



EMERGE & SEE

N E V E R J U S T A N U M B E R

*Our Member
Guide*

Support - Connect - Empower

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Did you know?

4% of Australian adults will experience PTSD in their lifetime. That number increases to up to 11% for Emergency Service workers. Nearly 3 times the rate of ordinary Australians.

What is PTSD?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a reaction to extreme stress or trauma that can affect thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, and behavior, that persists long after the event/incident has resolved.

What is trauma?

Trauma is something that affects our sense of the world being safe. There are four main areas of trauma experienced by Emergency Service Workers

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PTSD in ES Workers

PHYSICAL THREAT

Threats to their or others' physical safety

MORAL INJURY

Threats to the integrity of social norms and rules
Exposure to human vulnerability and suffering

TRAUMATIC LOSS

Exposure to sudden, horrifying, or violent loss of life
death of a vulnerable person

A personal connection to identification with the victim of a crime

EMBITTERMENT

Persistent negative feelings in reaction to a negative life event
A response to injustice, humiliation, or a breach of trust

Disorder or Injury?

Everyone is affected differently by PTSD. Symptoms can range from subtle changes in day-to-day life, withdrawal and numbness, to distressing flashbacks or physical anxiety. Some people start to notice increased triggers and symptoms over a period of time, others are confronted somewhat unexpectedly with triggers or symptoms or seem to just 'break down' out of the blue in one instance. Sometimes PTSD can lay dormant for years.

WHAT CAN PTSD LOOK LIKE?

IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOUR
PHYSICAL REACTIVITY
EXAGGERATED STARTLE RESPONSE
CHANGES IN BELIEFS
CHANGES IN MOOD
VOID OF EMOTION
AVOIDANCE / ISOLATION
DETACHMENT/DISCONNECTION
EXCESSIVE BEHAVIOUR
RISKY BEHAVIOR

WHAT DOES PTSD IN EMERGENCY SERVICES FEEL LIKE?

**A CONSTANT SENSE OF DREAD
THREAT/DANGER IS EVERYWHERE
SENSORY OVERLOAD
RESTLESSNESS/AGITATION/ANGER/ANNOYANCE
NUMB TO EMOTION
JOYLESS
DISCONNECTED FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS/COMMUNITY
FAILURE
WEAKNESS
LOSS OF FUNCTIONING
LOSS OF CONTROL
LOSS OF IDENTITY
LOSS OF PURPOSE
HOPELESS
OVERWHELM
INJUSTICE
CLAUSTROPHOBIC**

Symptoms of PTSD

Re-experiencing the trauma

- repetitive memories (or flashbacks) that are hard to control and intrude into everyday life
- nightmares
- extreme distress caused by reminders of the trauma
- memories or disturbing thoughts that can be prompted by smells, sounds, words or other triggers

Avoidance

- Staying away from places, people or objects that may trigger memories of the traumatic event
- changing a normal routine to avoid triggering memories
- not wanting to talk about or think about the event
- feeling numb

Negative thoughts and mood

- Feeling a sense of hopelessness about the future
- negative beliefs about yourself or the world
- blaming yourself or others unreasonably
- intense worry, depression, anger or guilt
- not being able to remember the traumatic event
- no longer enjoying favourite activities
- becoming emotionally detached from others
- not being able to experience positive emotions

Increased arousal

- constant, excessive alertness
- scanning the environment for signs of danger
- being easily startled
- irritable or aggressive behaviour
- difficulty sleeping
- poor concentration

Most Emergency Service Workers will have Complex PTSD

What is complex PTSD?

PTSD +

disturbances in thoughts, behaviors, and emotions including:

- difficulties expressing emotions — it is common for someone to lose control of their emotions, such as in explosive anger or persistent sadness
- negative self-belief — a person can view themselves in a negative light, and they may feel helpless, guilty, or ashamed
- problems maintaining healthy relationships due to lack of trust — in some cases people avoid relationships completely, while others can develop unhealthy relationships
- ongoing feelings of emptiness

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Complex PTSD & your relationships

For Emergency Service Workers, PTSD and other mental health-related issues can cause significant change, and impact your connections and relationships. Emergency Service Workers often feel isolated from their Organisations and identities, yet they do not know how to relate to everyday people or trust their emotions, reactions, or behaviors. They often don't want to burden family and friends, or they feel misunderstood or invalidated. There are key areas to ensure you stay connected with your family, friends, and community.

