

# Blue Mountains Community Emergency Hub Guide

This Hub is a place for the community to coordinate your efforts to help each other during and after a disaster.

**Objectives of the Community Emergency Hub are to:**

- › Provide information so that your community knows how to help each other and stay safe.
- › Understand what is happening.
- › Solve problems using what your community has available.
- › Provide a safe gathering place for members of the community to support one another.

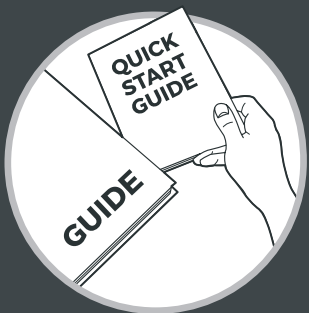


# About this guide

If you would like a copy  
of the design file for your  
community please contact  
WREMO@GW.GOV.TZ



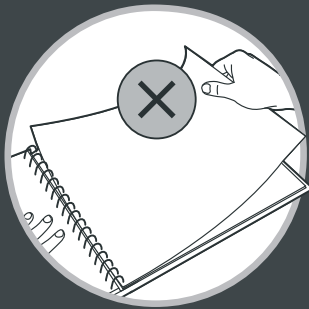
This guide provides information to help you set up and run the Community Emergency Hub.  
Take the time you need to set the Hub up properly, you don't have to open until you are ready.



A quick start version is included in the kit along with this full guide to help get you started.



Adapt the ideas in this guide to suit the emergency, and the facility.



Please do not separate the pages from this guide. There are separate copies of the role-specific pages in the Hub kit.



This guide has been customised for your local Community Emergency Hub and your community.  
Where a community has gone through a Community Response Planning Process, there is more detail about how to solve local problems with the local resources available. In communities that have not yet been through this process, there are questions which may assist you in finding solutions.



Some posters are also included, which can be displayed for visitors to the Hub.

People working at the Hub have no legal powers to take resources from anyone, or force anyone to do anything. All usual laws still apply in an emergency.

## Symbol reference guide



Repeat these actions after every aftershock or change in situation



Important information



Useful advice or information



Messages for the public



Use this guide to check off things as you complete them



Considerations for people with disabilities

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# Community Emergency Hub

During disasters, councils and emergency services aren't the only ones responding. Communities have many of the skills and resources needed to solve problems and help each other. Community Emergency Hubs are a way for people to work together to solve problems locally, while still coordinating with councils about really big problems.





## Objectives of the Hub

The Community Emergency Hub is a place where the community can coordinate their efforts to help each other during a disaster.

- 
- › Provide information so that your community knows how to help each other and stay safe.
- 
- › Understand what is happening.
- 
- › Solve problems using what your community has available.
- 
- › Provide a safe gathering place for members of the community to support one another.
- 

Providing the community with information helps everyone make informed decisions about how to help themselves, so even if you do not have the capacity to help in a more practical way, providing information is an important service.



## Information about the wider response

Emergency and council services are likely to be overwhelmed during a disaster and may not be able to respond to every issue immediately. However, for life-threatening situations, still try phoning 111.

- 
- › The Hub has a basic start-up kit consisting of an AM/FM radio, maps and a Civil Defence VHF radio that allows communication with the wider official response if phone lines are not working.
- 
- › Other community support groups may also self-organise in your area, and the official response may come in, if needed. Work with them to make sure everyone in need is reached, the workload is shared, and the overall response is efficient and coordinated.
- 
- › People working at the Hub have no legal powers to take resources from anyone, or force anyone to do anything. All laws still apply in an emergency.
-

# Facility map

***Blue Mountains Hall, Avian Cres.***

*Under discussion -  
A map of the venue is still to be sourced. Areas of the venue available for use as a Community  
Emergency Hub, and areas that could be hazardous and should be avoided are to be confirmed.*

Please respect this facility and the contents inside. This is a privately owned property that has been offered to the community for disaster response.

# 1

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# Accessing the Hub

For your safety, always work with other people.

# Check that the environment around the facility is safe

Are there any potential hazards that present a health and safety risk?

Flooding or slips which threaten the facility

Fires nearby

Smell of gas or sewage

Exposed electrical wires

Is the facility in a tsunami evacuation zone?

If the area is not safe, find another location. Leave a note to say where you are relocating to, and why, to help keep others from harm. It could be written on a footpath in chalk, or left somewhere visible near the entrance to the building.

## Locate keys

- › The location of the lockbox is marked on the Facility Map in this guide.
- › The lockbox holds the facility key and alarm code (if applicable).
- › Other people in the community may have keys for the facility, such as the building owner, staff, Board of Trustees, or neighbours.



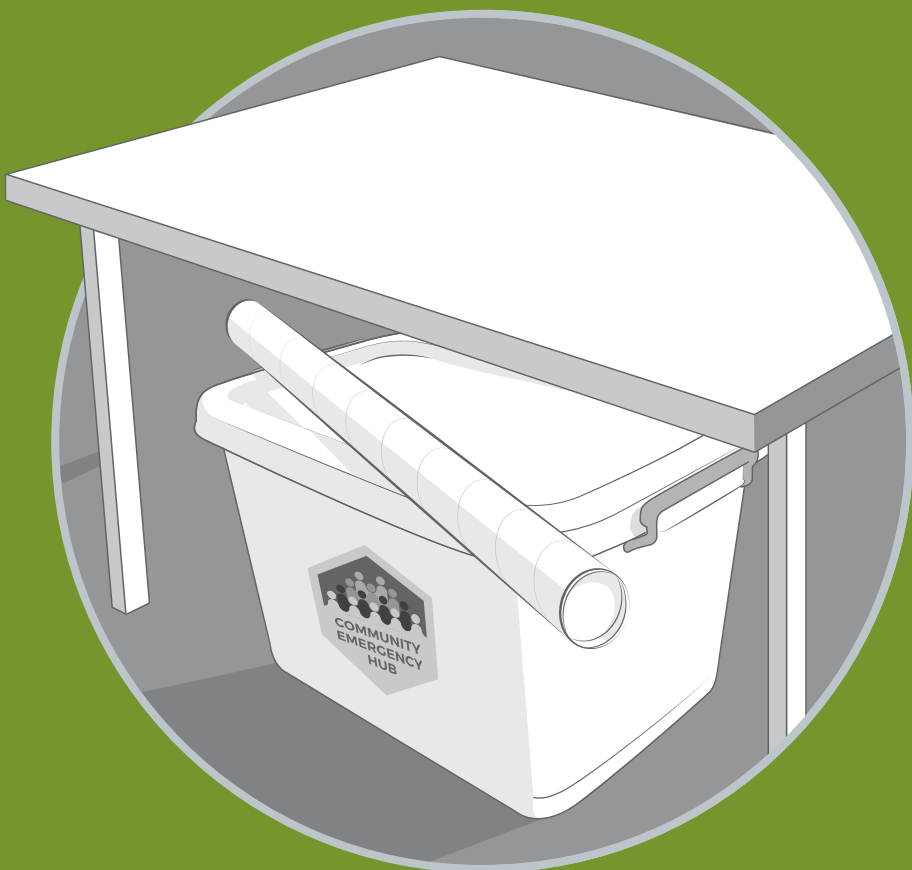


# Check that the buildings are safe

- › Check the outside and inside of the buildings to make sure they are safe enough to use. Does there appear to be any structural damage?
- › When you get inside, look for hazards that might not have been visible from outside the buildings.



If there are any concerns, find another location. Leave a note to say where you are relocating to, and why, to help keep others from harm. It could be written on a footpath in chalk, or left somewhere visible on a building.



# Locate the Community Emergency Hub kit

The location of the kit is marked on the Facility Map in this guide.

