



# QPASTT

Queensland program of assistance  
to survivors of torture and trauma



*Information for Community Leaders about*

## **Mental Health**

**Who can experience mental health issues? – Anyone!**



## Are you worried about someone whose behaviour has changed?

### **One or more of these changes could be a sign of illness.**

- Stops talking to family or friends
- Becomes afraid or suspicious for no reason
- Is sleeping a lot more or less than usual
- Develops strange ideas or behaviour
- Hears voices no one else can hear
- Believes they have special powers
- Has difficulty concentrating or following simple instructions
- Says or writes things that don't make sense
- Abuses drugs or alcohol
- Feels sad or worried most of the time, for more than a few weeks
- Becomes easily confused and irritated
- Is eating far more or far less than usual

Mental health issues can affect anybody, just as anybody can get physically sick; young and old people, men and women, people born in Australia and people who come to Australia as migrants or refugees, educated and non-educated and people who have a lot of money and people who have little money!

The good news is that there are many things we can all do to keep our mental wellbeing and there is lots of help we can get if we become unwell. Remember, asking or accepting help as early as possible is crucial for recovery!

Family, friends and people from the community can help by supporting them to access services.

With treatment they begin to recover.



## How can you start a conversation about worrying or unusual behaviour?

### Ask

- Choose a time when the person is calm and you won't be interrupted.
- Find a place that is private.
- Tell the person that you are worried about changes you have noticed in their behaviour.
- If the person gets upset or believes they don't have a problem, leave the conversation for another time.

**You could ask:** *"I've noticed that you don't spend much time with your friends any more... is everything OK?"*

- Listen openly. Try not to judge or 'fix' the problem
- Pause and let the person talk. It might be hard for them, so try not to rush or be afraid of silence

### Support

- Describe the help that you or other community leaders can offer.
- Help the person to think through their options for assistance.
- If the person won't listen, ask a family member, friend, or spiritual leader who you know they trust, to talk with them.
- Provide hope.

**You could say:** *"I think we can find the right people to assist you" or "We all have ups and downs in our lives and it's ok and normal to ask for extra help at these times".*

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## How can **you** help?

### Get Help

- Encourage the person to see a GP they trust or help them identify one.
- Offer to help the person to make an appointment or go with them to their first appointment.
- Ask the GP to book an interpreter (if required) and ask for a longer appointment
- Suggest you write some notes together, to help explain things to the doctor.
- Phone some services listed on this brochure for advice

**You could say:** *“Do you have a GP that you can talk to? Doctors can help with these worries “or “Would you like me to call a service to get some advice so you can feel better?”*

### Follow up after the conversation

- Keep doing things you enjoy together. The small things can make a difference.
- If the person doesn't want to talk about their problem yet, at least they know you care, and will listen and help when they're ready.



## How can you get advice?

All of these services offer a confidential, free, phone call to a health professional who can advise what to do. The service will pay for a telephone interpreter. They can arrange it or you can call Translating & Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450.

### **Old Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)**

**(07) 3391 6677** QPASTT has a duty officer available Mon to Fri 9-5pm to provide advice and referral.

### **Old Transcultural Mental Health Centre** **(07) 3167 8333 or 1800 188 189 (Toll free)**

Phone 8.30am - 5pm Mon-Fri.  
Ask for "Intake".

**The following services are available by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

### **1300 MH CALL (1300 64 2255)**

Mental health advice with local support and assessment options in Brisbane South, Logan and Bayside. Other regions in Queensland, contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) to be connected to your local hospital.

### **Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636**

Phone advice or chat online (3pm - 12am) if you have worries about feeling down, stressed or depressed.  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

### **Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800**

'We care and we listen, any time and for any reason' (for those aged 5-25 years old) [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

## **Crisis**

### **Suicide Helpline Call Back Service**

**1300 659 467** Provides telephone crisis counselling to people at risk of suicide, or advice to carers of someone who is suicidal [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Lifeline 13 11 14** If you're thinking about harming yourself or ending your life call or chat privately online using crisis support chat. [www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp](http://www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp)

**Call 000** (Triple zero) and ask for ambulance

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## How can you support somebody who is **accessing mental health services?**

- Introduce your role as a community representative, family or friend.
- Ask ANY questions you have.
- If the person wants and needs your ongoing support ask to sign consent forms so you have permission to stay involved and informed
- Insist on services using interpreters (if required)
- Recommend the service involves the Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre if you feel more understanding about culture is needed

## **How can you get information about mental health for your Community?**

**Request a FREE information session:**

**Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma  
(QPASTT)** - (07) 3391 6677

**Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre** - (07) 3167 8333 or 1800 188 189 (Toll free)





## Which service can you make an appointment with?

### **Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) (07) 3391 6677**

Ages 5 to adult. QPASTT is NOT a crisis service but provides counselling about health issues related to people's experiences of being tortured or refugee related trauma prior to migrating to Australia. QPASTT also runs a youth suicide prevention program and has a duty officer available to provide advice and referral. [www.qpastt.org.au](http://www.qpastt.org.au)

### **Culture in Mind (07) 3198 2500**

Age 18 + This is not a crisis service but supports the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of CALD people who reside in the Greater Brisbane area.  
[www.cultureinmind.org.au](http://www.cultureinmind.org.au)

### **Harmony Place (07) 3848 1600**

Age 16+ Supports people from CALD backgrounds who live with severe and persistent mental health issues. After hours appointments available.  
[www.harmonyplace.org.au](http://www.harmonyplace.org.au)

### **Head Space**

**Woolloongabba:** (07) 3249 2222

**Inala:** (07) 3727 5000

For many other locations across Qld check the website. Ages 12-25. Helps young people who are going through a tough time. [www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

### **World Wellness Group (07) 3333 2100**

Multicultural health and wellbeing organisation. Includes GP, counselling, traditional medicine and community acupuncture clinic.  
[www.worldwellnessgroup.org.au](http://www.worldwellnessgroup.org.au)

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## What can you do when **the person you are worried about refuses to be assessed** or follow treatment?

Consider applying for a Justice Examination Order (JEO). For further information talk with any of the listed services. The person to be assessed won't know who made the request.

### **Who should you call in an emergency?**

**If the person agrees:** Call 000 (triple zero) and ask for 'Ambulance' - In Qld the ambulance service is free

**If the person doesn't agree:** Where there is risk of someone being harmed, call 000 (triple zero) and ask for the 'Police'. Let them know that you are concerned about the mental health of the person.

Call 112 from a mobile phone if you have no credit, or you are outside a network coverage area.

### **How can you find out more?**

**Mental Health in Multicultural Australia**  
[www.mhima.org.au](http://www.mhima.org.au)

**Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI)**  
[www.copmi.net.au](http://www.copmi.net.au)

**Sane** [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org)

**Beyond Blue** [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

**Mental Health Act 2000**  
[www.health.qld.gov.au/mha2000/factsheets.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mha2000/factsheets.asp)

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