

Media Release

Communities urged to look out for each other during the holidays

19 December 2017

The holiday period can be a difficult and stressful time which is why the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) is urging communities to get together around the message “I’ve got your back” this Christmas.

Some people may experience increased levels of stress, be overwhelmed, or experience loneliness during the holidays, and it’s important to reach out for help.

WAPHA general manager Bernadette Kenny said the support of family, friends and community can’t be underestimated, and it’s important to talk about these kinds of feelings with someone you trust.

“However, sometimes you may need additional support from one of the many mental health resources such as helplines, or local medical services.

“It’s good to know that while some of the usual support services will be closed during the holidays, there are still lots of places you can get help,” Ms Kenny said.

“That’s why we decided to raise awareness on local radio and Facebook, as well as through the media, to let people know that there are many ways you can help yourself or others you care about to stay positive and involved at this time of year.”

“This includes some simple yet effective tips that people can use to look after themselves and each other in the lead up to Christmas and during the holiday period.

How to help yourself

- Don’t keep it to yourself, there is always someone who will listen.
- Make a plan and know how and where to get help and support.
- Get involved with family, friends or community activities.

How to help someone in need

- If you're concerned about someone, ask if they're okay, tell them you're worried and offer to listen, or support them to get help.
- Check in on them regularly and get them involved in activities, or just spend time with them.
- Look after yourself, so you can look after them.

If you, or someone you know needs help, call Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636 or Lifeline on 13 11 14. In an emergency call triple zero.

Visit www.mhc.wa.gov.au/getting-help/helplines for more information, as well as some tips for what to do if you or someone you care about needs help.

Notes for editors

Journalists are reminded about the importance of following responsible media guidelines when reporting on mental illness, particularly suicide. To access these, visit: www.mindframe-media.info/for-media/reporting-suicide/facts-and-stats

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About WAPHA: WAPHA oversees the strategic commissioning functions of the Perth North, Perth South and Country WA Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The WA PHNs are three of 31 PHNs established by the Australian Government nationally to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. We work across the WA healthcare system with doctors, allied health professionals, Area Health Services and service providers to improve the coordination of care for people who are at risk of poor health outcomes. For more information, visit www.wapha.org.au