You are looking for a plastic tub and a cardboard tube.

If the kit is damaged or you cannot get to it safely, find alternative or additional equipment from within your community.

## The Hub kit contains:

- › A copy of this guide
- › Civil Defence VHF radio
- › Stationery
- › AM/FM radio
- › Maps

# Identify a safe working space

## Keep in mind:

- › The facility needs to be easily accessible – remember some people may be in wheelchairs, have buggies/pushchairs, or have limited mobility.
- › The Hub may need to increase or decrease in size during the time it is open, depending on the community's needs.
- › Somewhere with extra rooms or additional buildings nearby will be useful if you have many people coming to the Hub.
- › If the radio is required, this will need a quiet room away from the public.

## Clean up



### Tidy up the rooms you plan to use to make them safe to work in.

Clean up rubbish and broken items

Move furniture to free up space

Secure any items that might fall in aftershocks




Ensure the space is accessible by everyone, keep walkways clear and consider those with mobility and visual difficulties.



If more people come to the Hub while you are setting up, encourage them to help, if they can.



# 2

## IN THIS SECTION

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# Working as a team

# Bring everyone together

Once you have tidied up the available spaces, but before you start setting up tables and noticeboards, gather together everyone available to help run the Hub to talk about what you are actually there to do and achieve.

The Community Emergency Hub is a place where the community can coordinate their efforts to help each other during a disaster.

## You are here to:

- › Provide information to the public so that the community knows how to help each other and stay safe.
- › Understand what is happening by gathering information.
- › Solve problems using the resources and skills available in the community.
- › Provide a safe gathering place for members of the community to support one another.

Providing the community with information helps everyone make informed decisions about how to help themselves. Even if you do not have the capacity to help in a more practical way, providing information is an important service.




# Appoint a Hub Supervisor

Appoint someone in the group to be the initial Hub Supervisor. It is important to have someone looking at the big picture of what you are trying to achieve. Consider both the immediate needs and potential assets in your community as well as what the anticipated challenges might be in the days to come.

Remember that you are forming a team. While it is useful to have one person overseeing the Hub, decisions should be made as as a group and must be inclusive of newcomers who want to help.


The Supervisor may change as numbers grow and someone with more experience is collectively agreed on.





Make sure everyone knows who the Supervisor is and that they are easily identifiable.


# Assign roles


Each of the following roles should be assigned. If there are more roles than people available to help some people may have two or more roles. Information on each of these roles can be found on the following pages.


**Hub Supervisor**


**Information Coordination**


**Public Information**


**Reception**

**Needs and Offers**

**Community Space**

**Communications**

**Facility Maintenance**



These roles are priority positions and should be filled first if you have limited people.

## Role lanyards

Lanyards for each of the key roles are included in the Community Emergency Hub kit. These hang around the neck of the volunteers responsible for that position.

The lanyards have the position titles on the front to identify the role to other people in the Hub. The lanyards also include a list of tasks on the back to remind the person of what tasks they need to do in that role.



## Hub Supervisor

The Hub Supervisor oversees all activities in the Community Emergency Hub to make sure the objectives are being met and ensure the Hub runs safely, smoothly and efficiently.

This includes making sure all the jobs are being done, that basic needs are addressed, and significant decisions are discussed and agreed with the wider team. The Hub Supervisor may need extra help to achieve these objectives, depending on the size and duration of the emergency, so may need to allocate extra people to help oversee the running of the Hub.

### Tasks:

#### Oversee the running of the Hub

- › Make sure roles are allocated, decisions are made by the wider team, and people or groups aren't working in isolation.

#### Make sure everyone has what they need to do their job

- › If they need more tables and chairs, etc., talk to the Facility Maintenance person. If they need more people to help with a task, ask if there are other members of the community willing to help.

#### Organise regular team meetings

- › Make sure that the Hub staff work as a team.

#### Keep records of all major decisions that are made

- › Others may need your records to understand what has happened and what has been done about it. This is useful for shift change-over.

#### Make sure everyone takes regular and adequate breaks and are fed and hydrated

- › If people don't look after their own needs they are more likely to suffer stress. If someone is finding the work stressful or looks stressed, they should consider changing roles, taking a break or going home.

#### Create a roster for people working in the Hub

- › Consider the daily opening hours, the length of time it will be open and make a roster. Ensure no one works for too long and everyone has opportunities to take breaks and rest.

### Close the Hub overnight when appropriate

- › Make sure all equipment is locked up securely.
- › Use signage to say that the Hub is closed and when it will reopen.
- › Advise the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) that the Hub has closed for the night and when it will reopen.

### Close the Hub when the community no longer needs it

- › It is important that the following happens:
  - Use signage to tell the community that the Hub will no longer open, and provide information on where they can go to find assistance, e.g. a council-run facility.
  - Advise the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) you are closing.
  - Clean up all areas. Return any moved furniture and equipment.
  - Collect together all of the records for the event and leave them in the Hub container for collection. The Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) may need them for analysis.

## Work with any media that show up

**The media can be a useful resource for sharing information with the wider community.**

- › The sort of information you can provide:
  - Anything they can see (such as we are open, weather conditions).
  - General information (such as we are really busy, we are quiet, we have had lots of offers of community help).
  - Public information you have received from the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).
- › Do NOT provide:
  - Personal information (people’s names, addresses, etc.).
  - Any private or confidential information you have received.
  - Details of any deaths or injuries.
  - Addresses of evacuated homes.



The group of people in our community with impairments is wide and diverse. In fact, one in five people in New Zealand has some form of impairment. These include hearing, vision, physical, mobility or cognitive impairments. Ensure that the Hub caters for these different needs so that nobody is left behind. Make sure that all public information messages, signage and directions are clear and easy to read. Ensure the Hub is easy to get around for those with mobility challenges.

## Legal Information

If there is a life-threatening situation saving life is the priority, even in an emergency the law and usual rules still apply.

If a State of Emergency is declared, it allows the Regional and Local Controllers (local government) to have the legal ability to prioritise needs, and direct or restrict resources and activities. This may include recognised groups or organisations being given authority to do specific tasks or acquire specific resources to help the community. These instructions will come directly from the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Make sure you keep a record of them.

