

Network Participants

Anglicare

Anglicare is the urban mission and welfare arm of the Sydney Anglican Church. Each year, Anglicare reaches out to over 400 000 people, bringing care and support to those struggling with poverty, disability, illness and despair. Anglicare services include emergency relief for families in crisis; foster care and adoption for abused children and those with special needs; counselling and support for children and youth with disabilities; migrant services; aged care through both nursing homes and community services; opportunity shops providing low-cost clothing; emergency services in times of disaster and chaplains in hospitals, prisons, mental health facilities and juvenile justice institutions. Anglicare's Emergency Service, in partnership with the Anglican community, offers assistance in caring for individuals and communities affected by major emergencies including bushfires, floods, storms, drought and unexpected high-impact incidents.

- ① Doug Philpott – Manager, Emergency Services
Ph: (02) 9895 8000

Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety is a research centre within the School of Public Health in the Faculty of Medicine with affiliation with the Faculty of Agriculture, with funding from the Hunter New England Area Health Service and NSW Health, with project funding from Rural Industries Research and Development Corporations. Its mission is to assist rural Australians to attain improved levels of health and wellbeing through action to reduce the incidence and severity of injury and illness associated with life and work in agriculture. The Centre is the national resource centre for Farmsafe Australia and maintains links with farming organisations, industry and government across NSW and Australia. In its work with farmers, the issues of mental health and problems of increasing pressures on the people in agriculture have become propriety health issues for the Centre's work. The Centre has worked with farmers in north-west NSW to develop a resource package – *Managing the Pressures of Farming*, and is working with the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health in its programs aimed at improving access to effective mental health services in rural NSW.

- ① Associate Professor Lyn Fragar – Director
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Australian General Practice Network

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) represents a network of 111 local organisations (general practice networks) along with eight state based entities. More than 90 percent of General Practitioners and an increasing number of Practice Nurses and allied health professionals are members of their local general practice network. The Network is involved in a wide range of activities including health promotion, early intervention and prevention strategies, chronic disease management, medical education and workforce support. By delivering local health solutions through general practice, they aim to ensure all Australians can access a high quality health system.

- ① Elaine Dunne – Principal Network Advisor - Drought
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Australian Rotary Health Research Fund

The Australian Rotary Health Research Fund (ARHRF) is a program of Rotary, a worldwide organisation of more than 1.2 million business and professional men and women who are acknowledged leaders in their communities and who put the ideal of service into action. Since 1981, Rotary clubs and Rotarians have supported health research in Australia. Findings in previous research areas of Cot Death, Health of the Elderly and Adolescent Health and Family Health have been internationally acclaimed. From 1 January 2000, support has gone to mental illness research in Australians. ARHRF has pledged to invest at least \$8 million for research into mental illness with the aim of funding research that will result in better treatment and services. It also aims to promote greater understanding in the community through education, which will reduce stigma and improve the lives of Australians affected by mental illness. The Rotary Health Safari, which saw a Winnebago tour the country throughout much of 2005, was particularly successful in improving the general public's awareness of mental illness – particularly the mental health of children.

- ① Cheryl Deguara – Program Coordinator, Mental Health Forums
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beyondblue

beyondblue is a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation working to address issues associated with depression, anxiety and related substance misuse disorders in Australia. *beyondblue* is a bipartisan initiative of the Australian, State and Territory governments with a key goal of raising community awareness about depression and reducing stigma associated with the illness. *beyondblue* works in partnership with health services, schools, workplaces, universities, media and community organisations, as well as people living with depression, to bring together their expertise around depression. *beyondblue* has identified rural mental health as a key priority, recognising the special challenges – such as isolation and difficulty accessing services – facing rural people.

- ① Nadine Bartholomeusz-Raymond – Project Manager, Rural and National Drought Agenda
Ph: (02) 9810 6116

Centre for Mental Health Research, Australian National University

The Centre for Mental Health Research aims to improve the mental health of Australians through research and development, training, policy and the dissemination of health information. The Centre produces population-based mental health research of the highest standard, including evaluated interventions designed to prevent and treat mental health problems in the community. Its e-mental health program explores the use of new technologies for this purpose. Examples include the [BluePages Depression Information website](#) and [MoodGYM](#) – an online cognitive behaviour therapy program. Both sites have been shown in scientific trials to reduce symptoms of depression. The Centre's e-mental health programs also include sites focused on the provision of mental health care in rural and remote regions of Australia, and the facilitation of consumer participation in mental health research. The Centre also has a Foundation known as AFFIRM (the Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research). [AFFIRM](#) works with business and community sectors to undertake outreach activities and fundraising for mental health research in Australia.

