

MEDIA RELEASE
Thursday, 3rd March 2022

**HOW LIFELINE CAN HELP IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH
DISTRESSING CURRENT EVENTS AND HEADLINES**

With distressing events continuing both at home and overseas, Lifeline is reassuring the community that it is normal to be experiencing some level of psychological distress.

Patron John Brogden said it's critical that every Australian knows they can access services like Lifeline when they are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping or staying safe.

"Our thoughts go out to anyone directly impacted by the floods in Queensland and NSW. Our 13 11 14 crisis line is available 24/7 and our Lifeline Centres on the ground are ready and primed to provide practical and psychological help at a local level."

"The vision and stories of war in Europe are very distressing to us all – more so for Australians whose family, friends and homelands are at war."

Mr Brogden revealed Lifeline has received approximately 192,000 calls and 32,000 text and webchat contacts since January 1st, 2022 and continues to see elevated call volumes compared to those before the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During January and February, calls to Lifeline were up 5% on the same months last year. We are consistently seeing this trend towards increased help seeking behaviour, and I am pleased to say that Lifeline's call answer rates remain around 90%," said Mr Brogden.

"Even for the most resilient of us, some of the news we are reading and images we are seeing at the moment are very confronting, and we know there will be an increasing number of people who will be struggling with heightened anxiety and distress."

"If you are feeling overwhelmed, I encourage you to connect with Lifeline in the way you feel most comfortable, whether that be on 13 11 14, or via our 24/7 text and webchat services".

"Our trained Crisis Supporters are ready and waiting day and night to listen without judgement, chat about your needs, worries and feelings and work with you to explore the best ways to stay safe and get support in your community."

Lifeline has also developed a range of free toolkits to provide you with practical information and assistance during challenging times. Anyone can browse, print or and download them at www.lifeline.org.au/resources/toolkit-downloads/.

There is tailored support for anyone being impacted by floods at www.lifeline.org.au/floods.



Lifeline is Australia's leading suicide prevention service, with 41 centres around the nation. The service responds to over one million requests for support each year, creating an average of 120 safety plans to keep a person experiencing suicidal ideation safe every day.

You can phone Lifeline to speak to a Crisis Supporter on 13 11 14 (24 hours/7 days), text 0477 131 114 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or chat to Lifeline online at www.lifeline.org.au (24 hours/7 days).

For further information or comment, please contact Richard Shute on media@lifeline.org.au or 0408 407 376.