



Introduction to Road Trauma Support WA

Presented by: Christine Smith

www.injurymatters.org.au

Injury Matters acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan can be found at www.injurymatters.org.au

Artwork: "Standing Strong" by Nerolie Bynder Blurton



Acknowledgement of lived experience



Today's session will cover

- The impact of road trauma in WA
- Common reactions experienced after a road crash
- Where and how to access support for yourself and others

Road Trauma Support WA

Road Trauma Support WA is a **free statewide service** assisting **anyone affected by road trauma**, regardless of when the incident occurred, or what level of involvement the person had.

When you're ready to talk, we're here to help.



Impact of Road Trauma in WA



FATALITIES 2022

- 175 people lost their lives
- 112 regional and 63 metropolitan

As at 17 October 2023

- 122 people lost their lives
- 61 regional and 61 metropolitan

Crashes involving heavy vehicles

38 heavy vehicle occupants were **seriously injured** and 14 were **killed** in a crash in WA in 2022.

Between 2018- 2022, heavy vehicle occupants were killed or serious injured in a crash in WA:

72% were male



83% were the driver



53% aged between 40 – 59



8% weren't wearing a seatbelt



Causes of road trauma

27% of crashes involve **risk taking behaviour.**

Speeding, drink or drug driving and not wearing seatbelts or helmets.

70% of crashes involve **human error.**

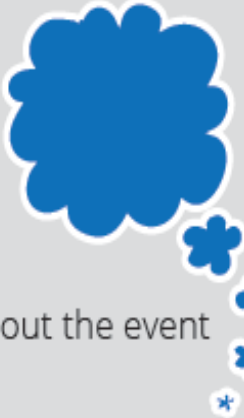
Most people follow the road rules, However errors can occur in perception, judgement and lapses in attention.

Impact of road trauma



Thoughts

- Worrying about family and friends
- Constantly thinking about the event
- Confusion
- Fear of driving
- Easily distracted
- Forgetting things
- Thoughts of harming yourself or others



Common behaviours

- Avoiding:
 - driving
 - reminders of the crash and/ or
 - social activities
- Trouble functioning at work
- Relationship difficulties
- Eating more or less than usual



Emotions

- Shock
- Disbelief
- Fear
- Sadness
- Grief
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Anger
- Shame
- Helplessness



Physical reactions

- Trembling
- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Crying
- Rapid breathing
- Poor balance and coordination
- Unusual fatigue
- Disrupted sleep
- Nightmares
- Fast heart rate



Common reactions after a road crash

A road crash can affect anyone and can be life changing.

These changes can leave you feeling lost. Feelings of loss are not always immediate and can occur months and even years later.



Common examples of loss or change after a crash include:

Physical

- Injury
- Disability
- Change in sex life



Emotional

- Death of a family member or mate
- Relationship breakdown
- Family problems
- Change in personality
- Legal worries
- Work pressure
- Low confidence



Financial

- Money worries
- Losing your home
- No savings
- Vehicle damage
- Loss of business
- Legal costs