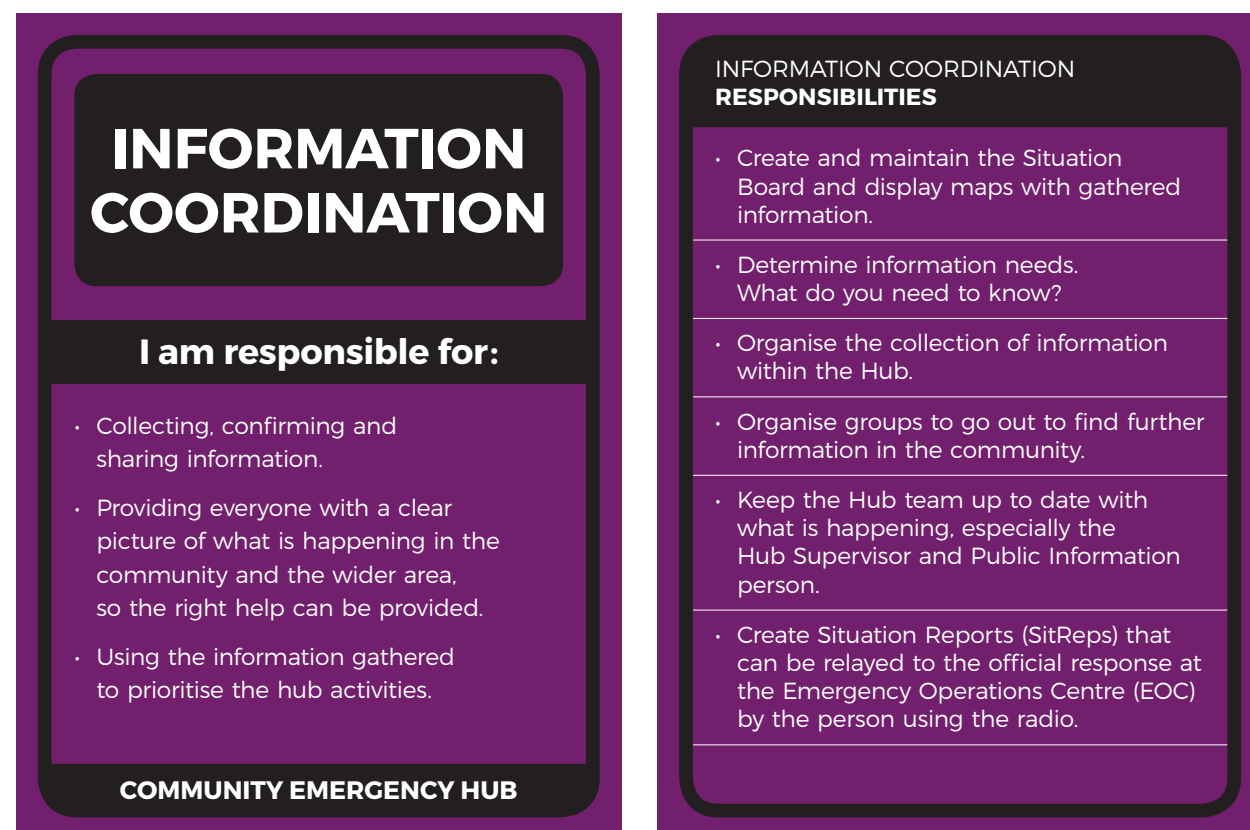


**If you do not have any special legal powers in your normal life, you don’t have any in a State of Emergency either.**



If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Hub or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information Coordination team.





## Information Coordination

To know what help is needed and where, you need to know what is happening in your community.

The Information Coordination person or team coordinates all the information coming into the Hub. They collect, display and try to confirm this information to present a clear picture of what is happening in the community. This information can then be used to prioritise help where it is needed the most.

Information needs to be gathered from any sources available, including people coming into the Hub, and displayed for the Hub team to work with. Some information will be displayed on a Situation Board to build the overall picture, some will be displayed for the public, and some information will need to be communicated back to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

## Tasks:

### Create and maintain the Situation Board

- › Use materials from the kit and other available resources (whiteboards, sheets of paper, pens, tape, etc.). Use big headings to organise the space.
- › Display the maps from the Community Emergency Hub kit on the walls or a table.
- › Information for the board and maps should include:
  - Known hazards (e.g. slips, liquefaction areas, flooding, contamination or other at risk areas)
  - Status of lifelines (tap water, wastewater, stormwater, power, gas, telecommunications, road and rail networks)
  - Latest weather reports (if available and relevant)
- › Clearly mark if information isn't confirmed.

### Write down what type of information you want to know

- › There may be information that you don't have but which would be useful. Brainstorm what this information is and where you could find out.
- › What information would help you know what's happening? For example, if a specific bridge is flooded or a road is open.
- › Are there areas of the community you haven't heard from? If possible, try and check in on these areas. Even if they don't need help, they may not have known about the Hub and may be able to offer help.

### Organise someone to collect information from people as they arrive

- › When appropriate, ask new arrivals:
  - where they have come from and what is happening in their area
  - what they saw on the way to the Hub
- › This can be as simple as asking questions like "What street did you come from? What was going on there? Does anyone there need help?" etc.



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Suggested Situation Board layout

› **Date & Time**

› When did you find out about it?

› **Location**

› Where is it? Record an address if possible.

› **What's happening**

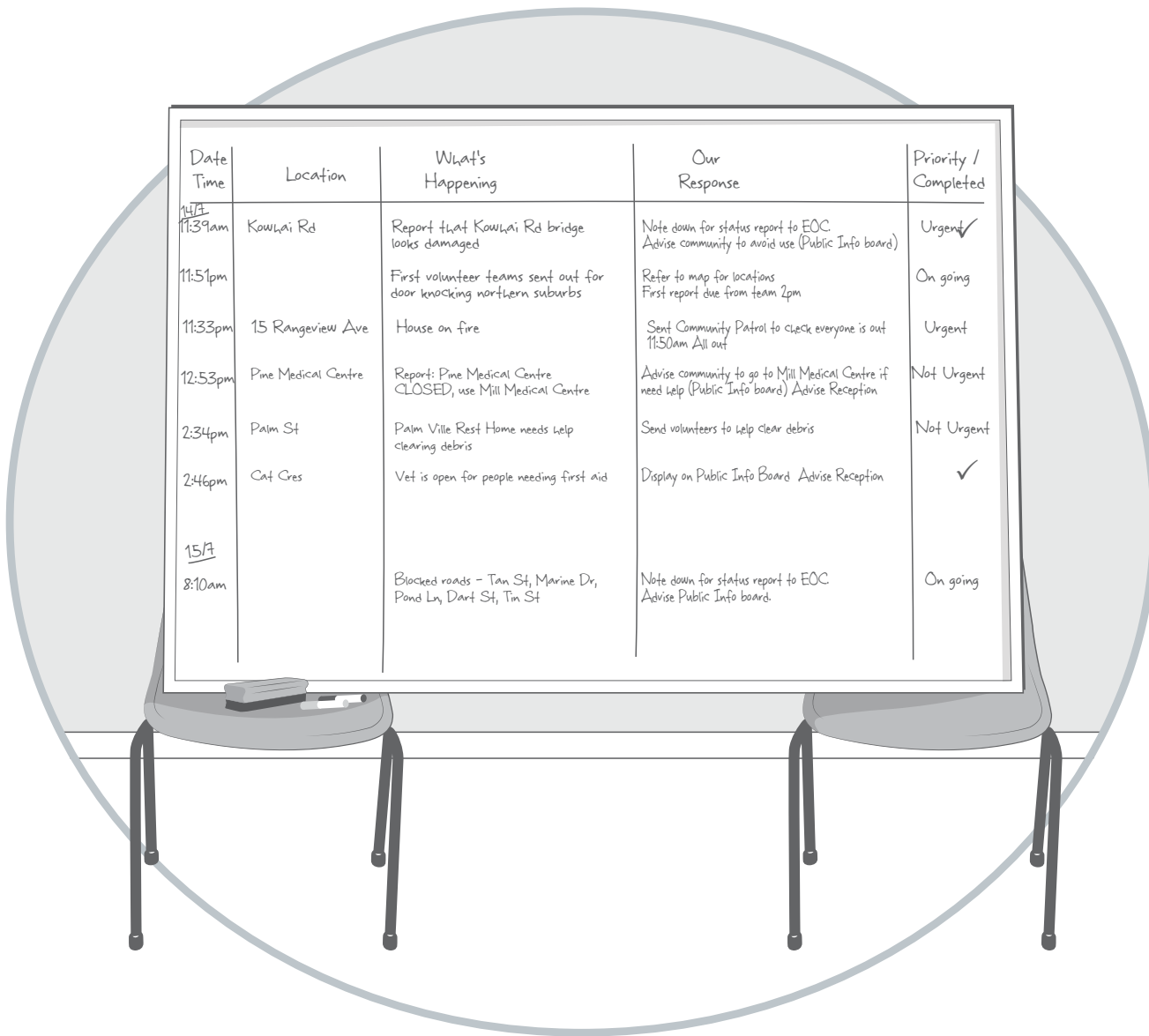
› Brief summary of issue or information reported.

› **Our response**

› What you have done or plan to do about it, and who is taking care of it?

