

Media release:
For immediate release

September 17, 2018

Wellways plants seeds of hope for Aussie farmers

With most of eastern Australia gripped by drought, farming communities and regional centres are bearing the brunt of its consequences. As people on the land battle to feed stock, plant crops and save their livelihoods, their mental health is also suffering.

“We know that life of the land can be a struggle. We also know that the mental health of our farming families is suffering in this fight,” said Wellways CEO Elizabeth Crowther. “It can be hard to keep going with no end in sight. We need to take action on the mental health front and that’s what Wellways is doing with this new take-home kit.”

“We are encouraging people to talk about their mental health and not to let pride or fear get in the way. We’re reminding people that help is out there when you need it.”

Wellways has produced a manual of mental health and suicide support and available services called “Growing Hope”, written especially for regional communities, farmers and their families.

The manual has been possible through funding from the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network (MPHN) under the Murrumbidgee Suicide Prevention Program. Wellways has received \$1.5 million in funding to deliver a range of initiatives aimed at increasing Mental Health support to communities across the region.

“We know that people in our communities are facing many challenges, It’s important that people have access to practical information and are encouraged to reach out when they need support.” said Melissa Neal, CEO Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network.

“This is a practical guide to keep on hand for whenever it’s needed,” Ms Crowther said.

This unique guide is being launched at Henty Machinery Field Days, where 60,000 visitors are expected at what is regarded as southern Australia’s single biggest agricultural event.

Among the latest in machinery and farm equipment, Wellways will also be providing information and resources about mental health support and the support services available. The event is on between September 18 and 20, in Henty, News South Wales.

Growing Hope is part of Murrumbidgee Suicide Prevention Program launched by Wellways earlier this year and represents the next phase of the program and seeks to increase community awareness, and encourage conversations among mates, families and communities.

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Launch event: Growing Hope launch, Wednesday September 19
1.45pm, at The Stump, Henty Fields

For more information

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About [Wellways](#) Australia

Wellways Australia is a leading not-for-profit organisation dedicated to ensuring all Australians lead active and fulfilling lives in their community. We work with individuals, families and the community to help them imagine and achieve better lives.

We advocate for change to make sure people can access the best possible care and information when they need it. We provide a wide range of services and assistance for people with mental health issues, disabilities, youth and older Australians and those requiring community care.

About Murrumbidgee PHN

[Murrumbidgee PHN](#) is a not-for-profit primary healthcare organisation. Our aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of our people, resulting in resilient communities across the Murrumbidgee. MPH is one of 31 PHNs in Australia with the objectives of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes and improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time. The Primary Health Networks Programme is an Australian Government initiative.

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