

# Understanding the impact natural disasters have on the health and wellbeing of your people



Natural disasters, like bushfires and floods, can have a significant, on-going impact on the health and wellbeing of your people.

While everyone will react differently to a natural disaster, it's important to remember that people may still experience its effects long after the event has taken place.

## How natural disasters impact our health and wellbeing

### Behavioural

- Avoidance
- Social withdrawal
- Interruptions to routine
- Lack of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Inability to maintain general life routines
- Self destructive behaviour

### Physiological

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Lethargy
- Nausea
- Fight, flight and free response

### Impacts of trauma

### Emotional

- Negative mood
- Feeling flat
- Fluctuating emotions
- Guilt

### Cognitive

- Intrusive and or disrupted thoughts
- Confusion
- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- Poor memory

## Long term impact of natural disasters

Traumatic events can be categorised into three distinct phases:

- 1 Immediate impacts**  
occur immediately up until one month after the event
- 2 Short – medium impacts**  
occur 1 – 3 months after event
- 3 Long term impacts**  
occur 3+ months after an event

The impacts people may experience following a traumatic event will generally stay the same across each phase. How people experience these impacts will vary depending on the severity and length of time. Most people however, will experience and resolve their impacts in the immediate to short-medium term phases.

Whilst rare, it's also important to understand that people can experience impacts in the longer term, without ever experiencing any impacts in the immediate to short-medium term.

### We're here to support you through a traumatic event

Contact your Customer Success Manager to have a conversation about how we can support your organisation through a traumatic event.

# Supporting your people through natural disasters



	Immediate support Up until 1 month after an event		Short - medium term support 1 - 3 months after event		Longer term support 3 - 12 months after event	
	Scenario	How we can help	Scenario	How we can help	Scenario	How we can help
I'm affected	I'm affected and need urgent support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> </ul>	I need help with my recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP (engaging manager and HR to assist with transition)</li> </ul>	I need help coping with the upcoming anniversary of natural disaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Check</li> <li>• TELUS Health One app</li> </ul>
			I need help with returning to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP (engaging manager and HR to assist with transition)</li> </ul>	I want to make sure that my response to the anniversary doesn't significantly impact my performance at work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> </ul>
			I need help with my finances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Helpline</li> </ul>		
I'm a People Leader	I need urgent support for team members affected by a natural disaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Incident Support:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Onsite</li> <li>- Proactive phone calls</li> <li>- Phone Standby</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I need to understand how my team are coping and what I can do to support them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Check for Team Members</li> <li>• Group Supervision</li> <li>• Key Impacts for People Leaders</li> </ul>	I want to know how my team are feeling as the anniversary of natural disaster approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> </ul>
	I need knowledge and skills so that I can support team members affected by a natural disaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Incident Training</li> <li>• Supporting your Team During a Crisis Training</li> <li>• Group Supervision for People Leaders</li> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> <li>• Key Impacts for People Leaders</li> </ul>	I need help supporting affected team members return to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> <li>• Effectively Transitioning back to the Workplace Training</li> </ul>	I need help supporting individuals impacted by the anniversary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> <li>• TELUS Health One app</li> </ul>
	I need help to take care of my own wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Check for People Leaders</li> <li>• Self-Care Strategies Training</li> </ul>	I need help taking care of my own wellbeing while I support employees return to work and manage BAU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> </ul>	I need help taking care of my own wellbeing while I support my team as the anniversary approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Hotline</li> <li>• TELUS Health One app</li> </ul>
I'm not directly affected, but I'm still concerned	I need help taking care of my own wellbeing as constant media exposure and second hand information is taking it's toll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue Training</li> <li>• Stress, Burnout and Fatigue Training</li> </ul>	I need help taking care of my own wellbeing as constant media exposure and second hand information is taking it's toll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> </ul>		
	I have family, friends and colleagues affected and need help taking care of my wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Check</li> <li>• Resilience Assessment</li> <li>• Self-Care Strategies Training</li> <li>• Building Resilience Training</li> </ul>	I have family, friends and colleagues affected and need help taking care of my wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Check</li> <li>• Resilience Assessment</li> </ul>		
	I've experienced a natural disaster in the past and need help managing my reactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> </ul>	I've experienced a natural disaster in the past and need help managing my reactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TELUS Health EAP</li> </ul>		
	I want to contribute as a peer support officer so that I can help my peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Support Program</li> </ul>				

