



# Hang Gliding Federation of Australia

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## **Affected by a serious accident? Where to get some help?**

Serious accidents can have an emotional impact. This impact can affect not only the pilot but family members, friends, and witnesses. There are medically proven techniques that can help you alleviate the emotional impact of an accident. This sheet is intended to explain how you can get some help.

### **What if you or someone else is having a crisis right now?**

If you or someone else is having a crisis right now, especially if you think they might harm themselves or others, you should stop reading and get help right now. There are a number of well-respected organisations' that provide crisis help. Please, call one of the following:

- Lifeline: **13 11 14** Provides 24x7 crisis intervention via phone or online chat.
- Beyond Blue: **1300 22 4636** Provides 24x7 telephone support and referrals
- Kids Helpline: **1800 55 1800** provides 24x7 crisis intervention, focuses on the needs of children, young adults and parents.

In case of an acute crisis, the best approach is to call emergency medical services on **000**.

### **What if you would like some help, but it is not a crisis right now?**

The Medicare system in Australia provides access to counselling services through two major programs. They both work like this:

The first step is to see your GP for an assessment and referral. There are a number of standard techniques that your GP may use to help you assess your situation and to make a referral for further counselling as appropriate. At the end of the counselling process, your GP will receive a written report from the provider. The report may include recommendations for further treatment. In the Medicare system, there are 8 different categories of counsellors with different professional qualifications. Your GP will help you determine the appropriate category and will likely recommend some counsellors appropriate for your situation. In the most common Medicare program, the final choice of the counsellor is entirely up to you. When making an appointment with your GP you should indicate that you are looking for a mental health referral, or at least that you will need a long or double appointment.

The advantages of working within the Medicare system are that you will get significant cost support and you will be dealing with counsellors who have demonstrated appropriate experience, training, and professional qualifications.

For those in remote areas, telehealth counselling is available.

### **If I get a referral how does it work and how much does it cost?**

A referral can cover up to 10 individual sessions and 10 group sessions in a calendar year. Many people see relief with fewer sessions. Everyone is different. You and your counsellor will find the approach that is best for you.

Costs get complicated. Medicare pays 85% of the standard costs in one of 16 treatment codes for covered sessions. If you have private health insurance with extras cover, it may contribute to the cost. Generally, there is some out of pocket expense. It is best, to discuss costs with your health care professionals.

### **Is this likely to help?**

We are not medical professionals. The best evidence suggests:

- That modern treatment techniques can provide significant help to people with relatively short terms of treatment;
- That the sooner after a shocking event you start the easier the treatment is likely to be;
- That it is important that you and your counsellor “click” and you should feel free to seek another if you do not;
- That it is important that your counsellor has an appropriate professional background. In Australia, anyone can call themselves a counsellor, whether or not they have appropriate qualifications.