Brisbane CBD Distress & Referral Pathways Guide

A practical guide for frontline staff, peer workers and community organisations

Purpose: Use this as a quick referral guide when someone presents in distress in or near Brisbane CBD. It is not a clinical assessment tool. Always follow your organisation's policies, duty of care requirements and escalation procedures.

Immediate Risk First

If you notice...	Recommended immediate action
Immediate danger, medical emergency, violence, serious injury, life-threatening risk	Call 000 immediately.
Urgent mental health crisis, suicidal thoughts, self-harm risk, severe distress	Call 1300 MH CALL on 1300 642 255, Lifeline on 13 11 14, or 000 if risk is immediate.

Quick Referral Cheat Sheet

Presenting issue	First referral option	Notes
Immediate danger, serious injury, violence or life-threatening risk	000	**Crisis / urgent.** Stay with the person if safe to do so.
Suicidal thoughts or acute mental health crisis	1300 MH CALL / Lifeline / 000 if immediate	**Crisis / urgent.** Use a warm handover where possible.
Young person in mental health crisis	Acute Response Team / Kids Helpline / 000 if immediate	**Youth / crisis.** Include parent, carer or guardian involvement where appropriate and safe.
Carer or family member needing support	ARAFMI Queensland / Carer Gateway / Carers Queensland	**Carer support.** Not a substitute for emergency or clinical crisis response.
LGBTIQ+ person seeking peer support	QLife / Transcend Australia / Charlee resources	**Peer / identity-affirming.** Use crisis services if there is immediate risk.
Multicultural person or carer needing support	Multicultural Connect Line / Culture Care	**Culturally responsive support.** Use interpreters where needed.
Person seeking peer-led suicide support	Roses in the Ocean / Brook RED / Alternatives to Suicide	**Peer-led / non-clinical.** Do not use instead of 000 for immediate risk.
Homelessness or sleeping rough	Micah Projects Home for Good Hub	**Housing pathway.** Use warm handover if the person is overwhelmed.

Alcohol or drug concern	ADIS 24/7 Alcohol and Drug Support	**AOD support.** Also supports family, friends and workers seeking advice.
Domestic, family or sexual violence	DVConnect / BDVS / 1800RESPECT	**Safety pathway.** Prioritise safety planning, privacy and confidentiality.
No food, money or basic essentials	Brisbane Relief Hub / Communify / Emergency Relief	**Practical support.** Check eligibility and opening hours first.
Multiple complex needs	Micah Projects / community centres / legal supports	**Service navigation.** Consider advocacy and coordinated support.

1. Mental Health & Suicide Risk

Common presentations: Suicidal thoughts or plans; Self-harm concerns; Panic, severe anxiety or overwhelm; Depression, psychosis, trauma response or grief.

Warm handover prompt: Wherever possible, offer to call the service with the person, support them to make the call, or help them write down what they want to say. Do not use peer warm lines or online-only resources where there is immediate life-threatening risk. **Organisation / service**	**Contact**	**What they can help with**
1300 MH CALL	1300 642 255	Queensland mental health triage and referral line, available 24/7.
Medicare Mental Health	1800 595 212	Mental health advice, navigation and referral support.
Crisis Support Spaces	Via Queensland Health / 1300 MH CALL	Hospital-based, welcoming support spaces for people in significant mental health distress, where clinically suitable.
Lifeline	13 11 14	24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention.

Additional mental health, crisis and peer supports

Organisation / service	**Contact**	**Best used for**
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467	Phone and online counselling for people affected by suicide, including people supporting someone else.
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	24/7 mental health support, information, online chat and coaching options.
13YARN	13 92 76	24/7 culturally safe crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
Roses in the Ocean Peer CARE Companion Warmline	1800 77 7337	Non-clinical peer-led suicide prevention call-back support for people with lived experience of suicide.
Acute Response Team at Children's Health Queensland	(07) 3068 2555	24-hour crisis support for children and young people under 18 with urgent mental health concerns, and their families and carers.

Community Care Unit	Various Queensland Health sites	Clinical care, rehabilitation and residential support for people with mental health issues who need ongoing support to live in the community.
Co-Responder Program	Ask for mental health co-responder when calling 000 for ambulance	Joint response from trained ambulance and mental health staff for acute mental health crisis situations.

