

**13 December 2021**

Mental Health Council of Tasmania Media Release  
**Support for Tasmanians concerned  
about borders reopening**

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) have today launched a [new section of their #checkin website](#), designed to support Tasmanians who are worried about the imminent border reopening.

With the state borders having been closed to much of the country since early last year, many Tasmanians are looking forward to the opportunity to reunite with family and friends over the holiday season, while others are anxious about the impact that the border reopening will have. MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, said it's likely there are lots of Tasmanians who are feeling a mix of both.

"It's fair to say that many people will be looking forward to reopening, but also a little anxious about what impacts that will have on themselves, their family and their communities. It's normal to have concerns when things are changing - as humans we crave certainty and stability. So it's about managing these concerns, and balancing them with the things we're excited about."

The #checkin website was initially created and launched last year in response to the pandemic, providing Tasmanians with general information and resources to help them boost their mental wellbeing. With many now uncertain about what will happen when the borders reopen, MHCT have expanded the website to provide reassurance and advice to Tasmanians concerned about the border reopening

The new section of the MHCT #checkin website aims to normalise the range of feelings and concerns that Tasmanians are experiencing, and reassure them that they're not alone – there are other people in the community that feel the same way they do. The website also provides practical tips and advice to help people overcome their concerns, worries and anxiety.

"One thing that people can do is try and focus on the good things that the border reopening will bring. For some that might mean reuniting with friends or family that they haven't seen for a couple of years. It might be the increase in tourists and the positive impact that will have on their shops and businesses. For others it might even be the big events that we can look forward to getting out and enjoy during the Tassie summer," said Ms Digolis.

Simple activities that the website recommends include things like exercising, eating healthy, meditation and mindfulness, and connecting with friends and family, as ways to help Tasmanians stay positive and overcome their concerns. The website also guides people towards other support options, such as A Tasmanian Lifeline 1800 98 44 34, a telephone service which was set up to assist Tasmanians struggling with the many impacts of COVID-19.

With increasing focus on the mental health and wellbeing across the media and government, Ms Digolis said that it has been positive to see people reaching out and supporting the people close to them, and actively seeking to boost their own mental wellbeing.

"One thing is for sure – we've come a long way since the beginning of the pandemic. And while we're all battling a bit of pandemic fatigue, after witnessing the way Tasmanians have come together to support each other over the past couple of years, I'm confident that we'll continue to support ourselves, our friends, family and those that we care about, as we get through this uncertain period together."

Tasmanians who are worried about borders reopening can visit <https://checkin.org.au/opening-up/> to find tips and advice. They can also call 1800 94 44 34, 8am-8pm 7 days a week, to speak with a trained support worker about their concerns.

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**Please include the following crisis support services for any story regarding mental health or suicide:**

Lifeline: 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

beyondblue: 1300 22 4636 [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

**More information on safely reporting on mental illness or suicide can be found at:**

<https://mindframe.org.au/> and <https://www.tascharter.org/>