- ① Kathy Griffiths – Director, Depression & Anxiety Consumer Research Unit
Ph: (02) 6125 9723

Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health

The NSW Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) was established in 2001 by NSW Government to lead the development of research, education and service development in mental health for rural and remote NSW. The CRRMH is part of the University of Newcastle, and is an important resource for mental health in rural NSW. The Centre is contributing both locally and nationally to improving the understanding of mental health needs of people in rural areas, and ways of developing better health services to meet these needs, through its academic leadership, collaborations and achievements in research, education and service and policy development. Among its many projects, the CRRMH has developed a set of projects focussing on the mental health and well being of farmers and farming communities: including working closely with farming organisations, and those community services that work closely with farmers. Projects are being undertaken that that endeavour to translate mental health research findings into a range of community and clinical programs. This includes playing a leading role in the Rural Mental Health Network.

- ① Craig Hart – Coordinator, Drought Mental Health Assistance Package
Ph: 02 63607 757

Centrelink

Centrelink is responsible for the provision of services on behalf of a number of Federal Government agencies including the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. These include provision of financial and support services that enhance the well-being of farming families and communities facing change, for example through rural restructuring, drought etc. Membership of the NSW Farmers' Association Mental Health Network enables Centrelink to maintain a close connection with the farming community, thereby enhancing communication and the identification of service gaps and issues facing farming families. It also recognises the importance Centrelink places on the maintenance of a healthy farming sector.

- ① John Allsop, – Email: john.allsop@centrelink.gov.au



Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University

The Centre for Rural Social Research (CRSR) is a sub-program of the Institute of Land, Water and Society at Charles Sturt University. It contributes significantly to rural Australia and is recognised as the national centre for rural and regional social research due to the various research and consultancy projects it has undertaken on behalf of government agencies and community groups. It is the first place of call for many organisations interested in rural social issues. The Centre promotes the development of better provision of human services in rural Australia. The Centre has taken a lead role in drought research in recent years, with the most recent publication *The impact of drought on secondary education access in Australia's rural and remote areas*, highlighting the "silent victims of the drought".

- ① Professor Margaret Alston – Director, Centre for Rural Social Research
Ph: 0418 242 856

Chaplaincy Australia

Chaplaincy Australia is a National Department of the Australian Christian Churches (ACC) who is committed to communicating the Christian faith in a hands-on, compassionate and meaningful way. Chaplaincy Australia is a part of the National ACC Chaplaincy Network linking Chaplains together with common objectives, practice, training and support. Their Chaplains are represented by a broad spectrum of nationalities, backgrounds, ages and localities from within the Australian Christian Churches. They are purposely trained men and women with a passionate commitment to serve their community with care.

- ① Reverend Ron Westbrook
Ph: 0448 040 374

Counsellors and Psychotherapists Association of NSW

CAPA is the peak New South Wales Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. CAPA was established to provide a forum for professional counsellors and psychotherapists and it works at the State and Federal level to further the interests of its members. CAPA is a member association of Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA). CAPA members are practitioners with a diversity of training and specialty areas. All members meet the criteria set down by CAPA, at the State level, and PACFA, at the national level. These criteria cover training, client contact hours, ongoing professional development, supervision, insurance requirements, ethics, complaints handling and good governance.

- ① Maxine Rosenfield - President
Ph: 0413 570 539

Country Women's Association of NSW

The Country Women's Association has been involved in improving the quality and quantity of health services provided in NSW since its inception in 1922. In rural areas there were no facilities to support families, or communities, in distress. Many feel that the situation has come full circle. When the CWA was invited to participate in the NSW Farmers' Association initiated Rural Mental Health Network, the organisation agreed without hesitation, seeing the idea as a positive and tangible means to further assist members, their families and communities. The loss of services and facilities, particularly in the area of mental health, has been a concern for CWA members for many years. With the lowering of incomes, the increase in Government regulation, drought, and the ever-increasing population shift, rural communities have fewer resources and numbers to support a user pays system. The members of the Forum have brought forward projects and ideas that will allow rural and regional residents to access affordable assistance, without having to travel hundreds of kilometres. The CWA of NSW is committed to supporting the initiatives brought forward by the members of the Rural Mental Health Network, distributing information to members and their communities and lobbying Governments to improve mental health facilities and access to them, for rural and regional Australians.