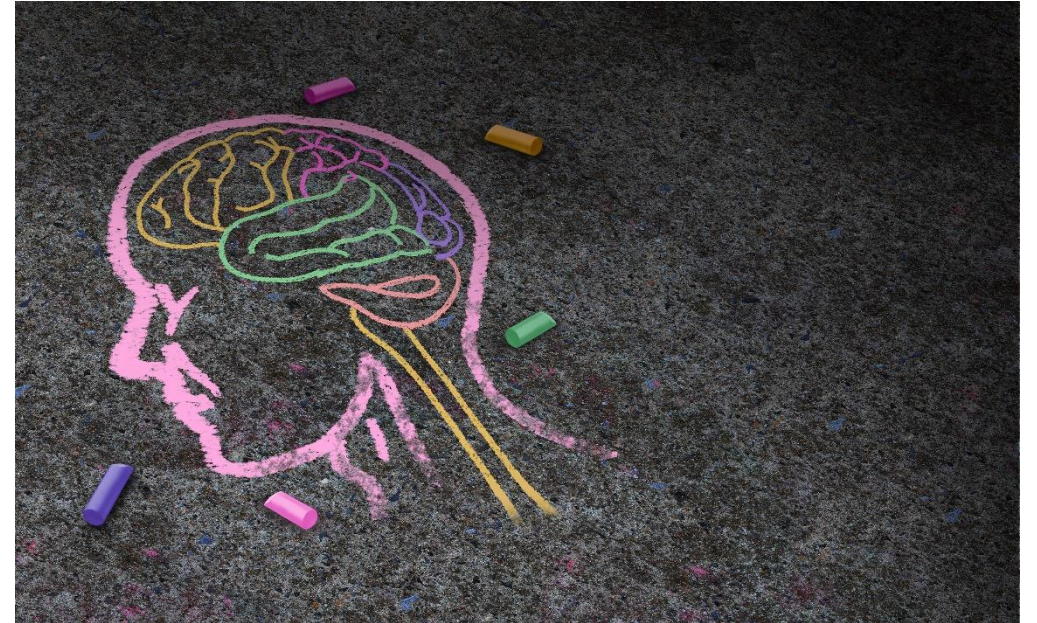
Social

- Change in your normal routine
- Unable to drive
- Dependent on others
- Change in friendships
- Avoiding activities you used to enjoy



Psychological effects of road trauma

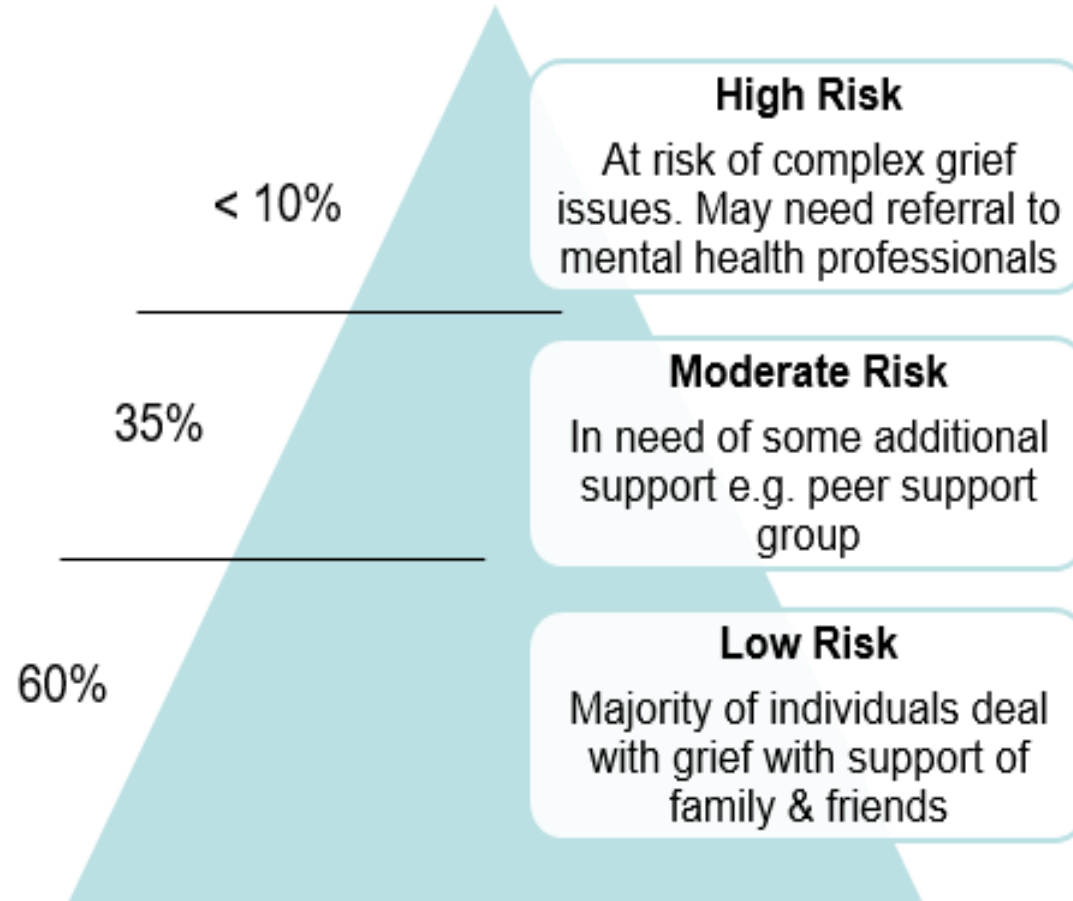
- Anxiety, anxiety disorders, phobias
- Depression
- Range of reactions: grief, guilt, shame
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Can reduce help seeking behaviour



Impact on mental health is sometimes overlooked



Who needs additional help?