› **Priority / Completed**

› Lots of things may feel important, what needs to happen first? Mark when completed.



Finding more information

- › If you haven't been provided with enough information, you will need to send out people to find or confirm that information for you.
- › What further assistance do you need? A group from the Hub can walk or drive around the community to find out what you need to know. Consider using already established groups to gather information.
 

– Neighbourhood Support or similar groups could collate information from their streets.

– Does your area have a Community Patrol, or a 4WD club for accessing hard-to-reach areas? Groups like these may have vehicles and radio communications, which could be useful.
- › Plan where these groups will be going and arrange a time that they will be due back. People should not go out by themselves. It is safer to go in a group.
- › Use mobile phones or portable radios to remain in contact with the Hub if possible. Liaise with the Communications team so they know what teams have gone where, and how to stay in touch.

Hub Status Report

The Hub Status Report is a way of keeping the Emergency Operations Centre up to date about what is happening in your community, as well as requesting further assistance. Send an initial Status Report as soon as practicable to advise that you are open, and then update approximately every four hours, or as requested by the Emergency Operations Centre.

The Emergency Operations Centre will want to know about power and water outages, main roads that are blocked, buildings with significant damage, people injured, and other major impacts. They are primarily interested in the challenges your community cannot deal with yourselves and extra assistance you need.

There is a separate information sheet in the Hub kit with contact details for the local Emergency Operations Centre and an outline of the Hub Status Report.



## Public Information

Information and advice help community members understand what has happened and how they can look after themselves.

The Public Information Board is the main display of new and important information that the community can use.

Some people may only come to the Hub for information, so the Public Information Board should be visible, close to the entrance of the Hub, and be updated regularly.

### Examples of important information include:

- › Known hazards (e.g. evacuation zones, liquefaction areas, slips, flooded or at risk areas, contaminated water).
- › Latest weather reports as available.
- › Status of tap water, wastewater (sewerage), stormwater, power, gas, telecommunications, transport networks including main and local roads, rail, etc.
- › Key safety messages and advice (e.g. stay away from coastal areas or flood waters, boil water).

The Public Information person or team is responsible for maintaining the Public Information Board with relevant up-to-date information and advice. Make sure information has been confirmed as accurate.

### Tasks:

#### Put up the posters

- › Put up posters (found in Hub kit) in the appropriate places around the Hub.

#### Work with the Information Coordination team

- › Work with the Information Coordination team to identify information that would be of interest to the public.

#### Position the Public Information Board somewhere clearly visible to people coming into the center, such as near the entrance

- › The board should be out of the way enough that people reading it don't obstruct others.
- › Make sure the Public Information Board is protected from rain and wind, and if possible out of direct sun.

Update the Public Information Board as new information becomes available from official updates and what is known to be happening in the community

- › Mark each piece of information with the time and date so people know how old the information is.
- › Write clearly to make sure it is easy to read. Use large print and a dark marker.
- › If information isn't confirmed, either don't put it up, or clearly state that it hasn't been confirmed.



Make sure that all messages on the Public Information Board are in large font, clear and easy to read for those that may have vision difficulties.

Work with any media that show up

- › The media can be a useful resource for sharing information with the wider community. The sort of information you can provide:
  - Anything they can see (such as we are open, weather conditions).
  - General information (such as we are really busy, we are quiet, we have had lots of offers of community help).
  - Public information you have received from the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).
- › Do NOT provide:
  - Personal information (people's names, addresses, etc.).
  - Any private or confidential information you have received.
  - Details of any deaths or injuries.
  - Addresses of evacuated homes.
- › Direct the media to the Hub Supervisor if you are unsure.



If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Hub, or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information Coordination team.



## NEEDS AND OFFERS

**I am responsible for:**

- Linking up needs and offers – linking people in need of assistance with other people who are able to offer help.
- Updating the Needs and Offers board to link up problems with solutions.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB

### NEEDS & OFFERS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Address all life-threatening needs immediately.
- Set up display boards for Needs and Offers.
- All Needs and Offers posted on the boards need to have:
  - Date & time
  - A clear description of what is needed
  - Name and contact details of the person or organisation posting the message
- Check the new offers or requests for assistance to see whether an existing need or offer matches.
- Display new requests for assistance (Needs) on the board.
- Remove requests when the need has been matched with an offer.
- Display new offers of assistance (Offers) on the board.
- Remove offers when they have been used up or are no longer available.

Some communities have already done some prior planning around these problems, as part of their local Community Response Planning process, and potential solutions and offers from key organisations are included in Section 5 - Your community's response. For those areas that haven't been through this process, that section includes questions, which may help you find local solutions.

## The Needs and Offers Boards

The Needs and Offers Boards are a tool for managing and tracking what the community needs, what offers of assistance have been made by individuals or organisations, and matching them up when a solution presents itself.

People in need of assistance go to the Needs Board and people who have a resource or skill go to the Offers Board. The people managing the boards match up the needs with the offers of assistance coming from the community. For example, people needing accommodation are matched with people offering spare rooms in their house.

Someone will need to manage these boards, and might need extra assistance depending on the scale and duration of the event.

## Needs and Offers

One of the objectives of the Hub is to solve problems using the resources and skills the community has available – meeting people's needs with the community's offers of assistance.

There are some fundamental basic needs common to every disaster that will need to be addressed. Preservation of life is the highest priority, including rescue and medical attention to those who are injured, and checking on people to make sure they are safe. The other basic needs are shelter, water, food, and sanitation. You may also need to deal with the wellbeing of pets or livestock, and other issues that may come up.



## Tasks:

### Address all life-threatening needs immediately

- › Attempt to contact the emergency services by phoning 111.
- › Make sure the Hub Supervisor is advised as soon as possible.
- › Pass the information to the Emergency Operations Centre through the communications team.

### Set up display boards for Needs and Offers

- › Set up display boards near the entrance to the Hub marked “Offers” and “Needs”. You may also need tables to make it easier to collect and write requests and offers.

### Use notes to record and display community offers and requests for assistance

- › Make sure people record:
  - Date & time (especially if the offer or need expires – e.g. a place to stay until Monday).
  - Name and contact details of the person or organisation posting the message, or where to find them.
  - A clear description of what is needed or what is offered.

### Match offers with requests for assistance

- › Check the new offers or requests for assistance to see whether you know of an existing need or offer that matches.

### Display requests for assistance (Needs) or offers of assistance (Offers) on the boards

- › Group Needs by themes such as labour required, accommodation, clean-up equipment etc.
- › Group Offers by themes such as equipment, manual labour, shelter, food, water, etc.

### Keep the boards up to date

- › Remove requests when the need has been matched with an offer.
- › Note how the problem was solved, it may be useful again. Do not destroy completed notes, keep them for the Hub records.
- › Remove offers when they have been used up or are no longer available.

### Significant Offers or Needs

- › In some cases offers may be large (e.g. from a supermarket) or be a critical resource or skill needed by many.
- › Requests for assistance could also be large or life-threatening (e.g. people needing rescue). These requests should be forwarded to the Hub Supervisor to make sure the community response is coordinated and the Emergency Operations Centre is informed.



If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Hub, or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information Coordination team.





## Community Space

People may want to be at the Hub for many reasons. People will be there because they have a specific need, can offer assistance, or are wanting information, others may just want general support, comfort or company at a time of stress. The Community Space is a dedicated place where people can seek company, wait for help or resources, or hang out until needed.

### Tasks:

#### Set up the Community Space

- › Have the Community Space as near to the rest of the Hub as possible. Ideally it will be a quiet space in a separate room away from the information boards. This could include the corner of a large space such as school hall or community centre.
- › Make sure that the space has seating and is accessible to people with mobility impairments.

