

FROM: Geneva Healthcare Limited
DATE: For Immediate Release
AUTHOR: Cath Hunter - Clinical Psychologist, Gains@Geneva National Clinical Manager
SUBJECT: [Clinical Psychologist Offers Advice On Dealing With Trauma After Christchurch Tragedy](#)



You may be struggling to understand how a shooting could occur in New Zealand, and why such a terrible thing would happen. There may never be satisfactory answers to these questions. It's understandable and to be expected that for the time being, our slice of heaven feels less safe than it did last week.

We do know that it is typical for people to experience a variety of emotions following such a traumatic event. These feelings can include shock, sorrow, numbness, fear, anger, disillusionment, grief and more. Over the next few days and weeks, yourself and other loved ones around you may report problems such as trouble sleeping, concentrating, eating, or remembering even simple tasks. These are all common and should pass after a while.

Even if you weren't physically present during the attacks, you may still experience stress. This is especially true if someone you care about was close to or affected by the shooting. Exposure to details via the constant news stream and social media may also cause distress. We call this 'secondary trauma'.

Psychological First Aid is something we can all deliver and this can help alleviate painful emotions and reduce further harm from initial reactions in situations such as this.

Consider the following:

- Help people get their basic needs met where you can
- Listen to people who want to share their stories and emotions, remember there is no right or wrong way to feel. This can also be calming for those affected.
- Give practical suggestions that encourage people towards helping themselves and meeting their own needs
- People who talk about traumatic events have better outcomes

What not to do:

- Don't force people to share their stories with you, especially very personal details
- Don't give simple reassurances like "everything will be Ok"
- Don't tell people what you think they should be feeling
- Don't tell people why you think they have suffered by given reasons, or disclosing your own "stuff"
- Don't make promises that can't be kept
- Don't criticise existing services

While we want to watch the news to help us try and understand what has occurred, it can also make our collective grief more pronounced and increase stress in some. Most people find relief and comfort in talking about their thoughts and feelings related to these types of events. So, it's perfectly reasonable to seek help from friends, family, spiritual advisors or a professional.

Finally, it is important to remember that the impact of this tragedy will be long lasting for many, and supporting those affected is just as important in the weeks and months that follow, as well as now.

If you need to speak to someone, or if you are feeling distressed, you can call or text 1737. There are extra staff available and the number is available to everyone.

[About Geneva Healthcare](#)

We are New Zealand's trusted experts in aged care, illness, injury & disability support. Since 1996, we've been supporting New Zealanders to live their best life and thrive by keeping well, living independently and staying connected with their community. We are also the industry's specialists in Temporary Staffing and Permanent Recruitment services that support healthcare facilities nationwide and overseas with reliable and quality total staffing solutions. With a highly trained, multicultural workforce and offices nationwide, we are a leading force in the industry known for creativity and technology driven innovative solutions that enable us to be more responsive in the delivery of high quality healthcare and recruitment services.

[For more information please contact:](#)

0800 GENEVA or 0800 436 382 | info@genevahealth.com | www.genevahealth.com