- ① Robyn Wright – Vice President
Ph: 0419 395 090

Industry & Investment NSW: Drought Support Workers

Drought Support Workers provide immediate personal support, information and referral to other appropriate services. They also contribute to policy development regarding drought and its impact on farming families to ensure priority issues and needs are addressed. As well as



drought they assist families affected by bushfires, floods and storms. They organise Farm Family Gatherings to bring communities together as well as being a conduit for dispensing information and training. The Drought Support Workers have observed and brought to the attention of NSW Department of Health and other relevant agencies the deteriorating state of mental health and well-being of rural people. They have referred many clients to Mental Health Workers, have linked with the Centre for Rural and Remote Health to implement the Rural Mental Health Support line and assisted in training the Support Line operators.

- ① GUNNEDAH: Jenny Croft 0429 446 417
- PARKES: Jan Bruce 0427 257 191
- SCONE: Carolyn Long 0428 296 332
- GOULBURN: Dick Kearins 0427 781 514
- HAY: Danny Byrnes 0428 973 141
- COROWA: Don Burrows 0427 324 033
- DUBBO: Pip Brown 0429 396 697
- GRIFFITH: Lou Revelant 0419 167 662

General Practice NSW

General Practice NSW Ltd (GP NSW) is the State Based Organisation for Divisions of General Practice in NSW. Formerly known as the Alliance of NSW Divisions Ltd, GP NSW was incorporated in 1998. GP NSW was established to work at a state level to support and promote the work of NSW Divisions Network, to maintain good working relationships with NSW Health and other stakeholders and to maximise the capacity and influence of Divisions in the primary health care sector. These objectives are achieved through leadership, support and advocacy.

- ① Jane Westly – Team Leader – Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol
Ph: 0419 843 086

NSW Farmers' Association

NSW Farmers' Association is an apolitical voluntary industry body representing the majority of commercial farm operations throughout the farming community in NSW. Through its commercial, policy and lobbying activities it provides a powerful and positive link between farmers and the public. The severe and in many regions ongoing drought highlighted to the Association the current mental health conditions and services across rural and remote NSW. The emotional stress from such adverse circumstances impacts not only farmers, but also their families, communities and even the drought support services themselves. Whilst the drought may have a limited life span, its ramifications such as depression, financial hardship, and loss will continue for many years. The Association is extremely concerned that despite the disproportionate level of depression in rural and remote areas, communities in these areas have poorer access to mental health support. The Association hosted a Rural Mental Health Forum in June 2005 to bring together the key mental health players across the state to identify a more collaborative approach. This led to the formation of the Rural Mental Health Network.

- ① Charles Armstrong – President
Ph: (02) 8251 1700


NSW Nurses' Association

The New South Wales Nurses' Association (NSWNA) is the registered union for all nurses in New South Wales. The Association represents the industrial interest of nurses employed under all awards and agreements registered in this State in both the public and private sectors. Its role is to protect the interests of nurses and the nursing profession.

- ① Marc Hopkins – Professional Officer (Mental Health)
Ph: 0437 990 146

Presentation Sisters Rural Outreach Service


The Presentation Sisters Rural Outreach Services provides an active, caring presence and is a supportive resource to people in isolated, rural areas of the Riverina and Southwest Slopes. Presentation Sisters Rural Outreach Services provide support for women, men and families; community building activities; home-based rural counseling; workshops; home visits and pastoral care. The Presentation Sisters Rural Outreach Services also provide community education services including parenting workshops, mental health and healthy well-being workshops and workshops for carers.



① Ann McRae
Ph: 0428 388 044

Royal Flying Doctor Service


The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) is one of the largest and most comprehensive aero medical organisations in the world. Using the latest in aviation, medical and communications technology, it delivers extensive primary health care and 24-hour emergency service to those who live, work and travel throughout Australia. The RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation. While supported by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, the RFDS relies heavily on fundraising and donations from the community to purchase and medically-equip its aircraft, and to finance other major capital initiatives. Today, the RFDS has a fleet of 53 aircraft operating from 21 bases located across the nation and provides medical assistance to over 270,000 people every year – that's one every two minutes.