#### Put up clear signage

- › Put up clear signage so people can find their way to the Community Space.

#### Be visible so people know who to approach if they need information or assistance

- › Wear the lanyard or use some other form of identification.

#### If anyone appears distressed, comfort them as you would a distressed friend, but avoid counselling them (don't try to talk them into being happier)

- › A guide on providing comfort is on the next page.

#### Set out refreshments

- › If refreshments are available, set them out and keep the area tidy so people can help themselves.

#### Keep a record

- › Keep a record of any key actions or decisions you or your team makes.

With all the excitement taking place during an emergency, the needs of people who are directly affected can sometimes be overlooked. A smile goes a long way in stressful situations. Treat people how you would want to be treated yourself.

## Providing comfort

While working in the Hub you should only provide comfort, do not attempt to counsel unless qualified to do so. You can provide comfort to people by listening to them, giving them information about the situation and helping them with their practical needs. It is important to provide an environment where affected people can maintain their dignity while receiving assistance.

### When providing comfort, it is important that you:

- › Help people feel in control of themselves by letting them make their own decisions.
- › Help them recover their composure in their own way and in their own time. Often it is best to stay quietly with them until the emotion subsides.
- › Listen respectfully to everything they say, show it is important to you and that you wish to understand them.
- › Encourage them to think about who else they can get support from.
- › Take note of what people need; they may not be able to express or ask for it. You may be able to find solutions from within the Hub.
- › Don't take anything they say personally, think of it as a message about how they feel.

### When providing comfort, it is very important that you avoid some actions:

- › Don't order people around or tell them to do things without explaining why.
- › Don't tell them not to worry, that it could have been worse or that others are worse off.
- › Don't talk down or patronise them.
- › Don't be distracted when they are talking to you.
- › Don't try to talk them out of their feelings.
- › Don't reassure them that everything will be all right, when it may not be.
- › Don't react to their anger or other emotions personally.
- › Don't separate them from other people they are with.
- › Don't get sentimental or excited with them.
- › Don't deny them privacy or independence when they need it.

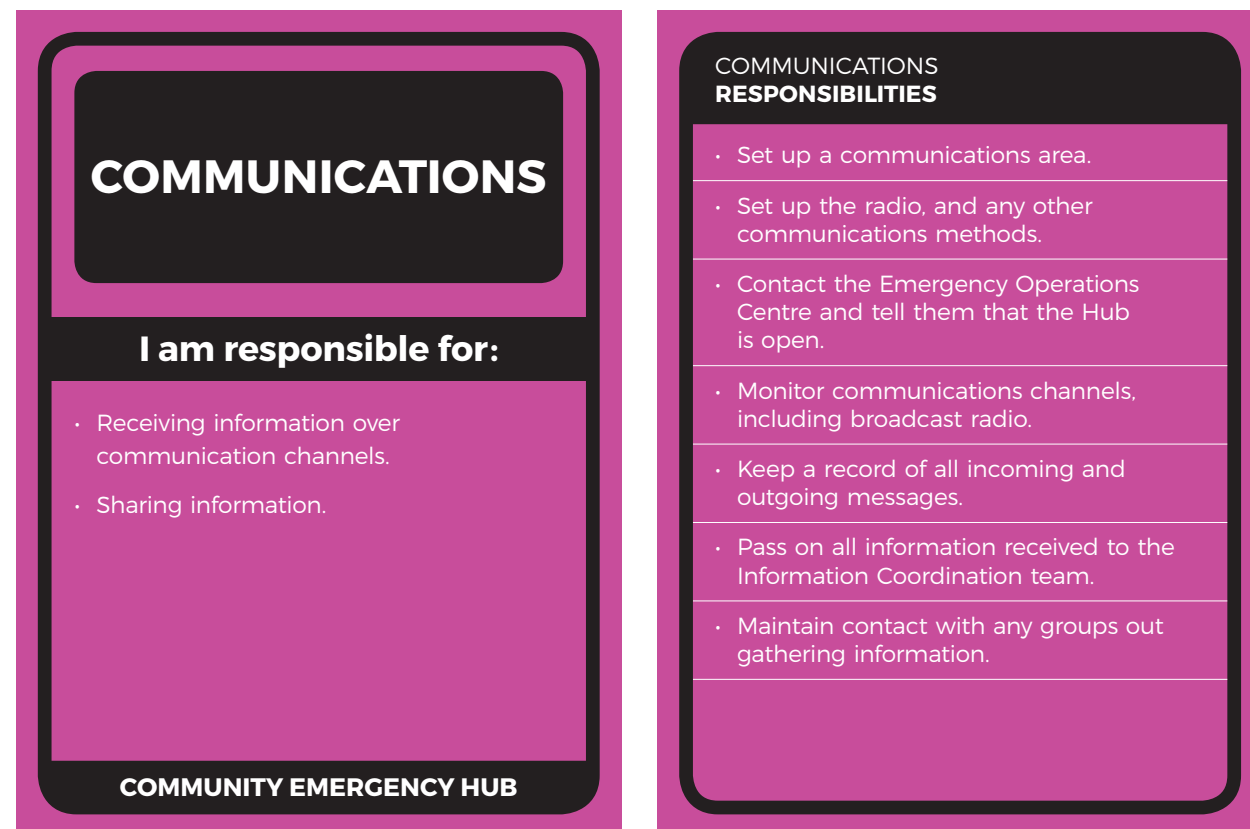
Based on advice from the Ministry of Health



The group of people in our community with impairments is wide and diverse. In fact, one in five people in New Zealand has some form of impairment. This could include a hearing, vision, physical, mobility or cognitive impairment. Ensure the community space caters for these different needs. Keep the community space inviting, well lit and easy to access.



If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Hub, or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information Coordination team.



# Communications

The Hub plays a critical role in keeping the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) informed of what’s going on in your community, so the official response can provide support where possible.

The Communications role feeds information to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and receives important information from the Emergency Operations Centre to be relayed to the Hub and the public (e.g. important safety messages, road closures etc.).

The Communications person should monitor the Civil Defence VHF radio and communicate via the radio, or preferably by phone and email if normal systems are still working.

The Communications person also works with any teams out gathering information if communication is possible while they are away from the Hub.

The Communications person needs to be able to speak clearly and record information quickly and neatly.

The Communications area needs to be set up in a quiet place, away from noise and distractions, but close enough to remain in constant contact with the rest of the Hub.

## Tasks:

### Set up an area for communications

- › Establish a quiet space/separate room to set up the communications area. This could be for phone communication if available, or VHF radio if the telecommunications network is down.

### Set up the radio if required

- › Instructions on using the Civil Defence VHF radio are kept with the radio, in the Hub kit.

### Contact the Emergency Operations Centre via phone, text message, email or radio and tell them that the Hub is open

- › The Emergency Operations Centre may want to know:
  - The impacts of the emergency in your community.
  - Do you have power, phone or email?
  - Are roads blocked, or houses damaged?
  - Are there people injured or in need of help?
  - What further assistance you need.
- › Only provide a brief summary of key issues to the EOC unless asked for more specifics. Refer to the Hub Status Report in the Information Coordination section.



**Monitor communication channels while the Hub is open so no messages are missed**


- › This includes listening to broadcast radio to hear what public messaging is shared with the country or region.
- › Keep a record of all incoming and outgoing messages – include the date and time. Include details such as who the message is from, the date and the time it was received.

**Pass on all information received**

- › Pass on all information received to the Information Coordination team.

**Maintain contact with any groups out gathering information**

- › Talk to the Information Coordination team about how many groups are out, how you might be able to contact them, when they are due back, etc.



A separate guide for operating your Hub’s Civil Defence VHF Radio is in the Hub kit.

