

Voices Distressing Your Loved one? Here's How to Help

Voices can be distressing for the hearer, and also for you - here's how to navigate this together



I've noticed they seem to be talking to someone who isn't there

- Share this observation with them. Explain you want to check in with them
- Hearing voices can be confusing and distressing - let them know you're there to provide support without judgment
- Listen to them share about their experiences, without judgement, and refrain from telling them "just ignore them, they aren't real" as to them they sound very real
- Encourage them to seek support from a mental health professional like their GP or a psychologist



I'm worried they're feeling anxious because of the voices

- Encourage them to practice grounding techniques like naming their senses or holding ice cubes
- Offer to do a calming activity together like taking a walk in nature or listening to soothing music
- Offer to attend a support group meeting such as with the Hearing Voices Network with them for peer connection and support
- Suggest they read or listen to other people's recovery journeys - www.perthvoicesclinic.com.au/resources



I'm worried for their safety and wellbeing

- Contact the Mental Health Emergency Response Line on 1300 555 788 (metro) or 1800 676 822 (peel) or 000 in an emergency
- Lifeline WA provides 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention at 13 11 14
- Stay with them in a safe, secure environment without access to anything they could use to harm themselves (as long as it's safe for you to do so)
- Encourage them to call a trusted friend or family member

Getting help from a WA mental health service

General Starting Points

- SANE Australia: National mental health organization
 - Provides information, guidance, and support for complex mental health issues
 - Helpline: 1800 187 263
- Local Government Mental Health Services: Community-based mental health support
 - Some services can accept self-referrals but some may require a referral from your GP, private psychiatrist, or public mental health services
- General Practitioner (GP): Often the best first point of contact
 - Their GP can provide an initial assessment, treatment recommendations, and referrals to psychologists or psychiatrists
- Psychiatrist: A trained medical doctor with extra training in mental health
 - Can diagnose conditions, prescribe medication, and provide therapy
 - Referral from GP required for Medicare rebates
- Psychologist: Can provide various evidence-based therapy
 - Mental Health Treatment Plan from GP allows Medicare rebates
- The Early Psychosis Youth Centre (EPYCentre) provides specialised support for young people (aged 12-25 years) after their first episode of psychosis (137824)
- The Perth Voices Clinic in Perth offers psychological therapy specifically for people who hear voices (for those aged 18+ 0477 453 264)
- The Hearing Voices Network WA offers peer support groups and information at 1800 742 466

For Those with a Diagnosis

- Richmond Wellbeing: Offers psychosocial support and NDIS assistance
 - Runs hearing voices groups
 - Phone: 1800 RICHMOND (1800 742 466)
- NEAMI: Provides community-based mental health services and NDIS support
 - Also runs hearing voices groups
 - Phone: 08 6252 0420
- For NDIS Support: Both Richmond Wellbeing and NEAMI can assist with NDIS applications and provide support for those with a diagnosis



In an Emergency

If your loved one is in immediate danger of harming themselves or others, take action right away:

- Take them directly to the nearest hospital emergency department
- Call 000 to request emergency medical or police assistance
- Contact the Mental Health Emergency Response Line at 1300 555 788 (metro) or 1800 676 822 (peel)

Remember, getting professional help quickly in a crisis can make a critical difference. Trust your instincts - if you feel your loved one is at serious risk, don't hesitate to call for emergency support.