Source: Aoun, Breen et al. (2015)

Who do we help?

- People bereaved by road incidents
- People injured in road incidents
- Families, friends, work colleagues, unpaid carers of those involved in a road incident
- Witnesses and first responders, including emergency services personnel
- Individuals who caused a road incident and their families

How do we help?

Information and Support

- Fact sheets, brochures and general information available to anyone affected by road trauma.
- Available on our website at www.rtswa.org.au or in hardcopy by contacting us by phone, email or social media.
- Links and referrals to external agencies.



How do we help?

Education and Training

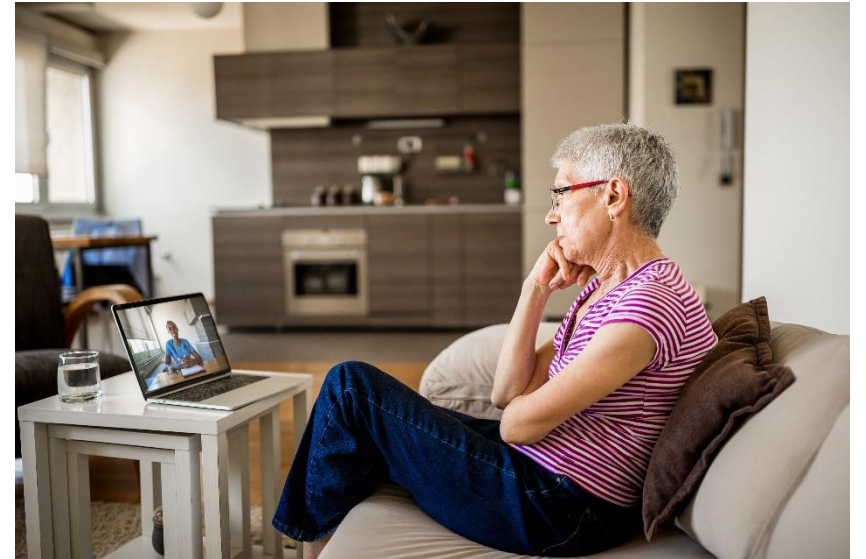
- Workshops and training on:
 - After A Road Crash: Supporting Yourself and Others
 - Anxiety After a Road Crash
 - Sudden Bereavement
 - Wellbeing
- Workshops can be tailored to meet community and organisational needs (fee may apply)
- Online webinars.



How do we help?

Counselling Service

- Specialised trauma and grief counselling
- No referral required
- No limit on number of sessions
- No timeframe for when the incident occurred
- Access options:
 - In-person (Leederville Office)
 - Phone
 - Online (Telehealth)
- Free service (not a crisis service)



Additional Support

When:

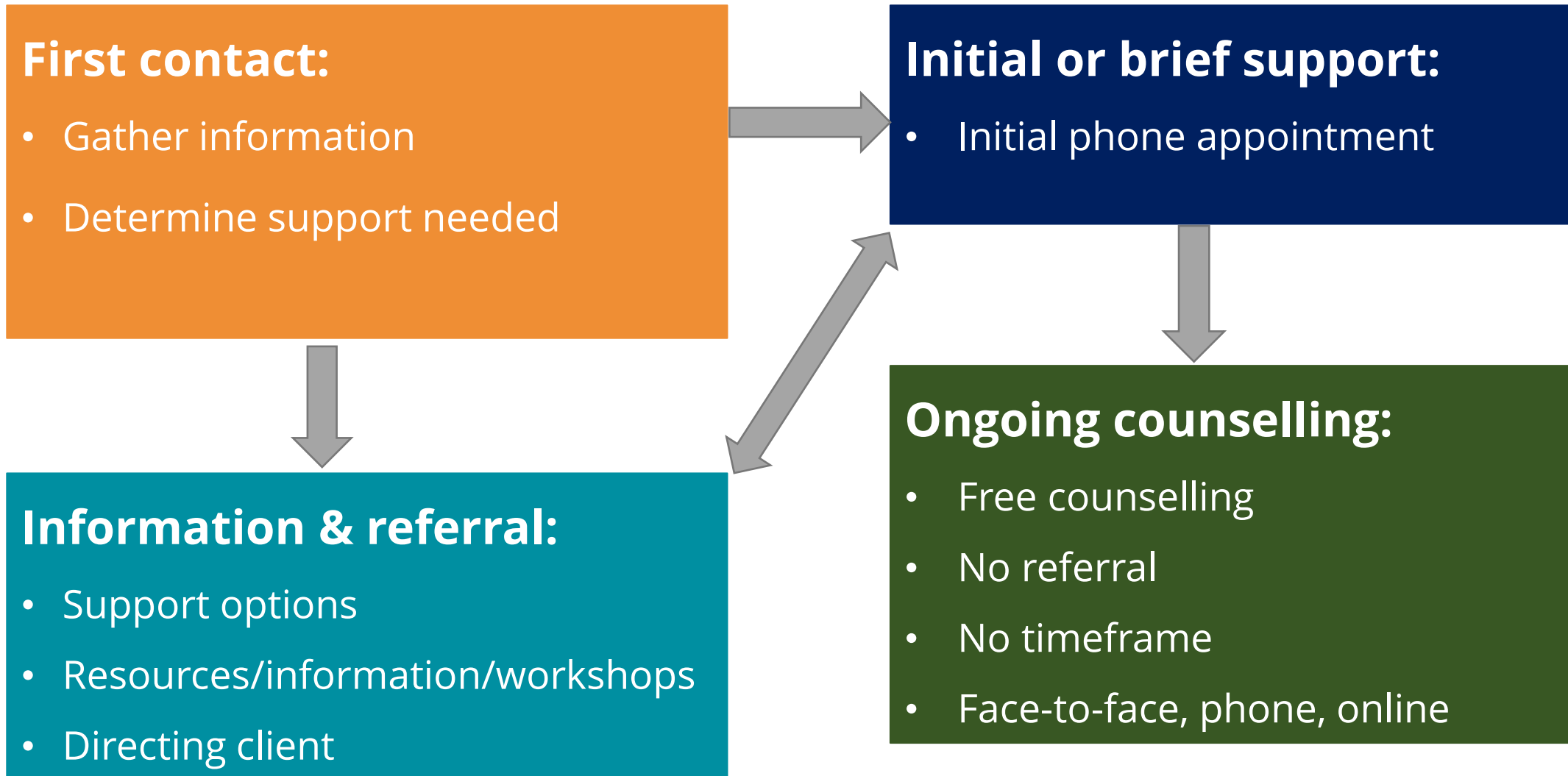
- Flashbacks, nightmares, panic attacks
- Persistent depression/anxiety
- Trouble functioning
- Anger, agitation, irritability increase
- Relationships are suffering
- Increasing avoidance
- Intrusive thoughts/rumination
- Lack of enjoyment
- Thoughts of harm or suicide
- Increase in alcohol & other substances



Where:

- GP
- Psychologist/counsellor
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Road Trauma Support WA
- Family/friends
- Support groups
- Online support

What happens when someone contacts RTSWA?





**Road Trauma
Support WA**

How to access our service

- ✓ *Phone us: 1300 004 814 (free call)*
- ✓ *Email us at: admin@rtswa.org.au*
- ✓ *Visit our website:
www.rtswa.org.au*

- ✓ *Facebook: [RoadTraumaSupportWA](https://www.facebook.com/RoadTraumaSupportWA)*
- ✓ *Twitter: [@RoadTraumaWA](https://twitter.com/RoadTraumaWA)*
- ✓ *Visit us at: Level 2, 297 Vincent
Street Leederville WA 6007*



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(08) 6166 7688



Level 2, 297 Vincent Street,
LEEDERVILLE



info@injurymatters.org.au



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**Road Trauma
Support WA**



**Know
INJURY**



**Mental and Physical
Safety on our Roads**

Injury Matters is able to continue to make a difference in the Western Australian community through funding obtained from the government, donations and income generated through our programs and services.