# RECEPTION

**I am responsible for:**

- Creating a reception area at the front entrance to the Hub.
- Providing a friendly welcome to visitors coming to the Hub and directing them to relevant parts of the Hub according to their needs.
- Making sure volunteers are identifiable by a lanyard, coloured vest or name tag.

**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB**

## RECEPTION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Greet people as they come in the door, and direct them to the part of the Hub that can best deal with their needs.
- Stay calm at all times – expect people to be upset, frustrated or even angry.
- Be honest if you don't know the answer. Try to connect them with someone who might know.
- Try and keep the Reception area tidy and clear of rubbish and debris.
- Ensure that signage remains clearly visible.
- Ensure that Reception volunteers are identifiable.

## Tasks:

- › Greet people as they come in the door, and direct them to the part of the Hub that can best deal with their needs.
- › Stay calm at all times – expect people to be upset, frustrated or even angry.
- › Be honest if you don't know the answer. Try to connect them with someone who might know.
- › Try and keep the reception area tidy and clear of rubbish and debris.
- › Make sure that Community Emergency Hub signage remains easy to see.
- › Make sure that the Reception team is identifiable.



See guidelines for providing comfort in the Community Space section on the previous page.

## Reception

People coming to the Hub should be met on arrival by a friendly person who can direct them to the area which can best meet their needs.

The Reception team needs to be welcoming, able to explain what the Hub is for, and what it can and can't provide.

Reception needs to be located at the front entrance to the Hub. Make sure that the Reception team is clearly identifiable by lanyards, coloured vests, or name tags. People will be looking for some obvious sign of who is there to help them.



# Facility Maintenance

People will feel better about being there and asking for help if the place is tidy and not chaotic.

Make sure the Hub is kept clean, tidy, and is safe to work in. It should be checked after every aftershock or any other environmental changes that might affect the safety of the building.

## Tasks:

**Clean up any hazards – broken glass, debris, and rubbish to avoid people being injured. Where possible, use protective equipment to avoid injury.**

- › Keep paths and walkways clear.
- › Help find resources to make the Hub run smoothly – tables and chairs and other useful equipment from the facility.
- › Collect up general rubbish and make sure there are bins for disposal.
- › Set up a hygiene station for handwashing with a bucket of water with bleach/detergent/soap if better facilities are not available.
- › Find or make a toilet facility.
- › Make sure tea, coffee, and water are regularly refreshed for staff.
- › Make the Hub weatherproof where possible.

## FACILITY MAINTENANCE

I am responsible for:

- Ensuring the Hub is kept clean and tidy.
- Ensuring the Hub is safe to work in.
- Checking the Hub after every aftershock or any other environment changes that might affect the building.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB

### FACILITY MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES


- Clean up any hazards – broken glass, debris, and rubbish to avoid people being injured. Always use protective equipment to avoid injury.
- Keep paths and walkways clear.
- Help find resources to make the Hub run smoothly – tables and chairs and other useful equipment from the facility.
- Collect up general rubbish and make sure there are bins for disposal.
- Set up a hygiene station for handwashing with a bucket of water with bleach/detergent/soap if better facilities are not available.
- Find or make a toilet facility.
- Ensure tea, coffee, and water is regularly refreshed for staff.
- Make the Hub weatherproof where possible.



**YOUR SAFETY IS PRIORITY – IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHING SAFELY, DON'T DO IT**



**YOUR SAFETY IS PRIORITY – IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHING SAFELY, DON'T DO IT.**



If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Hub, or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information Coordination team.

# 3

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## Setting up

Use this advice and the diagram on the next page to understand how the Hub could work.

Now that you have assigned the roles, the different Hub areas need to be set up. Each role can focus on setting up their particular area, but some areas are easier than others, so help each other as needed. Key areas to set up first are the **Public Information Board** and **Coordination area**.

### Make sure all roles are filled

✓

Are the following roles filled?

Hub Supervisor		Needs and Offers	
Information Coordination		Community Space	
Public Information		Communications	
Reception		Facility Maintenance	

★

People may have more than one role until others who are able to help arrive.

### Set up a Public Information Board

✓

Set up a noticeboard somewhere near the front to display important information to the community.

- › Ensure the **Public Information Board** is easy to see. If appropriate this could be outside.

### Set up an area for Hub and Information Coordination

✓

Establish a Situation Board (see page 15).

- › The Situation Board maintains an overall picture of what is happening and records the actions taken or tasks that have been assigned or still need to be done.
- › The Coordination area assesses, verifies and distributes important community information to the Public Information Board and Emergency Operations Centre (as and when appropriate).
- › Some information in the Coordination area could be sensitive, find a quiet space away from the general public (perhaps in an adjacent room).

## Set up an area to collect Needs and Offers



Towards the front of the facility, set up display boards marked “Offers” and “Needs”.



## Set up an area for Communications



Establish a quiet space close to the Coordination area for telephone or VHF radio communications.

If there is no electricity, find a car battery or alternate power source, such as a generator.



- › The Communications space needs to be somewhere quiet.

## Set up a Community Space



Set up quiet space away from the information boards for people to rest, seek companionship, wait for assistance/information or a volunteer role.

Make sure that the space is accessible to people with mobility impairments and has some seating.



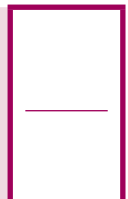
- › The Community Space could be in a separate room.
- › If there are a lot of people around, try and figure out why they are hanging out and find an appropriate space for them.

## Set up a toileting and hygiene station



Establish a hand washing area.

Find or make a toilet facility.