Communication

Ensure you communicate to your family and friends about how they can best support you, and what you need from them, but also be sure to ask them what they need from you. It is important to do this during a time when you are feeling calm, comfortable, and in control.

Engagement

With often a strong desire to isolate or avoid, it is important to engage in activities with family and friends. They need to be small, manageable, and achievable. Think about picnics in the backyard and small family dinners within the home environment to ensure you feel safe.

Finding new connections

It is not only important to maintain relationships but it is also important to make new connections. We encourage you to connect with like-minded people, this might be a social or activity group that has a common interest like a vintage car group, or a photography group. Emerge & See is a great place to start. You will be surrounded by people with similar experiences to yours, so you can feel safe and understood while participating in exciting new activities.

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Associated Problems

Co-morbid conditions

It is very common for people with PTSD to experience other problems in addition to the symptoms described above. The most common of these associated problems are:

anxiety
depression
alcohol and
drug use.

About Us

Emerge & See Ltd is an independent and confidential Australian Registered Charity run by medically retired NSW Emergency Service Workers with a lived experience of PTSD and recovery.

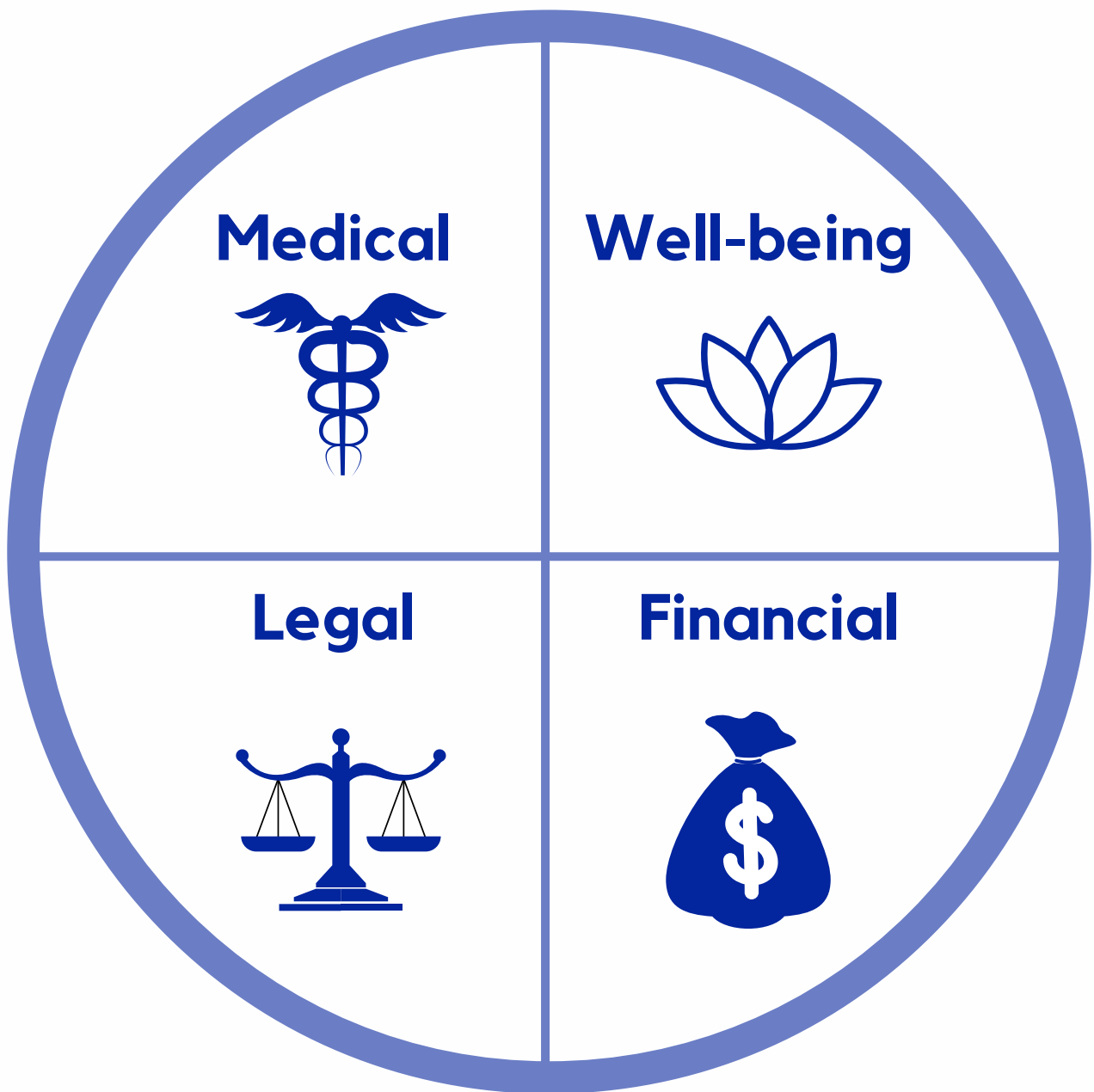
We guide and support Emergency Services (ES) Workers (serving and retired) with PTSD (symptomatic and diagnosed) and other occupational mental health issues from injury to recovery.

