

News

Counselling demand surge

THE Border watch has joined with Anglican Community Care in its bid to raise awareness of the agency's new family Relationships program. Each month, we will publish an article compiled by Anglican Community care, which focuses on promoting healthy relationships.

ANGLICAN Community Care recently recorded a 40pc jump in the number of men seeking help from counsellors over the holiday period.

They were concerned about what was going to happen over the holiday break with their children, as a result of relationship breakdown.

Historically demand again peaks once the children have returned to school.

The agency advises men seeking help to make appointments early so they can speak to someone before things get worse.

Appointments do need to be made and sometimes there is a waiting period of a week or in more Mount Gambier and if the need is in Naracoorte Millicent or Bordertown the waiting period could be up to three weeks.

According to Mensline, about two thirds of Australian breakups are initiated by women.

To many men their break-up comes as a surprise.

Breakups in relationship are always distressing but it can be particularly so when one did not initiate the breakup and thought things were okay.

Diane Jablonski, a counsellor

with over 10 years experience supporting men and women, explained that many men who have been supported in the past have commented that they should have talked to someone much earlier when they were feeling that their relationship was in trouble.

Common warning signs when a relationship in trouble include:

- Communication - little day-to-day communication with your partner and when there is, it is negative or critical.

- Time away - one or both partners seek to spend as much time away from each other as possible

- Listening - does not occur, judgments are made before sentences are finished.

- Arguments - discussions become arguments and leaves one or both partners feeling resentful.

- Difference - the differences that you were attracted to now you are critical of or turned off by

- Fun - there's no fun being together and you get fun by putting each other down, quite often in front of family or friends

- Interest - you have no interest in the life your partner is living, what they are doing, their hopes and dreams, hobbies etc

- Being nice - you stop doing nice things for each other and don't even think to do something nice.

So what can be done to get the

relationship back on track before it is too late?

- Listen - when your partner speaks of what they think are problems. Also listen to what is not said.

- Make time to talk regularly.

- Avoid using 'you' at the beginning of a sentence and use 'I' statements, eg 'I feel upset when you do that'.

- Take an interest in your partner's life.

- Be kind to each other

- See a professional independent person to talk things through and determine where changes need to be made.

Counsellors are professionals who offer a safe place for men to tell their story and look at other ways they could be using their skills or gaining more skills to fix relationship problems.

It sometimes takes quite a few sessions for someone to open up and start working towards changing behaviours.

In the South East there is help for both men and women, together or separately.

All counsellors are professionally qualified and support is confidential and impartial.

For assistance, call Anglican Community Care on 8724 9211 and Relationships Australia (SA) on 8724 5430 - family relationships counselling for couples SE Regional Domestic Violence Services 1800 631 385 - women and children experiencing domestic violence and Mensline Australia on 1300 789 978.

Services concern

THE lack of palliative care services at the Mount Gambier hospital has been raised as a concern by the Grand District Council.

Councillors will discuss the issue at their next meeting on Monday, said chief executive officer Russell Peate.

"The recommendation is that discussions be held with the director of the Mount Gambier and District Hospital, David Walshaw, around the provision of palliative care at the Mount Gambier and District Hospital," he said.

"Health and medical services for Mount Gambier and the surrounding areas is a priority."

Mr Peate said a telephone survey of 300 residents commissioned by council and undertaken by Roy Morgan Research three years ago found the the most important State Government service for people within the the area was health and medical services.