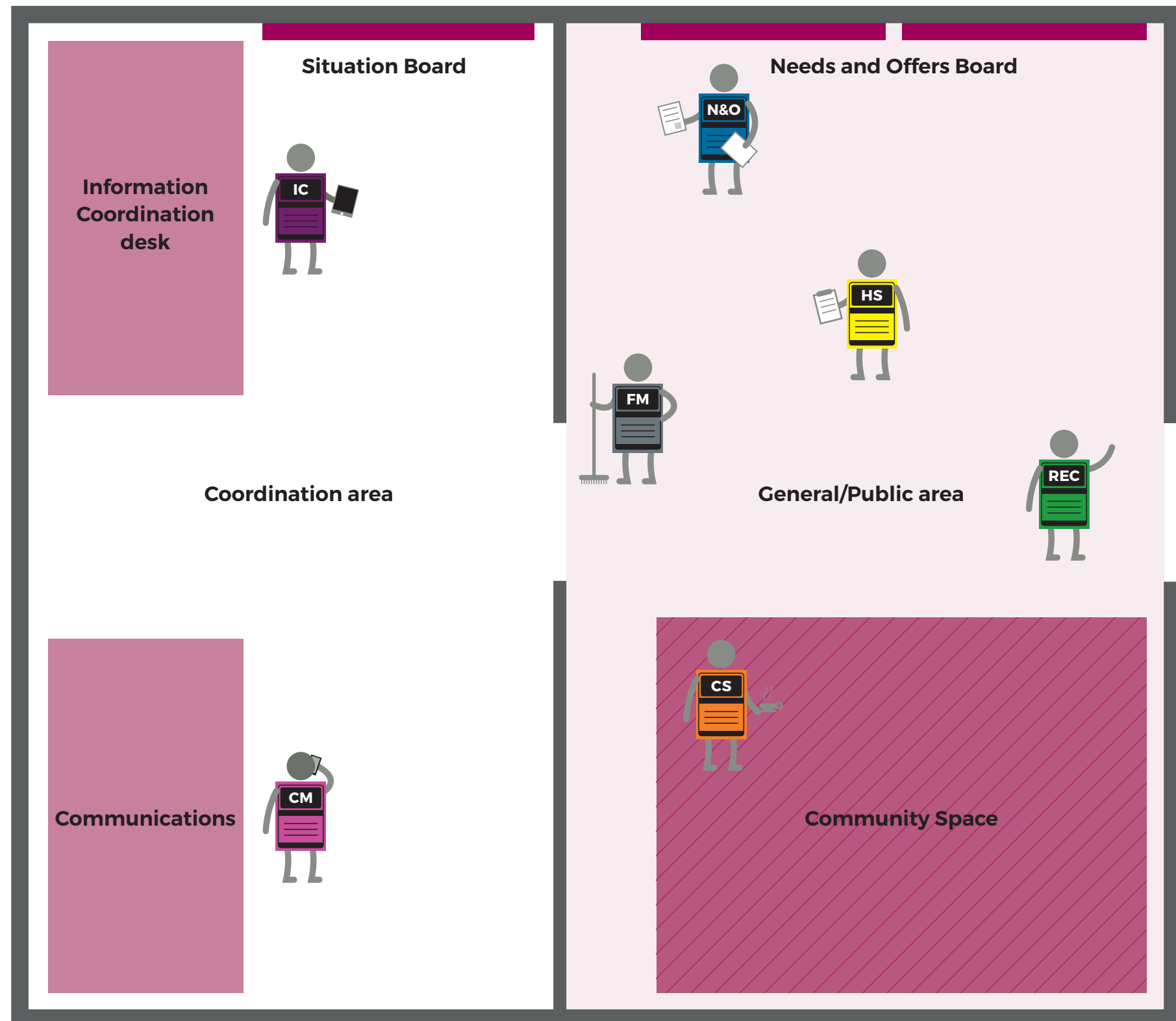


Ask neighbouring houses or local businesses to borrow any tools and cleaning materials you need.

# Hub diagram

Generic layout of a Community Emergency Hub and outline of the key roles

- 
**HUB SUPERVISOR**  
 I oversee that the Hub runs smoothly by helping everyone work together.
- 
**INFORMATION COORDINATION**  
 I keep track of important information coming in and out of the Hub.
- 
**PUBLIC INFORMATION**  
 I keep the Public Information board up-to-date and tidy.
- 
**RECEPTION**  
 I meet and greet people coming to the Hub and direct them where to go.
- 
**NEEDS AND OFFERS**  
 I match people's needs and offers of assistance by using notes on a board.
- 
**COMMUNITY SPACE**  
 I create a welcoming comfortable space where people can connect and wait.
- 
**COMMUNICATIONS**  
 I use whatever communications are available to stay in contact with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).
- 
**FACILITY MAINTENANCE**  
 I ensure the Hub is safe, clean and has the resources it needs to run.



# 4

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Understand the Hub processes	31
Open the Hub	31

---

## Before you open



Once set up, bring everyone together to ensure they are clear on objectives, their roles, the layout, and how they will share information and work together. Regularly repeat this briefing with the lanyard holders to ensure things are working smoothly.

Some common initial objectives

✓

Establish a working Community Emergency Hub.

Provide a safe gathering place.

Find out what has happened in your community.

Tell people what is going on.

Solve problems using what the community has available.

Match requests for assistance with offers of assistance.

Coordinate the community response.

Give an overview of who might be available to help

✓

Give an overview of who might be available to help (including community members, volunteers, response plan stakeholders).

Check everyone is happy with the role they have

✓

If not, change roles/lanyards as appropriate.

★

If there are roles that still need to be allocated people may end up with two or more roles.

Understand the Hub processes

✓

Make sure everyone has a clear idea of how the Hub will run and how information and people might move through the Hub, depending on their needs.

Open the Hub

✓

Put up clear signage that the Hub is running.

Contact the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to let them know that the Hub is open.

★

Bring the Hub team together regularly to ensure everyone knows what is going on, to inform them of any significant issues, and to check everyone is ok.

# 5

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# Your community's response

# Local ideas and solutions for challenges you may face

The following pages include prompts, ideas and local resources for assisting with the common needs of communities after an emergency, as listed below.

- › Checking on who and what has been affected
- › Medical assistance
- › Shelter
- › Water
- › Food
- › Sanitation

## Community Response Plans

Where a community has gone through a Community Response Planning Process, there are details about the local resources available to help solve these problems.

In communities that have not yet been through that process, there are prompts and questions that may assist you in finding solutions.

## Life-threatening situations

- › **Help if you can, but do not put yourself in unnecessary danger to save someone else. You don't want to become a casualty too.**
- › Attempt to contact the emergency services by calling 111 in all life-threatening situations. Sometimes all you can do is keep other people from being harmed. Let people know that there is a hazard, and keep other people away from the hazard if you are able. This may include helping people evacuate an area.
- › Report back to the Community Emergency Hub:
  - What the problem is.
  - What you have done.
  - What still needs to be done, if anything.
- › Information about life-threatening situations should be reported to the Emergency Operation Centre.

# Local resources

During Community Response Planning the following local resources were identified that could be useful for various purposes during an emergency. Use this information as a starting point when looking for solutions to community needs. Local resources may need to be shared with nearby communities, so communicate with your neighbouring hubs to work out the most efficient use of the available resources. Check with the owner to coordinate the use of their resources.

## Groups and networks

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## Places and spaces

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# Services in the community

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# Local vulnerabilities

During Community Response Planning the following potential vulnerabilities were identified. These may need further attention or assistance.

## Groups and networks

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# Services in the community

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# Checking on people and damage

Everyone in the community is checked on after an emergency – whether it’s for rescue and medical assistance, or just basic support and information.

- › Contact everyone in the community as soon as possible.
- › Record and report information on people and damage back to the Hub.
- › Regularly check everyone in the days following the event as people’s circumstances may change.



How can you make sure that everywhere has been checked?

- Start with known affected areas or groups that might need extra assistance.
- Draw upon any local lists and knowledge.
- Coordinate a street-by-street, house-by-house check. Use the area maps in the Hub.
- Record any information on the impact to the community. For example, status of roads, building damage, and peoples unresolved needs.

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Report the information back to the Information Coordination person at the Hub.

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Staying in contact with people as outlined in task one should be done frequently, as people’s circumstances can change after an event.

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If you can’t give someone immediate assistance, collect information about their needs and bring that back to the Hub. See if you can find an answer to their needs with the resources available in your community.



What groups could be available to walk around the community to check on people and look for damage?

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Where should we check first?

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How would we coordinate this?

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# Medical assistance

Community members who need medical assistance are directed to medical assistance.

- › Identify and coordinate community resources that can be used to assist and treat the injured.
- › Identify and check on people with day-to-day medical needs.
- › Direct the community to medical providers that are known to be open.
- › Identify and coordinate people in the community with medical skills who can help.



In all life-threatening situations, attempt to contact the emergency services by calling 111.

Injured and sick people should go to the nearest open medical centre first.

People with first aid skills should go to their nearest open medical centre or go to the Hub.

Check on your neighbours and people you know to have health issues or disabilities .

Look after your hygiene – wear gloves when touching body fluids.



Find out if the local medical providers are open and operational so that you can let the community know where to go.

Coordinate transportation for those who are in need and cannot get to the medical centre.

Where are the nearest medical providers?

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Where else could we provide medical assistance if the above facilities are not available?

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Who can help provide medical assistance?

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Where can we get extra supplies?

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How do we get people to medical assistance or medical assistance to people?

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# Shelter

Ensure everyone in our community has somewhere safe and comfortable to stay.

- › Find places where people can shelter from the weather if they can't stay at home.
- › Find comfortable places where people can rest and sleep.



Small repairs may make homes safe enough to stay in.

If people need to leave their homes, encourage them to take as much bedding as possible.

Encourage people to stay with friends or family if possible. Ask neighbours or others in their street if they have spare room.