There is currently no other independent or confidential, Government, NGO, or not-for-profit Charity or Organisation that specifically supports and guides NSW Emergency Service workers with PTSD.

Emerge & See provides guidance and support to Emergency workers and their families throughout NSW including regional NSW, specifically in the areas of Law, Medicine, Well-being and Finance.

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Areas of Assistance



Medical

It is important that you learn about PTSD, its symptoms and triggers, and how this affects your emotions, behaviors, beliefs, and connections. Studies show the sooner you receive treatment for PTSD the better your chances are of recovery.

There are many treatment options for PTSD.

The first step is to have a medical team create a plan for recovery.

- **General Practitioner (coordinates all medical treatment, can complete work cover certificates)**
- **A Psychologist (therapies)**
- **A Psychiatrist (diagnosis and subscribes/manages medication)**

These providers will become the backbone of your recovery from a medical perspective. Your medical providers should be in regular communication to discuss your treatment plan.

There are also a number of effective treatment programs for PTSD.

Please discuss these with us so we can ensure you are aware of all programs available to you across NSW both privately and publically, as inpatients and outpatients.

What we do

PTSD information sessions

Medical Provider options

Online Ask the Expert Sessions with Psychologists, Psychiatrists & Treatment Providers

PTSD treatment program guides

Inpatient facility guides

Outpatient programs guides

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Well-being

For a long time as an Emergency Service Worker, you are the helper, not the one asking for help. You often help others before you help yourself. You worry about the effects your PTSD injury has on your family.

It is important to realise that to manage your PTSD you need to prioritise your well-being. It is important to prioritise self-care, movement, nutrition, connection, and self-compassion.

We want to remind you we will ensure you are never alone through this process. It is vital for you to continue communicating with your friends and family during this time.

If you feel like you are unable to share with others, we encourage you to reach out to us for support. The most important thing is to not isolate or disconnect and be sure you are talking to someone.

What we do

Social connection activities

Fitness & wellness programs & activities - Emerge Fit & Well

Connection with fitness and wellness providers

Connection with rehabilitation providers

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Legal

Managing your PTSD injury and focusing on your well-being is a big enough task. However, we know that navigating the worker's compensation process can be overwhelming, confusing, and draining. We will make sure you are aware of all your legal entitlements and the procedural processes involved.

We have a relationship with Injury Management Lawyers. We work with the lawyers to ensure they're aware of the vulnerabilities their clients have with their PTSD diagnosis and how best to assist them in their claim.

