
MEDIA RELEASE
Monday, 22nd April 2024

NEW LIFELINE DATA REVEALS COST-OF-LIVING PRESSURES INCREASING AS A SOURCE OF DISTRESS FOR AUSTRALIANS

- 15% of the 3,000 calls a day to 13 11 14 are specific to financial hardship.
- Evidence shows people can experience increased risk of suicide over financial stress.
- Help seekers presenting in severe distress, with complexity of cases growing.

Data released today reveals around 500 calls to Lifeline each day are related to financial management, employment, or housing insecurity. Of this number, around 50 are focused on concerns related to homelessness.

Lifeline Australia CEO Colin Seery said it was important for anyone struggling to know that the organisation is available 24/7 to provide support.

“As well as telephone and digital support, Lifeline has 43 centres across Australia. Some of these offer face-to-face crisis support as well as counselling specifically focused on financial distress,” he said.

“What is concerning is that we know the true number of people identifying cost-of-living pressures as their primary reason for contacting Lifeline is actually significantly higher.”

“This data does not take into account the 900 help seekers contacting us via our text and webchat services each day, or those reaching to our Support Toolkit or specialised helplines.”

“Our centres are also reporting an increase in complex cases, with help seekers presenting in severe distress, having struggled to find relief and feeling like their options are increasingly limited.”

Lifeline Australia’s Chief Research Officer, Dr Anna Brooks, said that financial stressors are not isolated to those who have a mortgage, with cost-of-living increases flowing through to generate higher rental costs and other economic pressures.

“Financial stress and uncertainty can contribute to mental ill health. There is also a robust and growing body of evidence to suggest that people can experience increased risk of suicide when facing these challenges.”

If you, or someone you know are feeling overwhelmed, we encourage you to connect with Lifeline in the way you feel most comfortable.

You can phone Lifeline to speak to a Crisis Supporter on 13 11 14, text 0477 131 114, chat to Lifeline online or access the Support Toolkit to self-manage what you’re going through at www.lifeline.org.au (all services are available 24/7).

ABOUT LIFELINE

For over 60 years, Lifeline has been connecting with Australians in need through crisis support and suicide prevention services, operating the 13 11 14 telephone line within 43 centres around the nation as well as a 24/7 crisis text, webchat service and Support Toolkit.

The organisation expects to respond to over one million requests for support this year, creating an average of 120 safety plans to keep a person experiencing suicidal ideation safe every day.

To donate to Lifeline, visit www.lifeline.org.au/donate

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