People in the community may have spare beds, air mattresses, and couches available to offer to people without a place to stay.



Many people will be able to stay in their own homes, and this is ideal as people are much more comfortable in a home environment. Are there simple repairs that could be done to make a home safe enough for people to stay there?

You may have visitors to your community who don't live locally – commuters, shoppers, employees etc. These are the people most likely to need accommodation in your community.

Encourage people to make their spare beds and guest rooms available.

Don't wait for the perfect solution, shelter from the weather is a priority over comfort. Bad weather means the need for shelter is much more urgent than on a warm sunny day.

Tell the Emergency Operations Centre (through the Communication desk) the number of people who need accommodation.

**Who could help make people’s homes safe, weather proof and comfortable?**

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**Where can we get resources to make repairs?**

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**Where could we get bedding and clothing supplies to keep people warm and comfortable?**

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**What open spaces could accommodate temporary shelter?**

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**What facilities could be used for temporary shelter if people can’t stay at homes or with friends?**

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# Water

Our community has access to clean water for drinking and water for cooking and hygiene purposes.

- › Ensure everyone knows how to treat drinking water.
- › Coordinate community water sources for drinking, cooking and hygiene.
- › Arrange a place in the community where water can be distributed if needed.



Water reservoirs are all around the region but automatically seal if lines are damaged. Wellington Water technicians must manually attend to the valves. This will take time so look for other sources of water within the community right away.

Some schools and community centres have large water tanks installed. If there is one in your community check to see what their plan is for using the water.



Local streams and open bodies of water are not reliable sources of clean water. Chemical pollution and heavy metal contamination is not removed by boiling water or adding bleach.

Treat any non-bottled water. Boil it if you can, if not use bleach to treat.

**BEST CHOICE: BOIL.** Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms. If water is cloudy, filter it through a clean cloth. Boil water for one minute, let it cool, and store it in clean containers with covers.

**IF YOU CAN'T BOIL: ADD BLEACH.** Bleach will kill some (not all) types of disease-causing organisms. Just like boiling, filter cloudy water through a clean cloth first. Use only regular, unscented, liquid household bleach. Add two drops of bleach per litre of water. Stir well, let it stand for 30 minutes before using, then store in clean containers with covers.

Where can we find drinking water?

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Where can we find water for washing and cleaning?

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What water supplies should be avoided or need treatment before drinking?

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What places would be good distribution points?

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How do we get water to people who are unable to leave their homes?

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# Food

People in our community have enough food to sustain them.

- › Encourage people to share food with those who don't have access to it.
- › Organise a way to feed large groups of people who are displaced or do not have food of their own.
- › Coordinate food supplies in the community.



Assist with coordination of food supplies in the community where necessary.

Encourage people to share food with those who don't have access to it.

Tell people to use foods in the refrigerator first, then those in the freezer, and finally dry goods from the pantry.

Pool community resources to feed everyone

- Street BBQs
- Have places where excess food can be coordinated from



What food suppliers and providers are there?

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Where else could we find food?

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Where can we get cooking and catering supplies?

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How could we organise to feed large groups of people?

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How do we get food to people who are unable to leave their homes?

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# Sanitation

Ensure everyone has access to an appropriate place to go to the toilet.

- › Organise long drops throughout the community and in locations close to groups who might not have the ability to organise one themselves.
- › Identify and source sanitation supplies and tools from within your community to build emergency toilets.
- › Identify and coordinate people who can help dig or build toilet facilities.
- › Identify a suitable space for a long drop toilet at the Hub.



Wash your hands regularly – use hand sanitiser, boiled water with soap or gloves if clean water is unavailable.

Could you organise long drops throughout the community and close to groups who might not have the ability to organise one themselves?

Where are suitable locations for facilities that won't cause problems?  
. Could you build a private space for a long drop toilet at the Hub or other open space?

When digging a long drop dig a hole up to one metre deep and 30 to 40 cm wide. After each use, cover the waste with soil or other mulch. When the hole is full to about 30cm below the surface, fill with soil and dig a new long drop.

Alternatively, use a two bucket system – one for liquids and one for solid waste. Mix with sawdust. Can be used indoors and then emptied in a hole in the ground.

# Key resource statements

## New Zealand Police

During an emergency, Police across the region will focus on assessing the situation and will be tasked by their Central Communications Centre.

## New Zealand Fire Service

The focus of the Fire Service after a significant earthquake will be lifesaving activities and suppression of fire, as allowed by limited water supply.

## Wellington Water

All Wellington Water Reservoirs have seismic values to retain water after an earthquake. Technicians must inspect the reservoirs and alter the valve systems before the water inside can then be made available for people to manually collect. It will take a number of days to complete this process.

## Supermarkets

Supermarkets are likely to be closed immediately after an earthquake due to the mess and danger caused by stock falling from shelves.

They will try to make available whatever supplies they can, in coordination with the Hub to make sure these resources are efficiently used.

While supermarkets appear to hold a lot of stock, in reality if they cannot be restocked this will not go far for a whole community.

## Medical Centres and Hospitals

People needing medical assistance, and anyone able to assist in the provision of medical assistance should go to their nearest medical centre, **not the hospital**.

Each hospital has their current patients to look after, as well as the most severely injured following an emergency event.

The medical centre will assess who needs to go to the hospital, if they can get there.

# 6

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# Thinking about recovery

## Thinking long term: Recovery

Working in your Hub, you may find yourself exercising leadership, problem solving, and other abilities you didn't know you had. You and your community will come across a variety of issues. Some of these will require outside help, but many may be solved by pooling the skills, resources and connections that your community already has.

As your community self-organises to respond, you will start to find solutions to these immediate issues. But what about longer term challenges? How does your community then continue to work together and support one another through long-term recovery?

Many communities throughout the world, from Christchurch here in New Zealand, to New Orleans in the United States, to Tohoku in Japan, have gone through disaster. Those communities that are active, work together and support one another, can adapt and rebuild stronger than before.

## What can our community do to help each other through the recovery?

- › **Stay connected.** Maintaining your existing relationships and those you have formed during the response is important for the community's recovery. Some people may be evacuated, or may be living temporarily outside the community. Strive to help keep everyone connected and informed. Setting up phone trees, social media groups and email chains, in addition to meeting in person helps keep people connected so they can take action and support one another.
- › **Work together.** The drive to work together is often high at the start of a disaster when priorities are centered on meeting basic common needs. Keeping this positive energy alive through the recovery process will take a more concerted effort – sharing stories of the community's successes and challenges may help do just that. Consider how the community can continue to share knowledge and creativity as challenges change from just responding to what's in front of you, to proactively rebuilding the kind of community that you want to live and thrive in.

- › **Speak with a common voice.** Getting your community's message heard by local government and organisations that may contribute resources to help rebuild is a challenge. Look for common goals that meet the needs of many community members. Just as importantly, your community's voice can be strong and inclusive of different needs. When a one-size-fits-all approach won't work, part of sending a clear message means communicating that needs in your community are diverse.

- › **Talk about wellbeing.** During and after a disaster it is natural to experience different and strong emotions. Give yourself time to adjust and connect with family, friends and others who were affected in your community. Take care of yourself and each other, while respecting that people's needs will vary. Everyone may deal with challenges in different ways, but no matter what, remember it's ok to seek help. Re-establishing routines and engaging in healthy behaviours can help to enhance your ability to cope.

There is no perfect answer to how your community will tackle recovery. Staying organised and proactive through recovery may not happen in the Hub itself especially if it's located in a place that needs to return to its business-as-usual function. Whatever the form and place, it is the connections made, the shared experiences, and people being active in the community that will make it possible to adapt and rebuild stronger than ever.

**Recovery will present challenges. Strong communities face them together.**