It is important that you obtain Legal advice as soon as a Worker's Compensation notification is made. A Lawyer can help you navigate the system as well as ensure you are getting everything you are legally entitled to. They can even take on complete communication with Insurers if you need.

What we do

Legal Referral Services

Online Ask the Expert Sessions with Lawyers

Basic Guides to Aware Super Basic & Blue Ribbon Claims and TPD claims

Basic Guide to Work Cover - EML

Basic Guide to Whole Person Impairment, Commutation, Work Injury Damages and Income Protection

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Financial

One of the biggest uncertainties and concerns that face Emergency Service Workers with PTSD is their financial security in the future. This uncertainty often plays a significant part in their decision to medically retire from their Organisation or sometimes makes them feel forced into remaining in their Organisation to the detriment of their mental health.

Often the following areas are impacted by a Workers Compensation Claim or Payout of a Policy

Tax/claimable tax/tax concessions/tax implications

Centrelink Benefits

Child Support Payments

Divorce settlements

Ability to borrow or get finance

Prior to making any decisions regarding your finances we suggest you get advice from a Finance Professional (Accountant, Financial Planner, Mortgage Broker)

What we do

Financial Referral Services

Online Ask the Expert Sessions with Accountants, Financial Planners and Mortgage Brokers

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Never just a number

Our lived experience of PTSD and recovery gives us the understanding, knowledge, experience, resources, and connections to assist you in navigating the process ahead from injury to recovery.

Our ultimate goal is to see injured members receive treatment and remain a part of their Organisation in a meaningful capacity. We understand that this may not always be possible and we are here to support you through your individual circumstances and goals.

We have aligned ourselves with a network of like-minded providers, organisations, and services in the areas of Medicine, Well-being, Law, and Finance that have your best interests and recovery at heart.

We are completely Independent and Confidential. Nothing is shared with your Organisation or the Insurance company.

Our only priority is you.

We are committed to providing you support & guidance, reminding you there is hope, and ensuring you never feel alone. You can

emerge and see

a better future.

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What we are

**A support and guidance network built from lived
experience**

Independent

Confidential

Australian Registered not-for-profit Charity

Present and future-focused

Plan Focused

Recovery driven

Positive

Supportive

Encouraging

Understanding

Passionate

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What we aren't

**Affiliated with any Emergency
Services or Insurance Companies**

**Psychologists/Psychiatrists
Therapists/Counsellors**

A crisis intervention provider

A platform for blame or anger

Living in the past

Perfect

What we do

Virtual Seminars with various experts and our members to learn more about Law, Medicine, and well-being

Face-to-face seminars and learning days

Connection based activities with members - coffee and walks each month

Mastery - Exposing our members to new experiences in a safe and controlled environment to help them build mastery and confidence

One on one support and guidance

Link in our members with various Organisations and Businesses to help them from injury to recovery

Encourage community awareness of the prevalence of mental health issues in Emergency Service workers

Advocate for Organisational/Departmental and Government change in this area

Our Emerge Model

EFFECTIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT- just like a physical injury, there is treatment available specifically for PTSD. Our main priority is to ensure that you are aware of, and have access to appropriate and effective medical treatment as early as possible

MATESHIP- building new social connections with people who have the same shared experiences, through organised activities and events

EMPOWERMENT - sharing tools, information, and resources to help you become stronger, helping you find purpose again, and reminding you that you are #neverjustanumber

REFERRALS - we have an extensive network of providers in the key areas of Law, Medicine and Well-being to help in all aspects of injury and recovery

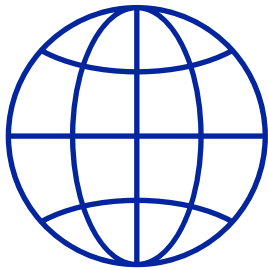
GUIDANCE - and support will always be offered by us throughout your journey so that you will never be alone

EDUCATION - offering educational and inspirational learning to navigate through injury and into your recovery

Contact us



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EMERGE FIT & WELL**



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