

On-the-Go Checklist

Visuals and Helplines

Choosing Images:

When portraying someone living with mental distress:

- ☐ **Choose images that emphasise connection and hope** to help reduce stigma
- ☐ **Remember most people with lived experience show no outward signs:** The wrong image can reinforce prejudice, even in a positive story
- ☐ **Ask interviewees if they have a preferred photo** or use a generic image of someone supported by friends or whānau
- ☐ **Consider using real people**, showing their faces or people supporting one another
- ☐ **Use imagery that reflects people living well** with mental health challenges to help reduce stigma

Consider not using:

- ☐ "Headclutcher" poses or dark, distressing images



This is an example of the kind of photo that reinforces unhelpful stereotypes

- ☐ Images of people isolated or exaggerated in their experience
- ☐ Generic hospital ward shots (unless the story is about a hospital ward)
- ☐ Images of pills, as not everyone chooses medication and some may find this confronting

Including Helplines:

- ☐ **Include New Zealand's six core helplines and resources** in stories about mental distress

The core six are:

- **Need to talk?**
Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.
- **Lifeline**
0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP).
- **Youthline**
0800 376 633, free text 234, email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat.
- **Samaritans**
0800 726 666
- **Depression resources**
www.depression.org.nz
- **The Lowdown**
www.thelowdown.co.nz

Use the appropriate helpline/resources for your story. Find more at mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines.

