



An Australian Government Initiative

Yorke Peninsula community more resilient and prepared thanks to successful pilot program

The Community Resilience and Readiness pilot program for bushfire affected communities has enabled communities to come together to increase their psychological and practical preparedness for future disasters.

Funded by Country SA PHN, as part of the Australian Government mental health response to bushfire trauma, the program supports Yorke Peninsula and other bushfire affected communities to increase their resilience and emotional preparedness for future bushfires and other disasters. The program has been based in the Southern part of the Peninsula which was the site of the 2019 Yorketown fire.

The idea germinated when Adelaide Hills Community Resilience Officer (CRO), Miranda Hampton was working with hills bushfire affected communities and identified gaps in people's practical and psychological preparedness. Miranda could see the benefits of building a resilient community – one that is emotionally and mentally prepared to face future disasters, rather than just react to them.

Country SA PHN's Bushfire Response Coordinator, Sally Patten, agreed and collaborated with Miranda to make the CRO program a reality. Country SA PHN funded seven CROs in the recently affected bushfire communities, in the state's South-East, Adelaide Hills, Yorke Peninsula and Kangaroo Island.

"We've been very pleased to fund and support the development of such an important community capacity building initiative," said Country SA PHN, Chief Executive Officer, Mark Hartigan.

"To be able to assist communities face inevitable future challenges with resilience and preparedness provides communities with a great sense of empowerment and ultimately improved future outcomes."

Katie Hughes and fellow Yorke Peninsula CRO, Kate Martin, have been working with bushfire affected YP communities to build their resilience and emotional preparedness.

“This project has enabled Kate and I to have the privilege of supporting our community as we all moved from the initial stages of disaster recovery, through to a focus on enhancing preparation for the future. It has been an incredible opportunity for growth for all of us, which placed a heavy importance on working with our community to identify and address the unique needs of the Yorke Peninsula region,” said Yorke Peninsula CRO Katie Hughes.

“The funding for the pilot Community Readiness and Resilience Program has allowed us to have the time and space to listen and learn from recent bushfire and other emergency experiences and make meaningful change possible – allowing us to plan for the future with our community.”

Yorke Peninsula Community Resilience and Readiness program highlights:

- Supporting local organisations and groups to increase their capacity to respond to natural disaster and other emergencies
- Working with local schools and preschools to support their students and access available funding for 'Wishlist' projects
- Supporting individuals and groups through grant writing workshops
- Linking those working through recovery with the organisations and information that would help them most
- Promoting the great work of organisations such as Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation, Australian Red Cross, Phoenix Australia, Bushfire Community Legal Program, Country SA PHN, Wellbeing SA, the CFS, PIRSA, Northern and Yorke Landscapes Board and many others who have been able to offer our region support
- Supporting events such as 'Are you bogged mate?' presentation by Mary O'Brien, 'Mates, Meals and Mental Health' by Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation, Lighthouse Youth Projects Inc. Community BMX Rides, Family Fun Days, The Resilience Project with Hugh Van Cuylenberg, ACT for Ag presentations by Steph Schmidt and so many more.

“This project has widened the community focus of emergency preparedness from solely focusing on physical preparedness, but also now including psychological preparation that will reduce and help manage the potential mental and emotional impacts of potential future emergency events.” said Kate Martin.

Community capacity building and resilience will continue to be a focus of the SYP Community Hub.

-ENDS-

To find out more about the Community Resilience Program you can email Katie at:

katie@sypcommunityhub.com.au

If this story has raised personal concern, please contact:

For **immediate medical assistance in an emergency always call Triple Zero (000)** and ask for the ambulance.

Mental Health Triage Service

For **non-life-threatening mental health emergencies, phone the 24/7 Mental Health Triage Service 13 14 65.**

Lifeline (24 hours)

Phone [13 11 14](tel:131114) for immediate support

[Lifeline online counselling \(6.30 to 11.30 pm, South Australian time\)](#)

Head2Health

For counselling support call the National **Head to Health** phone line - [1800 595 212](tel:1800595212).

Kids Helpline (24 hours)

Free counselling for people aged five to 25.

Phone [1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800) or get help online from [Kids Helpline online counselling](#)