



Robyn Preston MP

Member for Hawkesbury

MEDIA RELEASE

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DEDICATED RECOVERY SUPPORT FOR HAWKESBURY

The NSW Government is partnering with local organisation, Gateway Family Services, to provide dedicated and ongoing support to locals significantly impacted by bushfires across the Hawkesbury region.

Member for Hawkesbury Robyn Preston MP said the service, called *Step by Step*, will provide a recovery support worker for the Hawkesbury local government area.

“Whether directly or indirectly impacted by the bushfires, many people in our community will be experiencing high levels of anxiety, trauma-related stress and fatigue. I want to make sure that getting help is as straight-forward as possible,” Ms.Preston said.

“This innovative service will have a recovery support worker embedded in our community for at least 12 months, working one-on-one with those who are suffering personal hardship and distress as a direct result of the bushfires.”

“An additional recovery support worker will be available in our community if there is demand.”

Deputy Premier and Minister responsible for Disaster Recovery John Barilaro said the service complements the raft of support available through Service NSW.

“Even in the best of times, life can be challenging. When a disaster hits, those challenges can begin to feel overwhelming. Step by Step is there to help make those challenges a bit more manageable,” Mr Barilaro said.

“This program will offer help navigating all the various processes around the bushfire recovery and will support members of the Hawkesbury community who might feel uncomfortable reaching out to government agencies or other formal service providers.”

Step by Step will provide emotional support and assistance along the entire road of recovery. It acknowledges that bushfire recovery isn’t one size fits all, and the support they provide will need to vary with every individual. Everyone will have a different journey through the next year and *Step by Step* will tailor their support to a person’s needs. This support can range from very practical assistance such as filling in forms, making lists and plans for what to do next, to reconnecting people back with their communities.

The NSW Government has also committed \$1 billion over the next two years to rebuild infrastructure in bushfire affected communities and is coordinating the clean-up of eligible residential and commercial buildings destroyed by bushfires at no cost to residents or businesses.