① Ruth Redfern
Ph: 0408 476 341

St Vincent de Paul Society


The St Vincent de Paul Society prides itself on its grassroots involvement with people in the local community. Its most important activity is providing support and material help to people in crisis, in their home. It is one of Australia's largest charitable providers involved in every area of human need. The Society is a Catholic organisation with more than 20 000 members and volunteers in NSW and the ACT. The Society, through the work of its members, volunteers and staff, works to bring about lasting change to improve the lives of people in need. The Society's Disaster Recovery role is part of the NSW State Disaster Welfare Plan, an organised and co-ordinated disaster recovery plan which is implemented in the event of a disaster through the Department of Community Services. St Vincent de Paul has 16 Area Team Leaders in NSW/ACT for Disaster Recovery teams, who are constantly reviewing the Society's local plans so that the organisation is prepared for any emergency, including natural disasters such as droughts, bushfires and floods.



① John Gresser – Disaster Recovery Officer
Ph: 02 9568 0261

Suicide Safety Network


Several Suicide Safety Networks have been established across NSW as part of the Federal Department of Health and Ageing's Suicide Safety Networks Replication Project. The Suicide Safety Networks bring together agencies and individuals who are concerned with suicide prevention, forming them into a network providing opportunities for adopting a common focus; working together on prevention projects; speaking to the community with one voice; learning from each other and from network-organised skills education; and more effective lobbying for support and funding. The Suicide Safety Network (Central Coast) is the most recent network to have been established in NSW, with a network now in the process of being established in Tamworth.



① Chaplain Eric Trezise – President, Suicide Safety Network (Central Coast)
Ph: 0429 436 311

The Salvation Army


The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the Universal Christian Church. The Salvation Army provides a range of social services and programs throughout Australia ranging from chaplaincy to suicide support groups to youth services. The Salvation Army also works to address rural isolation, providing a range of support services across NSW and the ACT.



① Pam Wilkes – Territorial Consultant, Rural Support Services
Ph: 0411 120 701

Uniting Church

The Uniting Church's two Rural Chaplains work with a variety of communities in western New South Wales, being the Uniting Church in places where communities have been demoralised by years of drought and community decline. Julie Greig, based at Hillston, last year joined Kel Hodge, based at Canowindra, in helping the church build stronger communities, advocating for rural people and offering pastoral care and support for individuals. The chaplains also help out





practically: paying bills and organising community workshops to build skills like grant application writing.

- ① Julie Greig – Rural Chaplain
Ph: 0429 344 456



Wesley Counselling/LifeForce

LifeForce is a national suicide prevention program that aims to educate, empower and resource Australian communities. LifeForce's goal is to promote individual and community wellbeing with a specific focus on identifying and dealing with issues relating to suicide. LifeForce commenced in 1995 and was created by Reverend Bob Dunlop of Wesley Mission. LifeForce is based in Ashfield, NSW and reaches nationally across all Australian communities. It is an initiative from Wesley Mission, which is part of the Uniting Church of Australia.

LifeForce provides:

- training in suicide prevention;
- consulting, setting up and supporting local suicide prevention networks;
- Memorial services to support those who have been impacted by suicide to come together in the spirit of comfort and hope.

LifeForce has created a community network model that incorporates:

- community capacity information;
- training;
- creating a formal association of the local suicide prevention network;
- identifying and addressing local issues through regular meetings; and
- working with local networks to best identify and support local community needs (these could be local memorial days or bereavement support groups).

- ① Tony Cassidy – Manager
Ph: 0408 211 750



Workcover NSW

WorkCover works with the employers, workers and community of NSW to achieve safer and more productive workplaces, and effective recovery, return to work and security for injured workers. They administer occupational health and safety, injury management, return to work and workers compensation laws, and manage the workers compensation system.

Their work involves:

- health and safety
- injuries and claims
- licensing for some types of plant operators
- registration of some types of plant and factories
- training and assessment
- medical and healthcare
- law and policy.

- ① Colin Wall - Colin.Wall@workcover.nsw.gov.au



YWCA NSW

YWCA NSW is a unique community service organization led by women. Their work is focused on developing the life skills and connectedness of communities and people experiencing critical and vulnerable times. We can all experience critical times in our lives whether it's struggling as a new parent, dealing with a difficult teenager, going through a divorce, recovering from an illness or losing a job. YWCA NSW is the friend and champion that is there to help people develop the life skills and connectedness that they need to move forward with their lives and become confident, happy and contributing individuals.

- ① Genevieve Marchiori – Program Coordinator, Tamworth
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