



1300 309 508



Counselling

FESSN counselling is completely voluntary and has the same **confidentiality** as seeing your GP.

All staff and volunteers and their immediate family can **access an initial four free sessions** (additional sessions are approved as appropriate).

Counselling is provided externally by a select network of **psychologists in private practice** across the state.

- You may refer yourself directly.
- You DO NOT need permission from anyone.
- No approval needed.
- Available to all QFES paid staff and volunteers and their immediate family.
- Four free sessions for each person.

Contact a local counsellor using the list of FESSN Counsellors at:

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/fessn

24/7 Telephone Counselling: 1800 805 980

Peer Support Officers (PSOs)

PSOs are QFES staff and volunteers trained to assist and support fellow workers with work or personal difficulties:

- understanding and acceptance of feelings and experiences
- referral to professional counselling, if required
- support after a critical incident.

Confidentiality

PSOs can disclose information only when any of the following conditions are met:

- it is a legal requirement to disclose information
- failure to disclose information would place the client or another person at risk of harm
- the worker's written consent has been obtained to release the information to another person or agency.

Contact a PSO via:

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/fessn/

Critical Incident Responses

Support for staff and volunteers before, during and following critical incidents, activations and deployments.

Contact a PSO or Counsellor via the FESSN website:

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/fessn/

FESSN

Fire & Emergency Services Support Network

Development > Support > Recovery for our people

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Website

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/fessn



FESSN FireCare – SESCare
1300 309 508



24-hour telephone counselling
1800 805 980



Email
FESSN@qfes.qld.gov.au

1300 309 508

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What is fatigue?

Fatigue is a feeling of constant tiredness or weakness and can be physical, mental or a combination of both. Fatigue can be a lack of energy and motivation (both physical and mental). This is more than the drowsiness that we get when we have missed valuable sleep.

Fatigue often has a gradual onset and the person may not be aware that they are low on energy until the effects of fatigue become more significant and present more of a risk to safety.

What does fatigue look like?

1. There may be lack of motivation or the ability to begin an activity;
2. Tiring easily
3. Mental fatigue or difficulty with concentration and memory to start or complete an activity

Signs of fatigue:

1. Tiredness when waking
2. Constant tiredness through the day
3. Unexpected napping
4. Taking excessive amounts of stimulants such as caffeine to remain alert
5. Fatiguing abruptly
6. Yawning a lot
7. Feeling tired every day
8. Decreased interaction with team members
9. Poor communication
10. Loss of sense of humour
11. Uncharacteristically moody, irritable, argumentative or socially withdrawn
12. Confusion
13. Poor problem solving
14. Forgetfulness
15. Slowed or reduced quality of decision-making
16. Reduced self-awareness including attention to hygiene and normal safety procedures

Recognise signs

Signs of potential stress

	Yellow	Red	Dark Red
Frustrated or tense			
Tired and/or fatigued			
Poor quality of sleep			
Poor concentration or memory			
Moods: feeling low, worried or up and down			
Lack of appetite or over-eating			
Can't switch off/racing thoughts			
Avoiding places or people more			
Withdrawing from others			
Low motivation and/or energy			
Negative thinking			
Compassion fatigue			
Feeling sick, or hot and flushed			
Headaches and muscle aches			
Nightmares			
Increased drinking, smoking or drug-taking			

When to seek help or more tools

	Yellow	Red	Dark Red
3-5 signs getting worse for more than 2 weeks			
You are regularly in the RED and/or tired			
Something is bothering you and your normal methods aren't resolving it			

My self-care strategies

What to do?

Pacing

- By trying to manage your responsibilities with as much control as possible, for example:
- Having regular rest breaks
- Planning your time and being organised
- Prioritising where to use your energy
- Knowing what your triggers are
- Working within your available resources

Take rest breaks

Resting requires:

Go somewhere quiet and sitting or lying down for a short period. It is better to take breaks often rather than having one long break.

Engaging in relaxation to reduce stress and improve energy levels.

'Power naps' for longer than 30 minutes during the day (ideally prior to 4pm)

Nutrition and hydration

Thinking about eating the right things at the right times, according to what you are doing, is important in managing fatigue.

Lollies, sugary cereals, white bread and sugary drinks may result in a short term increase in energy, followed by decreased energy and concentration.

Pasta, fruit and vegetables, slow down the release of sugar and so maintain energy levels. Balance these and protein from foods such as meat, fish, dairy products and nuts.

Hydration (particularly water) keeps the brain and body to work effectively. Drinking lots of caffeine, such as in tea, coffee and some fizzy drinks, may increase your alertness initially, but this is often short-lived.

Mindfulness

This is a technique that entails being consciously aware of the present moment and taking time to focus on your own thoughts, feelings and the things around you. Mindfulness can help people with managing their symptoms of fatigue. There are numerous free and low cost smart device Apps that can assist in learning or guiding Mindfulness.