2. Housing & Homelessness

Common presentations: Sleeping rough; Couch surfing; Eviction risk or tenancy stress; No safe accommodation; Family homelessness.

Organisation / service	Contact	What they can help with
Micah Projects - Home for Good Hub	(07) 3036 4444	First port of call for people experiencing homelessness or housing stress in inner Brisbane.
Micah Projects - Street to Home	Through Home for Good Hub	Outreach support for people sleeping rough.
Brisbane City Council - Safe Communities / PSLOs	07 3403 8888	Council pathway for people experiencing homelessness in public spaces.
Brisbane Housing Company	Website referral / enquiry	Affordable rental accommodation provider for people on low incomes.

3. Alcohol & Other Drugs (AOD)

Common presentations: Intoxication or drug-related distress; Withdrawal concerns; Substance dependence; Family impacted by AOD use; Request for detox, rehab or harm reduction advice.

Organisation / service	Contact	What they can help with
ADIS 24/7 Alcohol and Drug Support	1800 177 833	Free, confidential alcohol and drug counselling, information and referral across Queensland.
Biala Community Health Centre	270 Roma Street, Brisbane	AOD counselling, withdrawal and opioid treatment services.
QNADA Service Finder	Service Finder	Useful for identifying specialist AOD treatment and support options.

4. Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence (DFSV)

Common presentations: Fear of returning home; Coercive control; Physical, emotional or financial abuse; Sexual violence; Safety concerns for children or family members.

Organisation / service	Contact	What they can help with
DVConnect Womensline	1800 811 811	24/7 statewide crisis support, safety planning and emergency accommodation assistance.
Brisbane Domestic Violence Service	(07) 3217 2544	Brisbane-based DFV crisis support,

(BDVS)		practical assistance, safety planning, advocacy and referrals.
1800RESPECT	1800 737 732	National counselling and support for sexual assault, domestic and family violence.
Women's Legal Service Queensland	1800 957 957	Free legal and social work support for women experiencing DFV and related legal issues.

5. Financial Hardship & Basic Needs

Common presentations: No food or money; Unable to afford medication; Utility disconnection; Transport barriers; Cost-of-living pressure.

Organisation / service	Contact	What they can help with
Brisbane Relief Hub	07 3737 7520 | 136 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley	Food hampers, basic necessities, medical script subsidies, financial resilience support and referrals.
Communify Emergency Relief	(07) 3510 2700 / local centre	Food vouchers, fuel vouchers and partial bill assistance for eligible Brisbane residents.
Queensland Emergency Relief Program	Search by suburb/postcode	Government-funded financial and material support for people in immediate hardship.

6. Social, Legal & Complex Support Needs

Common presentations: Social isolation; Family conflict; Grief and loss; Tenancy, debt or legal issues; Multiple intersecting needs; Difficulty navigating services.

Organisation / service	Contact	What they can help with
Micah Projects	(07) 3029 7000 / after hours (07) 3036 4444	Integrated support and advocacy across homelessness, DFV, mental health, family support and complex needs.
Community Legal Centres Queensland	Online service finder	Referral pathway for tenancy, debt, fines, civil and other legal issues.
Communify Community Centres	Communify Website	Community connection, navigation, emergency relief, Food Relief, Financial Assistance Asylum Seeker Support and other practical support.

7. Carers, Families & Young People

Common presentations: Family distress; parents or carers seeking guidance; children or young people needing counselling; carers needing emotional or practical support; family members supporting someone with mental health concerns.

Referral note: These services are useful for carers, parents, families and young people needing support, information or counselling. If a child or young person is in immediate danger or acute crisis, use 000 or the Acute Response Team first. **Organisation / service**	**Contact**	**What they can help with**
ARAFMI Queensland	1300 554 660	24-hour support line for mental health carers, family and kin. Not a crisis service.
Carer Gateway	1800 422 737	Emotional and practical support for families and carers.
Carers Queensland	1300 747 636	Peak body and information pathway for carers in Queensland.
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800	Free confidential phone and online counselling for young people aged 5–25.
Parentline Queensland	1300 30 1300	Confidential phone and online counselling for parents and carers.
Raising Children	Online parenting resources	Evidence-informed parenting information and guidance for families and carers.
ReachOut parent/carer coaching	Online coaching	Free professional coaching for parents and carers of teenagers.

