. See local contact details at www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps

Sustainable Farm Families

In addition to the DPI funded program some rural community health services are working with Western district Health Services to provide local programs. For more information see www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au

Health promotion and service development

All of the additional and existing programs identified above are supported through health promotion and service coordination work that is being facilitated through rural Primary Care Partnerships across Victoria. These are collections of services that work together to enhance more integrated planning and improve service access and coordination. Primary Care Partnerships have special drought funding for this work. See local contact details at www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps

How to apply / access

See local Primary Care Partnership contact details at www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps

For local counsellor information to discuss the 'No Bull' training and 'Looking After Your Neighbour Networks' contact the

DROUGHT PERSONAL SUPPORT LINE

Phone 1300 655 969

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Further information

Contact your Regional Department of Human Service Office for further information:

Grampians - Tony Lynch on 5333 6680 or John Koopmans on 5333 6020

Hume - Narelle Grantham on 5722 0530

Loddon Mallee - Michael Oerlemans on 5434 5600

Gippsland - Leah Henderson on 51772690

Barwon Sth Western - Larry Neeson on 5551 3220

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For general drought information contact DPI on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought