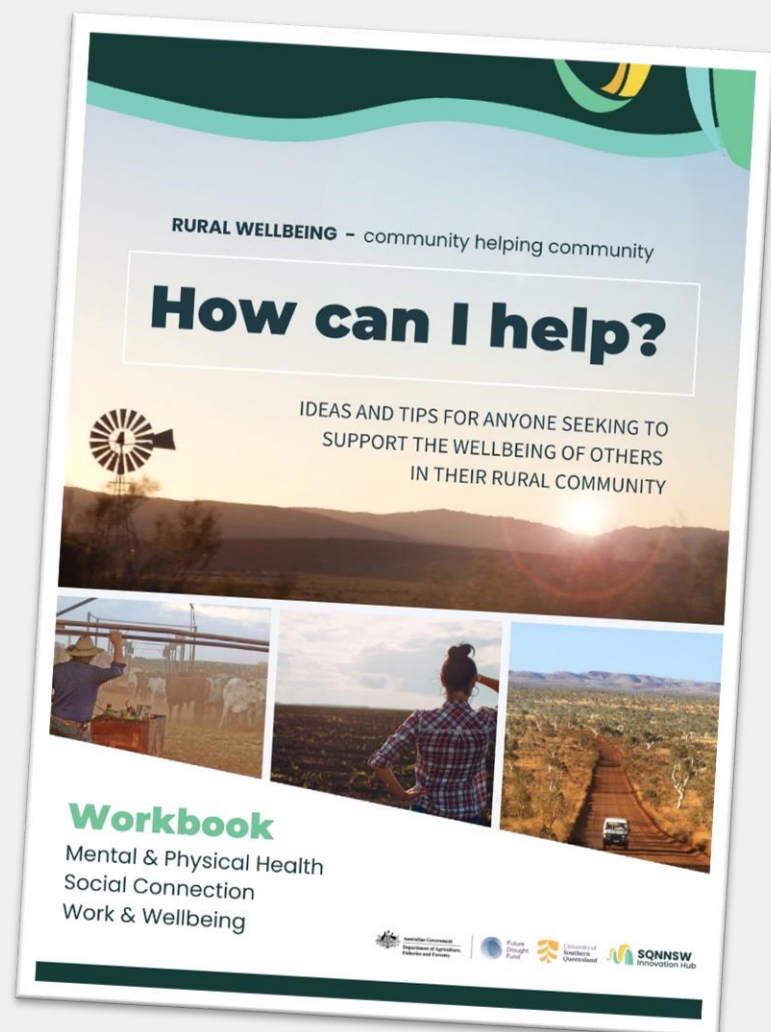


WORKBOOK + RESOURCES

Rural Wellbeing – community helping community.

# Facilitator Guide





This page left  
intentionally blank

# How you can help

### **You are an important part of a community.**

There are many ways to help others – and giving of your time and skills is one of the most rewarding ways to give back.

Whether you are volunteering with a local organisation, or you personally want to help out someone you know in the community, this toolkit helps you consider the best strategies for doing so. In particular, this toolkit will help you learn how to **recognise** when people need help, **connect** people to resources needed and give ideas for how you can provide **support**.

- **RECOGNISE**

Listen, understand, and identify what a person is needing

- **CONNECT**

Assist people in finding qualified and appropriate support

- **SUPPORT**

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer



### **What is wellbeing?**

If you look up the word ‘wellbeing’ in a dictionary, you will find a description similar to “the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy”. Wellbeing is how each person achieves positive outcomes in their life that are meaningful to them and makes them feel good. Wellbeing includes mental and physical health, as well as social, economic, cultural, and spiritual.

**This toolkit provides** information and resources to help you help others in your community, with a focus on **4** areas of wellbeing.



Mental health affects **how we think, feel and act**. It also affects our everyday life, such as work, relationships, and study. When we're feeling emotionally healthy, we can be fully present with our family, friends, and community.



Physical health and wellbeing is much more than good health. It is the direct result of lifestyle choices that include **sleep, diet, physical activity, hygiene, and relaxation**. Maintaining a **healthy balance** and taking care of your body will allow you to get the most out of daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress.



The **quantity and quality of relationships** affect your mental and physical wellbeing. The benefits of social connections include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher, self-esteem, and also strengthen physical health.



**Work and financial security** are essential components of wellbeing. They allow a person to satisfy their needs and life goals. Life experience, education, career goals and decision making are based on a person's aspirations, abilities, skills, and ability to adapt. This area of wellbeing opens opportunities for people, local economic growth, and stronger social cohesion.

Throughout this rural wellbeing toolkit, you will find the following types of media and resources to **help you help others**.



TIP SHEET

Quick and easy tip sheets are available throughout the toolkit. Each sheet provides an **overview of the wellbeing topic covered** and is designed to be a printed resource that will look great as a desk or wall poster.



CASE STUDY

Within each wellbeing section of the toolkit, you will find case studies that provide opportunity for you to **recap and apply ideas to various community examples**. Remember to refer to the other resources (tip sheets, activities, and useful links) for additional ideas.



ACTIVITY

Activity sheets are designed to be **printed and used with the person you are wanting to help or for yourself**. Use each activity as a conversation starter and for ongoing discussion.



USEFUL  
LINKS

There are so many useful **wellbeing resources available online** from support services, community organisations, researchers, and government. Each wellbeing module in this toolkit has a resource page with links for you to explore!

## module 1 | MENTAL HEALTH

Helping someone seek help

*A guide to all topics for this module and associated resources that you can find in the Appendix section of the workbook.*

### Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression



#### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

#### - Signs of Stress

- Acute and chronic stress  
The positive and negatives sides of stress



TIP SHEET

#### Signs of stress and what to look out for in Acute or Chronic stress



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Sally

Do you see signs of acute or chronic stress? Think about the questions asked in the case study. How could you help?

#### - Signs of Anxiety

- What can cause anxiety
- Typical anxiety triggers
- Types of anxiety disorders

#### - Coping with anxiety



TIP SHEET

#### Triggers for Anxiety and how to cope



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Tina

What could be triggering Tina's anxiety? Think about the questions asked in the case study. How could you help?

#### - Signs of Depression

- Triggers for depressions in rural communities
- Symptoms of depression
- Depression or ongoing anxiety requires treatment



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Angelo

Angelo was a town business leader. Soon after retiring his wife sadly passed away. He now isolates himself in his home. Think about the questions asked in the case study. How could you help?



TIP SHEET

#### Symptoms and treatment for depression

## module 1 | MENTAL HEALTH

Helping someone seek help

### How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help



#### SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

- Barriers to seeking help
  - o Why someone in your community may not seek help
- Recognising help seeking behaviours
- Strategies: Checking if someone is okay



TIP SHEET



ACTIVITY

#### Checking if someone is okay

##### My Not-To-Do List.

Taking the pressure off.  
What tasks, issues, or events can a person identify as not a priority?  
A helpful activity to sort out what is most important. One job at a time.

### Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources



#### CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



#### USEFUL LINKS

A selection of mental health support services and resources are provided. Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!

**Remember** that your role in supporting someone is to be a good listener, understand their concerns, identify where there could be barriers, but most importantly – understand that you are not there to provide treatment, but to help connect to professional services.

## module 2 | PHYSICAL HEALTH

Maintain health and stay active

*A guide to all topics for this module and associated resources that you can find in the Appendix section of the workbook.*

### How to help someone acknowledge physical health concerns



#### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

- Why someone may not want to seek medical advice
- Encouraging someone to chat with a healthcare professional

### Wellbeing benefits of staying active



#### SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

- Benefits of staying active
- Helping someone stay active
- How to stay active and be safe
- What activities are in your local area?



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Sam

Sam is ex-defence force and new to town. Read through his story. Do you think staying active will help him with his current social anxiety?



ACTIVITY

#### What activities are best for me?

Look for activities that you enjoy and that fit our lifestyle. Answering the questions in this activity may help you explain to other people what would be best for you.

### Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active



#### CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



USEFUL  
LINKS

A selection of support services and resources that can encourage and help someone with their physical health. Many of these are also strongly related to mental health as well. Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!



## module 3 | SOCIAL CONNECTION

Encouraging and building community

*A guide to all topics for this module and associated resources that you can find in the Appendix section of the workbook.*

### Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing



#### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

- The opposite – Social isolation and loneliness
- RECAP: Anxiety and social isolation
- What could be the reason behind someone isolating themselves?
- How to encourage someone to connect with others
- How does your local community connect?



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Dave

Dave is a well-known local farmer who recently experienced severe hail damage. His friends at the nearby town have noticed that he has stopped attending regular events. Think about the questions asked in the case study. How could you help?



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Kira

Kira finished high school a year ago and has watched as all her friends leave town. What could Kira do to build new connections in her local community? Think about the questions asked in the case study. How could you help?



TIP SHEET

**Stay Connected.**  
**How to create meaningful connections**

## module 3 | SOCIAL CONNECTION

Encouraging and building community

### Developing meaningful social connections – all ages



#### SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

- Meaningful connections
- Age diversity in your community
- The value in your community – across the age groups
- The power of intergenerational connections



ACTIVITY

#### Who do I know?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Think about the people you know in your local town and community. All ages.

***How could the following two people help each other? How would you introduce them?***



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Tyson

Tyson is a high school student as well as a carer for a parent. He is proudly First Nation but does not have any extended family living nearby to talk to or seek advice. He has recently been offered an apprenticeship in horticulture but is unsure how to balance this with school and caring responsibilities. How could he find support within his local community?



CASE STUDY

#### Meet Angelo

Angelo was a business leader in town. Soon after retiring his wife sadly passed away. Angelo has since become isolated in his home and rarely leaves it. His adult children are overseas and Angelo feels like no one remembers him anymore.

## module 3 | SOCIAL CONNECTION

Encouraging and building community

### Starting Point: Services and resources that encourage community social connection



#### CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



#### USEFUL LINKS

Encouraging someone to connect with others involves patience, being a good listener, and considering supportive and relatable opportunities available in the community.

A selection of support services and resources that can encourage and help social connection within your community are listed. Many of these are also strongly related to mental health as well. Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal government too.

## module 4 | WORK & WELLBEING

### Building opportunities

*A guide to all topics for this module and associated resources that you can find in the Appendix section of the workbook.*

#### Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing



##### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

- What is work?
- What work can mean to a person, their wellbeing, and to their community

#### Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude



##### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

- Where are you right now?
- Questions to ask someone who is seeking work or a change in work
- Work and Values



ACTIVITY

##### What are my values?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself. Read through the large list of values and identify which ones most relate to you. How do these values influence your work and life decisions?

- Your Occupational Interests (Vocational Personality)



ACTIVITY

##### What are my career interests?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself. Read through each of the interest areas. Tick each of the interest statements that describe you most. Don't overthink. Add up your score for each.

## module 4 | WORK & WELLBEING

### Building opportunities

#### Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude



##### RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

- Your Skills and Abilities



ACTIVITY

##### My transferable skills

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself. Read through the large list of values and identify which ones most relate to you. How do these values influence your work and life decisions?

- Your Attitude – How adaptable are you?



CASE STUDY

##### Meet Tina

Tina is needing to learn how to use a mobile phone, a laptop, and access the internet for government and bank services. Digital skills was not something Tina thought she would ever need and is now struggling with what to do. How can she adapt to the situation?

#### Job search strategies and identifying opportunities



##### SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

- What type of work suits you best?
- Where can you search for and find work opportunities?
- Why social connections are important
- Examples of who you could include in your list of connections and professional network



CASE STUDY

##### Meet Abraham

Abraham is wanting to seek out new work opportunities but is not confident in highlighting his skills to employers.



ACTIVITY

##### Opportunity mapping

Think about the job or business opportunities that you are aware of and interested in. How do you know about it?

## module 4 | WORK & WELLBEING

Building opportunities

### Starting Point: Education and employment services and resources



#### CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



#### USEFUL LINKS

A selection of education and employment support services and resources are provided. Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too.

## CASE STUDIES: MATRIX

Suggestions on where each case study can link within the workbook

*Throughout the workbook there are links to individual case studies that relate to the subject matter. However, **you can also use the Case Studies as a conversation starter.** Any of the studies can be used to reference sections within the workbook. Below is a quick overview of each case study, then a helpful matrix to illustrate where each case study is related to the modules within the workbook.*

### Overview of Case Studies

#### Meet Dave – Independent farmer impacted by recent storms

Dave is a vegetable producer and fourth-generation farmer. The farm property is well known within his town because of its historical value and busy farm gate shop.

At 55, Dave is not married and does not have children. However, he is always seen as a leader to his extended family and friends. He is very independent and will sort out any problems himself.

Recent storms have delivered severe hail damage to Dave's farm and many others across the region. In the weeks since the storm damage, Dave has only been seen in town a couple of times. He has not attended any of his usual Chamber of Commerce and Rotary meetings, as well as missed the past couple of Sunday services at his church. A few days ago, he also did not attend a free rural financial service event held for all storm impacted farmers.

---

**You are a friend as well as a member of Dave's church and Rotary group.** Dave's usual absence from recent meetings has been noticed by yourself and others. You want to check to make sure he is okay.

#### Meet Sally – Single mum who moved from the city

As a single mum of 2 teenagers, Sally moved to your rural town from Melbourne. Having experienced an extended COVID lockdown and newly divorced – Sally decided to relocate with her children to a rural community and begin the next chapter in her life.

Since settling into town 12 months ago, Sally has worked as a barista at a popular café. Always friendly with customers, Sally has become well-known and liked by many of the customers. Always with a smile, Sally is open to chat with people, but also guarded about her personal life.

The café is short staffed, and Sally has taken on extra hours to help her employer, as well as build up her finances. The longer shifts have been noted by many grateful customers, however, it has also impacted on her availability to attend school events.

---

**You are the local hairdresser and Sally is one of your regular clients.** At her last appointment Sally broke down in tears during a quiet moment when you were with another customer. You want to check on Sally to make sure she is okay.

## CASE STUDIES: MATRIX

Suggestions on where each study can link within the workbook

### Overview of Case Studies – continued

#### Meet Angelo – Recently widowed after 45 years of marriage

Angelo has lived in his small regional town for over 40 years as the local baker. After arriving from Sydney with his wife and young children, he started his business and soon became well connected within the community. With plans to travel together in retirement, Angelo had to postpone retiring and keep working until he finally sold his business. At 70 years of age, he was able to step away from work. However, not long after retiring, his wife became ill and passed away. He has now been widowed for over a year and his adult children are living overseas.

After his wife's funeral, he instantly became more reclusive and retreated from his social networks. He has been quite agitated whenever someone from town attempts to visit him. He has also recently begun to lock the front gate of his property during the daytime.

---

**You know Angelo as both your previous baker and a past business leader.** *You recently bumped into him during one of his rare visits to the post office. He has always been friendly but when you asked how he was, he abruptly replied – "It doesn't take long to be forgotten by everyone".*

#### Meet Tyson – Young adult carer seeking cultural connection and career guidance

Tyson is 15 and just about to start his senior years at high school. He is the eldest of three brothers in a sole parent family and has recently become the unofficial head of the house due to his mother's chronic illness.

With a strong interest in the environment and biology, Tyson has had on of his teachers encourage him to keep pursuing this. Recently an apprenticeship with a local horticulturist has been offered to him via an industry program within his school. Tyson really wants to take this apprenticeship; however, he is feeling torn about his family responsibilities.

As First Nation, Tyson is also feeling disconnected as he does not have any extended family living nearby. He is keen to strengthen his cultural connection but overwhelmed with where to start and who to talk to.

---

**You know Tyson from your local neighbourhood.** *During recent short neighbourly chats, you became aware of Tyson's current situation and concerns.*

#### Meet Tina – Needing to understand and use digital technology

Tina is 56 and does not have home internet or a mobile phone. Digital technology has not been something that Tina has had to use in any of her work so far, and not been something that interested her. With many government services changing to an online payment system, Tina has had to start thinking about how to use a computer or mobile phone to access these services.

The recent closure of her local bank in town has added to the immediate need for Tina to begin the process of buying, setting up, and understanding how to use this technology. Money is tight, and Tina is very worried about the cost and her overall usage as justification.

Tina is feeling very anxious about how to get organised with her digital technology.

---

**You are one of Tina's friends.** *The recent change to more online services within your town has impacted many members of the community. You realise that Tina is feeling overwhelmed but also that she hasn't reached out for help yet.*



## CASE STUDIES: MATRIX

Suggestions on where each study can link within the workbook

### Overview of Case Studies – continued

#### Meet Sam – Ex-defence force and a recent town resident

Sam is 45 years old and recently retired from the Australian Defence Force after 20 years in the infantry. He is a new resident in town and just begun working casual hours at the local supermarket.