8. Disability, NDIS, Multicultural & LGBTIQ+ Supports

Common presentations: Psychosocial disability; NDIS questions; culturally and linguistically diverse community needs; LGBTIQ+ people seeking peer support or family support; need for culturally appropriate or identity-affirming referral options.

Referral note: Use these pathways when culturally responsive, disability-informed or identity-affirming support is important. If there is immediate risk, use crisis	**Contact**	**What they can help with**

services first and then connect to these supports as part of follow-up. **Organisation / service**		
NDIS National Contact Centre	1800 800 110	NDIS enquiries and urgent access or plan-related questions.
SANE Australia	1800 187 263	Support for people with complex mental health needs and psychosocial disability, including forums for families and carers.
Multicultural Connect Line	1300 079 020	Information, connection and support for multicultural communities.
Culture Care	World Wellness Group online pathway	Wellbeing support and empowerment for multicultural carers.
QLife	1800 184 527	Anonymous LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral, generally available afternoon to midnight.
Transcend Australia	Online resources	Information and support for families and carers of trans, gender diverse and non-binary children, young people and adults.

9. Peer-Led and Community Mental Health Organisations

Use when: The person would prefer non-clinical, community-based, peer-led or psychosocial supports, or needs ongoing connection beyond crisis response.

When not to use this pathway: Peer-led or community supports should not replace emergency, acute mental health or medical responses where there is immediate risk, serious injury, violence, or a need for urgent clinical assessment. **Organisation / service**	**Contact**	**What they can help with**
Brook RED	(07) 3343 9282	Peer-run community mental health support, including alternatives to suicide peer support in Queensland.
Wellways	1300 111 400	Carer services. Mental health, wellbeing and other support.

Wesley Mission Queensland	1800 448 448	Clinical and non-clinical mental health and suicide prevention services.
Neami National	Head office: (03) 8691 5300	Mental health and wellbeing supports, where locally available.
Anglicare	1300 114 397	Mental health, youth and family support services across parts of Queensland.

10. Staff Resources for Safe Conversations, Safety Planning & Referral Practice

Use when: Staff need guidance on safe conversations about suicide, safety planning, culturally safe suicide prevention resources, or lived-experience-led alternatives to clinical crisis responses. These are practice resources, not direct substitutes for emergency response, clinical assessment or duty-of-care escalation.

- Alternatives to Suicide peer support options include Brook RED in Queensland, Alt2Su NSW, LELAN in South Australia and DISCHARGED in Western Australia.
- Useful safe-conversation resources include Conversations Matter, ChatSafe, Mental Health First Aid Australia, Samaritans and The Suicide Response Project.
- Safety planning resources include Lifeline's Beyond Now safety planning app, HERE safety planning resources and Charlee LGBTQIA+ suicide safety resources.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention resources include 13YARN and the Manual of Resources.
- Roses in the Ocean provides lived-experience-led suicide prevention resources and peer support options.

Appendix: Source Links and Further Resources

This appendix keeps the supporting links and practice notes together for staff who want to verify service details, update contacts, or access further guidance.

Trauma-Informed Referral Practice Notes

- Ask permission before making a referral or calling another service, unless there is immediate risk requiring emergency action.
- Offer choices where possible: phone, online, in-person, peer-based, non-clinical or specialist pathways.
- Use warm handovers when the person feels overwhelmed, unsafe or unlikely to be able to repeat their story.
- Avoid asking for unnecessary detail, especially in DFV, sexual violence, trauma or suicide-related conversations.
- Document only what is necessary and follow internal privacy, consent and duty of care procedures.

Sources and Service Links

- Queensland Mental Health Commission - Find support services
- Queensland Health - How to get help with your mental health
- Queensland Health - Crisis support spaces
- Medicare Mental Health - Crisis links
- Micah Projects - Housing and Homelessness Services
- Brisbane City Council - Housing and homelessness support
- ADIS Queensland
- ADIS - Find a Service
- QNADA - Where to get help
- Queensland Government - Brisbane Domestic Violence Service listing
- Queensland Government - DFV local services finder
- Wesley Mission Queensland - Brisbane Relief Hub
- Communify - Emergency relief
- Queensland Government - Emergency Relief Program

Review note: Service availability, eligibility and operating hours change. Check details before distributing this guide or sending someone to a physical location.