The reason for moving to town is because Sam's wife started work as a local primary school teacher. Though he is happy for his wife, Sam is worried. Sam is aware that he has stopped his daily exercise routine and is also now constantly fighting the urge to lock himself away from the community.

Applying for packing work at the supermarket took more mental energy than Sam wants to admit. The work has given him something to focus on, but he is not feeling confident in applying for any further work or to seek out other opportunities.

---

**You are a work colleague of Sam's at the supermarket.** Currently working with Sam on a couple of night shifts each week, you have learnt about his previous Army background. It takes effort to engage Sam in conversation and you recognise that though he smiles, he is withdrawn.

#### Meet Abraham – Farm worker with hidden tech skills

Abraham and his family arrived in Australia 4 years ago on a humanitarian visa. Recently settling in your town, Abraham and his wife are currently employed as farm workers. They have been very appreciative of the support and welcome they have received from their employer.

To financially support his wife and young children, Abraham is keen to explore opportunities that align with his experience and qualifications in Computer Science. Before fleeing their home country, Abraham had worked as a computer programmer and university tutor. He is not sure if he needs to seek further recognition of his skills and qualifications – or if local employers would even be interested in him.

He knows he has experience, skills, and knowledge that would be an asset for local businesses.

---

**You are a neighbour of Abraham and his family.** Abraham's past work experience and skills has only been briefly mentioned to you by his wife. She stated that Abraham is very nervous about contacting employers. You want to help encourage Abraham to explore work opportunities, but also be respectful of his privacy.

#### Meet Kira – Feeling left behind after graduating high school

Kira graduated from high school last year. The past few months have been busy with helping her parents on the family farm. She has been happy to have the break after finishing a very stressful year 12, however, she has also watched all her friends leave town for university or to travel.

Recently the farm has been impacted by severe weather damage that has added a high level of stress to her home life. Though she loves the farm and her family, Kira is beginning to feel trapped in a situation where she can't leave.

Looking after the grocery shopping for her family is when Kira mainly visits town nowadays. Fondly known by many locals, Kira has been unusually pessimistic when talking about herself and the town in general.

---


**You are a close family friend of Kira's family.** Recently you were able to have a quick chat with Kira when you saw each other at the local produce market. Kira avoided eye contact and replied she was okay when you asked how she was going.

## CASE STUDIES: MATRIX

Suggestions on where each case study can link within the workbook

### Matrix – mapping case studies to workbook modules

Module	Topic	Suggested Case Study
<b>Module 1: MENTAL HEALTH</b> <b>Helping someone seek help</b>	Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression	Any Case Study
	How to talk to someone about their mental health	Any Case Study
	Starting point: Mental health support services and resources	Any Case Study
<b>Module 2: PHYSICAL HEALTH</b> <b>Maintain health and stay active</b>	How to help someone acknowledge physical health issues	Sam
	Encouraging someone to stay active	Sam, Angelo
	Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources	Any Case Study
<b>Module 3: SOCIAL CONNECTION</b> <b>Encouraging and building community</b>	How social connection supports good health	Sam, Angelo
	Developing meaningful social connections – all ages	Any Case Study
	Starting point: Services that encourage social connection	Any Case Study
<b>Module 4: WORK and WELLBEING</b> <b>Building opportunities</b>	Understand the relationship between work and wellbeing	Any Case Study
	Importance of values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitudes	Sally, Tyson, Sam, Abraham, Kirra
	Job search strategies and identifying opportunities	Sally, Tyson, Sam, Abraham, Kirra
	Starting point: Employment and financial support resources	Any Case Study



This Facilitator Guide is for the “How can I help? Rural Wellbeing: Community helping community” publication designed and developed by Dr Jennifer Luke from the University of Southern Queensland and the Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNWSW) Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, in collaboration with Dr Sonja March and Dr Peter McIlveen from the University of Southern Queensland. This is a Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNWSW) Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub resource funded by the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund.

**FURTHER ENQUIRIES** For enquiries or further information about this resource and associated publication, please visit the Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNWSW) Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub’s website at: <https://www.unisq.edu.au/sqnnswhub>.



Australian Government  
Department of Agriculture,  
Fisheries and Forestry



Future  
Drought  
Fund



University of  
Southern  
Queensland



**SQNNSW**  
Innovation Hub